

UPLOOK

JUNE 1996





Preach (the Word)²

We need to heed A. P. Gibbs' advice concerning public ministry. He said it should be "well studied, well prayed over, well introduced, well expressed, well illustrated, well applied, and well concluded."

I want someone who knows the difference between the duties of a chef and a gardener serving my meals! In the process of providing a healthy and appetizing repast, there is the need for pitchforks, dirt, and compost—but not on *my* dinner table! In the same way there is a substantial difference between the energy and labor involved in exegesis (digging the truth out of the Word) and the finesse, taste, and garnish associated with exposition (displaying the truth in an appetizing way).

We might describe exegesis as the discovery of truth from God's Word, involving the careful, detailed examining of text, context, word meanings, flow of thought, symbolism, figures of speech, etc., with a view to uncovering, with the Spirit's aid, the thoughts that flow from the heart of God.

Exposition, on the other hand, involves the display of what has been discovered in such an orderly, attractive, and effective way that it exposes what the text was intended originally to mean, what it has come to mean to the preacher, and what it ought to mean to the audience.

Both skills are essential if the people of God are going to be fed properly. Some speakers spend a great deal of time thinking about what they are going to say, but evidently little time on how they are going to say it. Like raw meat or potatoes just pulled from the ground, they have the nutrients we need but are hardly ready for consumption. Indigestible sermons give God's people the wrong kind of heartburn.

There are others who, depending solely on some native "gift of gab," spread before the saints a flowery dish of make-believe, dusting their spices on thin air and calling it *nouvelle cuisine*. From such, O Lord, deliver us.

The solution to both is found in the student-speaker feeding his own soul with the truth first. "Preach all your sermons over to yourself," wrote F. B. Meyer. "Remember that your own heart must ever be your first congregation. Take for yourself, that you may

know if it be digestible, some of the food which you are preparing for others."

Perhaps the greatest preacher of the Church was the apostle Paul (although who of us would not have been delighted to hear Stephen before the Sanhedrin, or Peter at Pentecost, or Chrysostom the "golden-mouthed" before Eudoxia, or Luther before the Roman prelates?). Paul forcefully reminds us that our source is to be THE WRITTEN WORD: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears...But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:2-5).

But more, he tells us that our subject is to be THE LIVING WORD: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:5-7).

A good message should always have a target, the first being the stirring of our own hearts. God preserve us from passionless preaching! When we preach: the *intellect* should be exercised by the thoughtful exposition of its truth; the *imagination* may be activated to grasp after things unknown at present; the *heart* ought to be touched with the deeply stirring realities of the Word; the *conscience* should be addressed to be honest with God, like a miniature Judgment Seat; the *will* must be called to respond in obedience to God's revelation; BUT it must be the Spirit witnessing with our *spirits* that produces divine results.

We hope you enjoy, and profit from, this issue on preaching. We have also provided a smorgasbord of sermons through the ages. *Bon appetit!*

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Whatever Became of Preaching?

Preaching was once the glory of Protestantism. When the pulpit displaced the altar and the preacher replaced the priest, the benefit to the common people was immeasurable. What happened at the Reformation was not, of course, an innovation but the recovery of an ancient emphasis, for the history of preaching is an honorable one going right back to the apostles and Christ Himself.

Preaching has a place in Christianity which it has in no other religion. If it is true that preaching is the product of the church, it is also true that the church is the product of preaching. For the church did not spread in its earliest centuries through the sword or with the backing of state favor, but in the face of great obstacles and enmity. Its advance was spearheaded by the preaching of Spirit-filled messengers of the cross.

Does preaching still occupy this central place in the church today? It is probably true to say that serious and meaningful preaching has fallen on hard times. One authority on this subject goes so far as to say: "In the [present] history of the church, preaching has been neglected, ignored, debased, even almost totally forgotten...." In place of preaching they wish for more time to be given to all kinds of innovations—drama, group therapy, liturgical experiment, discussion forums, "in-depth" counseling, seminars and many others, some of which are useful but none of which is a substitute for preaching.

Every preacher must face one important question before he faces his audience: "Do I believe in preaching?" Not just, "Do I believe the Bible I hold in my hand?" or, "Do I believe the gospel I preach?" but something even more basic, "Do I believe in preaching itself?" The earliest preachers must have seemed eccentric as they set out to accomplish their task. Maybe they seemed to be figures of fun. But they believed in what they were doing. They knew it was a God-given work. They were confident that it was God's good pleasure "through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). And where there is a man today who believes with all his heart that preaching is a divinely ordained means of reaching men with the message of the love of God and the power of the cross, there is an effective preacher. For we must understand that God's grace is not confined to the subject of the

gospel but extends to the *preaching* of the gospel. Thus the God who revealed His grace at the cross still reveals His grace whenever the gospel is preached.

Failure really to believe this—that preaching is a divine activity and one at the very center of the purposes of God—results in many of the vices for which preachers are criticized: superficiality, frivolity, novelties in interpretation, dullness and many others. These deficiencies bring preaching into disrepute and can never be overcome unless first we clear away the debris of false ideas so as to come to a clear understanding of the nature and function of preaching.

Thus preaching is not an entertainment. It is an event in which, as someone has said, "the Incarnate Word is manifested from the written Word through the spoken Word." Nor is preaching a performance in which we set ourselves forward. It is an encounter when we set forth Christ in such a way as to bring men face to face with Him. Moreover preaching is not a comfortable discourse. Rather it is an urgent summons of God to men, "God Himself entreating by us, Be ye reconciled to God." Thus preaching is not merely the heralding of the saving action of God, it is itself an action of God through His chosen servant to call men to Himself. The God who worked in Christ to reconcile the world to Himself now works in His messenger, calling men to accept the reconciliation which has been effected at the cross.

The task of the preacher is thus of the very highest significance. His is a calling like no other, his a task of immense responsibility, his a message awesome and unique. What is most lacking today is not homiletical expertise, though this is important. Nor is it sufficient to speak of "hardened hearts" or "itching ears" as the cause of ineffectiveness. The real lack is a sense of exalted calling, which every preacher should have, together with a strong faith in the efficacy of preaching. We believe and so we speak (2 Cor. 4:13). **U**

Front Lines

FOR THE FAMILY

Spread the Word will conduct a Family Week at Greenwood Hills Bible Conference, Jul. 27-Aug. 4. Lord willing, the ministry will be shared by Willie Burnett (ON), Bob Gessner (PA), and Keith Trevolt (KS). Contact:

Greenwood Hills
7062 Lincoln Way East
Fayetteville, PA 17222
(717) 352-2150

CALIFORNIA OUTREACH

The saints at Grace Bible Chapel in Fullerton, CA, in the will of the Lord will hold a series of gospel meetings July 21-26. Weekday meetings will be from 7:00-8:30 PM. The speaker will be Mr. Jim Muir (Australia). Assemblies in the area are encouraged to bring anyone they know who needs to hear the gospel. Contact:

Mickey Carter
(310) 941-6519
Blaine VanAusdeln
(310) 947-1392

HEAD FOR THE HILLS

Greenwood Hills' third Family Bible Conference for the 1996 season will be held Aug. 17-25. Speakers are David Adams (ON) and Phil Morgan (FL). Contact:

Greenwood Hills
7062 Lincoln Way East
Fayetteville, PA 17222
(717) 352-2150

LABOR DAY RETREAT

Southwest Bible Camp (Glenwood, NM) announces their Labor Day Family Conference Aug. 30-Sept. 2. Rob Linsted (Wichita, KS) is the scheduled speaker. Send registration to:

Dr. James E. Leeman
Southwest Bible Camp
9929 N. Black Mesa Trail,
Tucson, AZ 85742
Phone: (520) 744-8564

55TH YEAR OF GOODNESS

Rest Haven Homes (Grand Rapids, MI) has just completed a new wing to their facility and is looking forward to celebrating its 55th anniversary on September 14 with a day of praise and thanksgiving. J Boyd Nicholson (ON) is the expected speaker. Mark the date on your calendar and plan to join us. For info: (616) 454-6248

A DAY IN THE WORD

The next session of the Ohio Bible Study Program will be held September 28 from 9:30-3:00 at the Believers Bible Chapel in Leroy, OH. Ron Hughes (Family Bible Hour, St. Catharines, ON) is the planned speaker. For info. or overnight accommodations:

Cleveland East:
Mike Thomas (216) 992-7822
Pennsylvania/New York:
Doug Tryon (814) 899-0063
Cleveland West/Michigan:
Guy Mehling (216) 835-2127

FALL FOLIAGE CONFERENCE

The Fall Foliage Conference (Sept. 23-28) will be held at Camp-of-the-Woods in the Adirondack Mountains. Lord willing, Dr. James Naismith (ON) will minister. Numerous leisure activities are available for the afternoons. A fee of \$245 includes meals and comfortable accommodations. For more information:

Honeyrock Ministries

c/o Mark Kolchin
PO box 305

Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734
Registration deadline is Sept. 20.
Reservations made prior to July 31 receive a \$15.00 discount.

MEN'S WEEKEND

Southwest Bible Camp (Glenwood, NM) announces their annual Men's Conference on October 4-6, 1996. Mr. Doug Crabb (Albuquerque, NM) hopes to bring a vital insight into happenings in Russia as well as ministry from God's Word. Come and bring a friend. Send registration and the number in your party to:

Dr. James E. Leeman
Southwest Bible Camp
9929 N. Black Mesa Trail,
Tucson, AZ 85742

TOUR THE LAND

Alan Parks, Rex Trogden and Mark Kolchin will host a study tour of Israel, Oct. 21-30, 1996. Some of the highlights include: Jericho, Joppa, Mt. Carmel, Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane and Gordon's Calvary. A four-day excursion to Greece may be added. For a brochure:

Mark Kolchin
PO Box 305
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

CORRESPONDENCE CONFERENCE

Tucson Bible Chapel (AZ) will be holding their annual Missions Conference November 1-3, 1996. Speakers expected are Ron Harris (Mexico) and Charles Fizer (Emmaus) to cover the theme, *How Effective is Correspondence Min-*

istry in *Spreading the Word of God?* Accommodations are available and encouraged. Please contact:

Jim Yencarelli
2324 N. Norton Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85719
Phone: (520) 795-3194

LETTER OF COMMENDATION

The saints meeting at Glen Ellyn Gospel Chapel in Glen Ellyn, IL, are glad to commend brother Rob Marshall to the work of the Lord with *Good News for Catholics* in Cupertino, CA. Rob has been in happy fellowship with the Christians there and is active in the assembly. He is co-director of the Chicagoland Missionary Study Class and the annual Missionary Spring Conference. Rob's desire to serve the Lord has been evident and they commend him wholeheartedly.

NEW CHAIRMAN

The board of Gospel Mission of India elected Edward Maltman as its new Chairman. In 1985, Ed retired from the US Army and was commended with his wife, Isabel (McRuer) by Lakeside Bible Chapel, Sterling Heights, MI, to serve with Wycliffe Bible Translators. After Ed suffered a heart attack, the Maltmans' returned to Michigan in 1993. In 1994, Ed was elected to the board of GMI. Ed is more than happy to share the need of India with your assembly. He can be reached at (810) 977-1944.

MISSIONARY CALLING

CMML missionaries are becoming scarce in northeast Zaire. By mid-summer there will be only six: Pearl Winterburn (Tch-

abi), Behring and Lois MacDowell (Itendey), Maryen Baisley (Nyankunde), and Bert and Lois Mast (Lolwa). Roger and Danita Rahybuck (Lolwa) have five children, the eldest to enter college later this year. They will be leaving on furlough in the summer. Jonathan and June Peck will be on furlough until July. When they return to Zaire, they will not be returning to Itendey; they believe the Lord is calling them to serve at Rethy Mission School. Dena Speering (Itendey) is in North America for medical treatment and is uncertain whether she will be able to return.

SUMMER FAMILY CAMP

Verdugo Pines Family Camp (Jul. 28-Aug. 3) is looking forward to a week with Joe Reese (ON) and Jim McKendrick (MI). Special meetings for the children will be conducted by Jim Muir. For more information:

David Dixon
7626 Layton St
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730
(909) 944-6492

STORYBOOK GETAWAY

Three family camps are planned for the summer at Story Book Lodge in Gilbert, MN. Week 1 is scheduled for June 30-July 6; Week 2 will be held August 4-10; and Week 3 is planned for August 11-17. Bring your whole family for a week of ministry, fellowship and relaxation.

Teen Challenge is a favorite for serious Christians between the ages of 14 and 29. The dates planned are August 18-24.

For more information about the family camps, contact Roxanne Rodgers:

(218)865-6663
Contact the Camp Director at:
(218) 865-6241
or e-mail:
LARRYRODG@AOL.COM

FAMILY CAMPS

Shiloh Bible Camp (Cosmopolis, WA) will be hosting two weeks of family camp this summer: Jun. 30-Jul. 6 and Aug. 4-10. For more information:

Shiloh Bible Camp
HCR 77, Box 400
Cosmopolis WA 98537
Phone: (360) 532-5179
or E-mail:
SHILOHBC@TECHLINE.COM.

GET A BIG HEAD START

Some people like to plan *really* far in advance. You will be interested to know that, in the will of the Lord, UPLOOK *Ministries* is looking forward to hosting another year-end conference, Dec. 29-Jan. 2, 1997, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Dearborn, MI. Watch for further details in future issues of UPLOOK.

RIGHTSIDE UP

The response to UPLOOK *Ministries'* new youth magazine, RIGHTSIDE UP, has been encouraging. Young believers have shown their eagerness to get involved by submitting articles and by getting their friends on the mailing list. If you (or someone you know) wants to be on the RSU mailing list or for a sample issue, write:

RIGHTSIDE UP
P.O. Box 2041
Grand Rapids MI 49501
Phone: (800) 952-2382
E-mail:
RSUMAG@ AOL.COM



Planting Seed in Estonia

I can tell when there is a lull in prayer. There is a lot that goes on here that is very anti-Christian. This is a land that has been well under the control of Satan for many years. We can feel the oppression pretty intensely some-times...

—DOYLE WALSTROM

Doyle and Heather Walstrom (upper left) with a group of friends in Estonia

We first met Doyle and Heather Walstrom at Garland Bible Chapel in Dallas, TX. They were the type of people who come into the assembly and immediately make themselves available to assist in needy areas. They were involved with the High School group, and developed close friendships and discipling relationships with some of the kids. They developed some innovative studies which greatly benefited this group. I remember hearing all my life that if you were not busy for God on this side of the ocean, a million gallons of seawater would not change you. So we were not surprised when they expressed a desire to work with Russians in Estonia.

I was born and raised in the Philippines, a son of missionary parents, and my wife Cheryl spent some time in Korea while her parents were commended to service there. We have a deep appreciation for the challenges, rewards, and frustrations of being a missionary in a foreign land. We had the privilege of spending a few days with the Walstroms in Estonia.

Estonia, the most Scandinavian of what are known as the Baltic Republics, is located 60 kilometers south of Finland. This tiny country, as well as the other countries of the former Soviet Union, has been forced to undergo

some major changes in recent years. Having demonstrated for their independence since the early 1980's, the Estonians were ready to take advantage of the coup of Gorbechov and declare independence. Although Soviet tanks tried to restore order, the Estonians prevailed. After being part of the USSR for 40 years, Estonia declared independence in August 1991.

Estonia has done remarkably well in adjusting to a free-market society. This has not occurred without its share of difficulties, however. Many of the people had all their money in Russian rubles; when the Soviet Union collapsed, the ruble lost all value. So those people were essentially left without anything. Of course, Soviet industry also ceased when the Union collapsed. That left people out of work, and in some cities, there still are no other jobs available. We saw people in the markets of Tallinn selling some of their household goods so that they could eat. The average salary is still extremely low, about \$150 to \$200 per month. Prices have steadily increased—24% in 1995; and the price of dairy goods alone has increased 40-50% in the past two years. All of these increases place incredible pressure on low-income families and particularly "pensioners" who live on well under \$100 a month.

Some of those most affected by all this change are the Russians who make up about 30% of the total population. Understandably, those who are able to find decent work in Estonia must be able to speak the Estonian language, which is nothing at all like Russian. Many of the ethnic Russians have lived in Estonia all their lives, yet do not



SPECIAL REPORT

Speak Estonian. Laws prohibit Russians from gaining citizenship on the basis of having been born in the country. All must pass a language and culture exam, which appears to have been purposely made difficult in an effort

to block the Russians from getting Estonian citizenship. Still burned into the memory of Estonians is the day that 80,000 people were shipped off by Stalin to Siberia; the families never saw them again. There's hardly a family in Estonia that hasn't been affected somehow by what took place under the Soviets.

All of these changes, however, present wonderful opportunities for the furtherance of the gospel. Doyle and Heather Walstrom first came to Estonia on a short-term mission in the summer of 1992, less than one year after independence had been declared. The Lord began to impress them with the need of the minority Russian population even on that first visit. They worked alongside an Estonian Baptist church and from them heard of much evangelistic work being done with the Estonians. At that time, and still today, there is comparatively less being done to reach the Russian population of half a million people in Estonia.

They have been in Estonia now for almost three years. The majority of their time has been taken up with language study and developing contacts. There are no schools in Estonia which offer the Russian language from an English basis. Their language study has come from private schools that teach Russian mainly for businessmen. As with new arrivals on many mission fields, language has been their primary challenge. They are now at the point where they are developing increased confidence in their speaking ability. Much time with friends and new materials have helped significantly. Their Russian language study has generated a mixed response from the Estonians. One of Doyle's closest Estonian friends confronted him once. "Why are you here for the Russians? You are in Estonia." Doyle struggled with how to explain this to his unsaved friend. "They need the gospel, too." Doyle is looking forward to the day when the Estonians and Russians recognize that they each cost the Saviour His life.

Their first contacts came through English courses



A summer outdoor Kids Club (Doyle with interpreter Lacy in rear)

they taught shortly after their arrival. Heather, who excels in language ability, put together a course, and Doyle taught the Emmaus course, *What the Bible Teaches*, in English. One of their current interpreters is the daughter of a student of their first course.

Each day this past summer, Doyle and Heather saw a large group of children gathered in the courtyard of their flat and yearned so much to teach them God's Word. They were studying the Gospel of Mark and the Lord made it clear to them that they needed to start working with the children. They contacted a young Russian woman named Lacy, who speaks English as well as Estonian, to interpret. Doyle and Heather prepared Bible lessons and placed invitations in all the neighboring buildings, hoping the children would come to their flat. The day arrived for the study and no one came. They decided they should go to them and, using a flannel board to tell the Bible stories, went outside and organized groups of both Russians and Estonians.

Located just behind their flat is a pre-school where they also asked permission to teach the stories. They were able to teach another two groups there, one Russian and another Estonian. The lessons with these four groups ran for two weeks. At the final lesson they offered the opportunity to their Russian "courtyard" group to have a weekly Bible study in the Fall, which is still continuing. They started with about a dozen children and the number has declined to about four.

Since so little is known about the Bible, they have begun at the beginning with creation and are working their way through the Old Testament. They are building foundations on which they can build the basis of their faith by showing mankind's desperate need for a Saviour. Heavy emphasis is placed on man's inability to approach God by his own effort, which is essential considering their Orthodox background. The children's names are Kristina, Tanya, Eara, and Natasha. Lacy is still helping by interpret-

ing for these meetings.

Doyle and Heather are also studying with one woman, Lida, who has shown a lot of interest in studying the Bible. They are using the same material they use with the children, only a little more detailed. Olia is the daughter of one of their first contacts and is helping to interpret for this study. Neither Olio nor Lacy have yet professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but seem equally, if not more, interested than those in the studies. The Walstroms have been encouraged by questions asked lately in both studies by the interpreters and the students and it is clear that the Lord is working.

Some personal contacts and friends include Marina and her husband Valodia. Marina has helped them with their language, and seems to have a deep interest in spiritual matters. They have shared the gospel with her openly and in a straight-forward manner recently, but she remains unwilling to respond. Pray that the Lord will soften her heart. She believes her sin is simply too great to be forgiven. They assured her that nothing could be further from the truth (Isa. 1:18; 1 Jn. 1:9; Eph. 1:7).

Yura and Earra have been some of their most patient and dear friends. Yura, as with so many in Estonia, must work outside of the country. Both are intrigued by Eastern religions and switch from one philosopher to the next. They enjoy discussions about the gospel with the Walstroms. However, the Christian gospel is only one of many voices they are listening to, and they struggle with making the ad-

mission that they are sinners in need of a Saviour.

Igor and Tanya are some of their most recent, yet closest friends. They too hear the voices of those who arrived about the same time the Walstroms did—the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” and “Mormons.” The Walstroms have had a number of discussions about these other groups and their true inner beliefs. Igor and Tanya seem more interested in hearing what the Scriptures have to say and are very interested in New Testament principles for the church. Igor recently left the country for 4 months as he works as a commercial fisherman. This is very difficult for them as a family; they have a boy, Slava, who is nearly four years old. Doyle gave Igor some good Christian literature and a Bible, all of which he said he would read. Doyle and Heather are praying that the Lord will use this time while Igor is away to draw both of them to the Saviour.

As many missionaries have found, starting a work from the ground up, takes time, prayer, and patience. The Walstrom’s are struggling with attitudes developed in 40 years of communism, and the prevalent secular thinking. Cults and mysticism abound; alcohol numbs the economic pain; and unwillingness to trust others, especially foreigners, makes Doyle and Heather’s battle mostly uphill. Their greatest discouragement (as with most new missionaries) is seeing the tremendous need and, in the beginning, not being able to communicate. However, they are encouraged with their progress in the language and are just about to the point where they will not need interpretation anymore. Their greatest joy is finding themselves completely thrust upon the Saviour, knowing the work is His. It is clear they take hope and encouragement in the One “who does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph. 3:20). He shall build His church which neither communism, secularism, cultism, mysticism, materialism nor any other thing, including the gates of hell, shall prevail against it (Mt. 16:18).

The Walstroms, who are commended from Alamosa, CO, are planning to come home for a short furlough in June of this year. They are praying for several couples to join them in the work in Estonia. Oh, that God would lay on the hearts of the right people, to join them in this noble task.

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Doyle in front of the Soviet-built apartment building where they live.



What's Going On?

1221 MISSIONARIES

The *Echoes Daily Prayer Guide*, published by Echoes of Service, Bath, England, calls us to pray for 1221 assembly missionaries in 42 countries of the world. The survey shows that there are 380 people commended from England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. There is a total of 841 missionaries from the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

A NATION HUMBLLED

The assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin by a young Jewish law student has without doubt humbled the nation of Israel and left the country deeply shocked. One senior government minister commented, "I used to think that Israel was different from other nations; now I can't believe that any more." It was as if God was reminding them of His words, spoken centuries before, to Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves...then will I hear from heaven." Pray that the country may be delivered from the violence of extremists on both sides of the government. The election at time of publication will also have far-reaching effects. —*The Nazareth EBS Post*

BROADCASTING EN FRANÇAIS

Communications la Foi Vivifiante, a Montreal-based ministry, received news from HCJB Quito, Ecuador, that their radio programs will be broadcasted during the next six months all over

Europe and the continent of Africa, reaching the largest French populations in the whole world. They will also cover all of Latin America over the short wave as they have done for many years. Large areas of Quebec are reached weekly through WCHP Champlain, NY, especially Montreal, Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivieres and all areas in between these three main cities.

ZEAL FOR CONVERTS

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is planning to re-convert 100,000 Christians of Madhya Pradesh, reports India Today. It is hoped this will be accomplished through a series of reconversion camps which claim to have already brought back 52,500 Christian converts into the Hindu fold. Dilip Singh Judeo, the organizer, wants to see next year observed as a "banao varsh" (convert to Hinduism year) and already has plans to mobilize throughout eastern India.

—*Harvest Times*

MORE THAN GOLD

As the World Cup Soccer Outreach winds down (with a total of 3,690 requests for Bible courses at the end of March), so the Olympic Outreach is looming. Already requests are coming in, both in English and Spanish, for Bible courses from the first printing of 3 million of the interactive Pocket Guide, "More Than Gold" in English. There are reports of some who have found the Lord through this booklet.

More Than Gold will soon be available in Spanish and Arabic.

100,000 are currently being printed in New Zealand.

MENINGITIS STRIKES

More than 4,500 people in West Africa have died this year in an epidemic of meningitis. The official death toll so far: Nigeria (3,386); Burkina Faso (668); Niger (503). More than 70,000 people have been infected. Fearing the spread of the disease, Saudi Arabia has barred all Nigerians making the pilgrimage to Mecca or Medina this year. —*World Pulse*

POLITICALLY INCORRECT

A committee of the Church of Scotland has recommended the removal of over 200 hymns from the hymnbook because they contain outdated theological concepts or exclusivist language. An example is *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* which is offensive because it ignores women.

REJOICING IN RUSSIA

Here are some items from Paul Beverly of things that are going on among the believers in Yaroslavl, Russia, for which we can praise the Lord:

- Young men taking part—praying and preaching;
- Development in singing. They'll tackle anything!
- The spirit of oneness that has developed—they have a sense that they are the body of Christ;
- Good numbers out to the prayer meetings;
- Growth in the knowledge of God's Word, especially in the women who have a great thirst;
- Care shown by the believers for one another.

U

Christ: Made a Curse for Us

Justin Martyr was born in Palestine, AD 96, and died AD 166. He was of Greek descent and was educated in heathen belief. The corruption of the time led him to seek truth from philosophy. While doing this he encountered a venerable Christian, who showed him that philosophy was not the greatest truth. The fortitude of Christian martyrs further impressed him and he became fully convinced of the saving grace of Christ. He was beheaded for his faith.

Tell me, was it not God who commanded by Moses that no image or likeness of anything which was in heaven above or which was on the earth should be made, and yet who caused the brazen serpent to be made by Moses in the wilderness, and set it up for a sign by which those bitten by serpents were saved? Yet is He free from unrighteousness. For by this, He proclaimed the mystery by which He declared that He would break the power of the serpent which occasioned the transgression of Adam, and would bring to them that believe on Him (who was foreshadowed by this sign, i.e., Him who was crucified), salvation from the fangs of the serpent. Unless the matter be so understood, give me a reason why Moses set up the brazen serpent for a sign, and bade those who were bitten gaze at it, and the wounded were healed; and this, too, when He had Himself commanded that no likeness of anything whatsoever should be made.

On this, another of those who came on the second day (Jews with whom Justin was discussing Christianity) said, "You have spoken truly: we cannot give a reason. For I have frequently interrogated the teachers about this matter, and none of them gave me a reason: therefore continue what you are speaking; for we are paying attention while you unfold the mystery, on account of which the doctrines of the prophets are falsely slandered."

Then I replied, "Just as God commanded the sign to be made by the brazen serpent, and yet He is blameless; even so, though a curse lies in the law against persons who are crucified, yet no curse lies on the Christ of God, by whom all that have committed things worthy of a curse are saved.

"For the whole human race will be found to be under a curse. For it is written in the law of Moses, 'Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of



the law to do them.' And no one has accurately done all, nor will you venture to deny this; but some more and some less than others have observed the ordinances enjoined. But if those who are under this law appear to be under a curse for not having observed all the requirements, how much more shall all the nations appear to be under a curse who practice idolatry, who seduce youths, and commit other crimes?

If, then, the Father of all wished His Christ for the whole human family to take upon Him the curses of all, knowing that, after He had been crucified and was dead, He would raise Him up, why do you argue about Him, who submitted to suffer these things according to the Father's will, as if He were accursed, and do not rather bewail yourselves? For although His Father caused Him to suffer these things in behalf of the human family, yet you do not commit the deed as in obedi-

ence to the will of God. For you did not practice piety when you slew the prophets.

And let none of you say: If His Father wished Him to suffer this, in order that by His stripes the human race might be healed, we have done no wrong. If, indeed, you repent of your sins, and recognize Him to be Christ, and observe His commandments, then you may assert this; for, as I have said before, remission of sins shall be yours. But if you curse Him and them that believe on Him, and, when you have the power, put them to death, how is it possible that requisition shall not be made of you, as of unrighteous and sinful men, altogether hard-hearted and without understanding, because you laid your hands on Him?

"For the statement in the law, 'Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree,' confirms our hope which depends on the crucified Christ, not because He who has been crucified is cursed by God, but because God foretold that which would be done by you all, and by those like to you, who do not know that this is He who existed before all, who is the eternal Priest of God, and King, and Christ. And you clearly see that this has come to pass. For you curse in your synagogues all those who are called from Him Christians; and other nations effectively carry out the curse, putting to death those who simply confess themselves to be Christians; to all of whom we say, You are our brethren; rather recognize the truth of God.

And while neither they nor you are persuaded by us, but strive earnestly to cause us to deny the name of Christ, we choose rather and submit to death, in the full assurance that all the good which God has promised through Christ He will reward us with. And in addition to all this, we pray for you, that Christ may have mercy upon you. For He taught us to pray for our enemies also, saying, 'Love your enemies; be kind and merciful, as your heavenly Father is.' For we see that the Almighty God is kind and

merciful, causing His sun to rise on the unthankful and on the righteous, and sending rain on the holy and on the wicked; all of whom He has taught us He will judge.

"For it was not without design that the prophet Moses, when Hur and Aaron upheld his hands, remained in this form until evening. For indeed the Lord remained upon the tree almost until evening, and they buried Him at eventide; then on the third day He rose again. This was declared by David thus: 'With my voice I cried to the Lord, and He heard me out of His holy hill. I laid me down, and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me.' And Isaiah likewise mentions concerning Him the manner in which He would die, thus: 'I have spread out My hands unto a people disobedient, and gainsaying, that walk in a way which is not good.' And He would rise again, Isaiah himself said: 'His burial has been taken away from the midst, and I will give the rich for

His death.' And again, in other words, David in the twenty-first Psalm thus refers to the suffering and to the cross in a parable of mystery: 'They pierced My hands and My feet; they counted all My bones. They considered and gazed on Me; they parted My garments among themselves, and cast lots upon My vesture.' For when they crucified Him, driving in the nails, they pierced His hands and feet, and those who crucified Him parted His garments among themselves, each casting lots for what he chose to have, and receiving according to the decision of the lot. And this very psalm you maintain does not refer to Christ; for you are in all respects blind, and do not understand that no one in your nation who has been called King or Christ has ever had his hands or feet pierced, or has died in this mysterious fashion—to wit, by the cross—save this Jesus alone."

—From the Writings of Justin Martyr: *Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew.*

*You...do not understand
that no one in your nation
who has been called King
or Christ has ever had his
hands or feet pierced, or
has died in this
mysterious fashion
—to wit, by the cross—
save this Jesus alone.*

Preaching in the Lion's Den

On January, 29, 1851, a man called on William Taylor to preach at the funeral of one, Charles B., a gambler, who, in a quarrel with a fellow-gambler the night preceding, was shot dead.

The man was laid out just where he was killed, in the Parker House, on the east side of the Plaza in San Francisco. Taking my stand near the corpse, I sang:

*That awful day will surely come,
Th' appointed hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.*

*What, to be banished from the Lord,
And yet forbid to die?
To linger in eternal pain,
And death forever fly?*

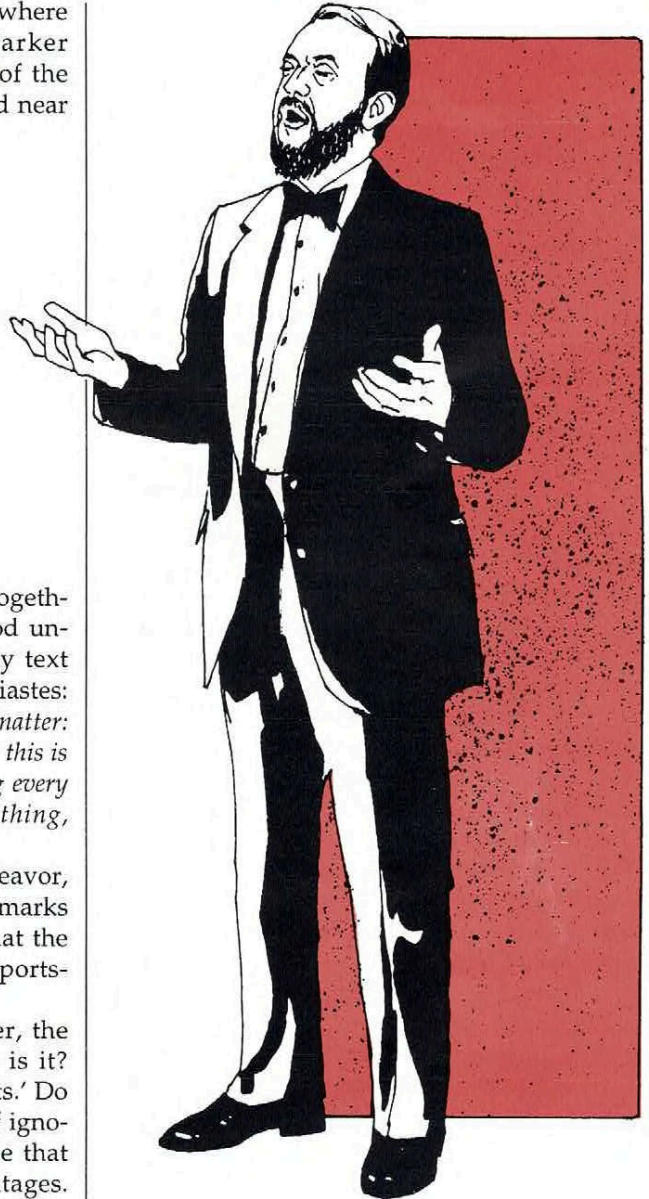
*"O, wretched state of deep despair,
To see my God remove,
And fix my doleful station where
I must not taste His love!"*

The singing and the occasion drew together nearly three hundred men who stood uncovered before me. I announced as my text the last two verses of the book of Ecclesiastes: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

"Gentlemen," I began, "I always endeavor, in my public discourses, to adapt my remarks to my audience. I take it for granted that the greater portion, if not all of you, are sportsmen; as such I shall address you.

"The conclusion of the whole matter, the great summary of life's duties, what is it? 'Fear God, and keep His commandments.' Do you understand it? You are not a set of ignoramuses. I know from your appearance that you have had early educational advantages. Some of you have had pious mothers to instruct you, and many of you, I doubt not, have been brought up in the Sunday school, and you have all had the opportunity of reading the Word of God and of hearing it preached from your boyhood to the present.

"You cannot plead ignorance. You know



your duty: to 'keep His commandments.' How comprehensive the commandments of God, embracing every duty growing out of the relations we sustain to God and to each other! Had you given your hearts to God, believed in Jesus Christ, received the regenerat-

ing power of His grace in your souls, and were you today consecrated to His service, what happy men you would be! What an influence you might wield for God and His holy cause in California; help to build up good society, and to make this fair land a safe and happy home for your wives and children. The boys and girls now growing up in our midst would repeat your names with grateful hearts, and call you blessed, when your bodies are beneath the ground, and your souls happy in the abode of angels and of God.

"But what are you about? What are you doing here in California? Look at that bloody corpse! What will his mother say? What will his sisters think of it? To die in a distant land, among strangers, is bad; to die unforgiven, suddenly, unexpectedly, is worse; to be shot down in a gambling-house, at the midnight hour—O, horrible! And yet this is the legitimate fruit of the excitement and dissipation, chagrin and disappointment, consequent upon your business; a business fatal to your best interests of body and soul, for time and for eternity.

"Again, look at its influence upon society. The unwary are decoyed and ruined. Little boys, charmed by your animating music, dazzled by the magnificent paraphernalia of your saloons, are enticed, corrupted, and destroyed to the hopeless grief of their mothers, whose wailings will be entered against you in the book of God. Remember that for all these things God will bring you into judgment. 'For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.'"

Every gambler listened with profound attention, and then formed the largest funeral procession I believe that I had, up to that time, ever witnessed in San Francisco. They returned, I presume, to their cards.

One of them afterward said to a friend of mine: "That Plaza preacher is the strangest man I ever saw. He preached B.'s funeral, and said everything in this world he could think of against us, and yet he did not give us any chance to get hold of him." He then paused a few moments, and, turning on his heel, said, "Didn't he give it to us?"

Five years afterward, when I was travelling in the mountains, I was informed of two of the same gamblers, who had recently asserted that they never had been able to forget nor to shake off the impressions of truth made on their minds at B's funeral.

U

THE EVANGELIST

His ear has heard the question:
"Who to the lost will go?"
"Send me," he cries, his sin-purged lips
With altar-fire aglow:
"I'll bear the living message
Of free, forgiving love;
O let me win the wanderers to
The path that leads above!"

'Spite all the ties of nature,
He leaves his friends and home,
A lonely witness o'er the world,
Despised and poor, to roam.
Nought takes he for his service,
But freely in His name
Who sent him and supplies his need,
The gospel would proclaim.

Within his yearning bosom
Love to the Saviour reigns;
In all the labors of his life
No other power constrains.
Deep are his tender feelings,
Sweet is his pleading tone,
As he describes the glories of
The Man on heaven's throne.

His heart the heavy burden
Of sinful souls must bear;
He wrestles for them at God's throne
Through hours of midnight prayer.
Eternity before him
More real than time appears:
Oh, wonder not he pleadeth with
The eloquence of tears!

Anointed by God's Spirit,
Trained at his Master's feet,
Commissioned and sent forth by Him,
All furnished and complete.
No human art or wisdom
His talent could assist,
A heavenly-moulded, God-sent man
Is the evangelist.

He is the weeping sower
Who shall with singing come,
Bringing his gathered sheaves from earth
To Heaven's harvest home.
And when with joy he lays them
Down at his Master's feet,
His own "Well Done, thou faithful one,"
Will make his bliss complete.

—WILLIAM BLANE

Jesus Only

Depend on it, brethren, that ravishing and exciting experiences and transporting enjoyments, though they may be useful occasional refreshments, would not be so good for every day as that quiet but delightful ordinary fellowship with "Jesus only," which ought to be the distinguishing mark of all Christian life.

"And when they had lifted their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only" (Mt. 17:8). The last words will

suffice us for a text, "Jesus only." When Peter saw our Lord with Moses and Elias, he exclaimed, "Master, it is good to be here," as if implying it was better to be with Jesus, and Moses, and Elias, than to be with Jesus only. Now it was certainly good that for once in his life he should see Christ transfigured with the representatives of the law and the prophets; it might be for that particular occasion the best sight that he could see, but as an ordinary thing an ecstasy so sublime would not have been good for the disciples.

We shall first notice what *might* have happened to the disciples after the transfiguration; we shall then dwell on *what did happen*; and then, thirdly, we shall speak on what we anxiously desire *may happen* to those who hear us today.

First, then what might have happened to the three disciples after they had seen the transfiguration? There were four things, any of which might have occurred. As a first supposition, they might have seen nobody with them; they might have lifted their eyes and found the entire vision melted into thin air; no Moses, no Elias, and no Jesus. They would not have gone down the mountain that day asking questions and receiving instruction, for they would have had no teacher. They would have gone down among scribes and Pharisees to be baffled with their knotty questions, and to be defeated by their sophistries.

There are some in this world, and we ourselves have been among them, to whom something like this has actually occurred.

You have been under a sermon, or in reading the Word of God, for awhile delighted, exhilarated, lifted up to the sublimer regions, and then afterwards when it has all been over, there has been nothing left of joy or benefit, nothing left of all that was preached, that you could take

with you into the conflicts of everyday life. The whole has been a splendid vision and nothing more. There has been neither Moses, nor Elias, nor Jesus left.

As we go about our life work, may our religion be a matter of fact, a walking with the living and abiding Saviour. Though Moses may be gone, and Elias too, yet Jesus Christ abides with us and in us, and we in Him, and so shall it be evermore.

Now, there was a second thing that might have happened to the disciples. When they lifted up their eyes they might have seen Moses only. There are too many who see Moses only, inasmuch as they see nothing but law, nothing but duty and precept in the Bible. I know that some here, whenever they read the Bible or hear the gospel, feel nothing except a sense of their own sinfulness, and, arising from that sense, a desire to work out a righteousness of their own. They are continually measuring themselves by the law of God, they feel their shortcomings, they mourn over their transgressions, but go no further. Oh, how blessed is it to escape from the voice of threatening and come to the blood of sprinkling, where "Jesus only" speaks better things!

But there was a third alternative that might have happened to the disciples: they might have seen Elijah only. Instead of the gentle Saviour, they might have been standing at the side of the rough-clad and stern-spirited



Elias. Elias may be taken representatively as the preparer of Christ, for our Lord interpreted the prophecy of the coming of Elias as referring to John the Baptist. There are not a few who abide in the seeking, repenting, and preparing state, and come not to "Jesus only." Their souls are rent and torn by Elijah's challenge, "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him," but they remain still halting between two opinions, trembling before Elias and not rejoicing before the Saviour. At the girdle of John the Baptist the keys of heaven never hung; Elias is not the door of salvation.

Only by faith in Jesus can you be saved, but complaining of yourselves is not faith. Jesus only is the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus only is the sinner's Saviour. O, that your eyes may be opened, not to see Elias, not to see Moses, but to see "Jesus only."

But there was also another alternative: they might have seen Moses and Elias with Jesus, as in the Transfiguration. At first sight it seems as if this would be superior to that which they did enjoy. But, inasmuch as every man prefers noon to midnight, the disappearance of Moses and Elias was the best thing that could happen.

Why should we wish to see Moses? The ceremonials are all fulfilled in Jesus; let Moses go, his light is already in "Jesus only." And why should I wish to retain Elias? The prophecies are all fulfilled in Jesus; let, then, Elias go; his light also is in "Jesus only." It is better to see Moses and Elias *in* Christ, than to see Moses and Elias *with* Christ. The absence of some things betokens a higher state of things than their presence. In all my library, I do not know that I have a Lennie's English Grammar, or a Mavor's Spelling Book. Nor do I regret the absence of those works because I am beyond the need of them.

So the Christian wants not the symbols of Moses, or the preparations of Elias, for Christ is all, and we are complete in Him. And as you grow in grace you will find that many doctrines and points of church government which once appeared to you to be all important—though you will still value them—will seem but of small consequence compared with Christ Himself. Like the traveler ascending the Alps to reach the summit of Mont Blanc, at first he observes that lord of the hills as one horn among many, and often in the twistings of his upward path he sees other peaks which appear more elevated than that monarch of mountains; but when at last he is at the

summit, he sees all the rest of the hills beneath his feet, and, like a mighty wedge of alabaster, Mont Blanc pierces the very clouds. So, as we grow in grace, other things sink and Jesus rises. They must decrease, but Christ must increase until He alone fills the full horizon of your soul, and rises clear, bright, and glorious up into the very heaven of God. O that we may thus see "Jesus only!"

We must now speak on what really happened. "They saw no man, save Jesus only." This was all they wanted; to see their comfort. They were sore afraid: Moses was gone, and he could give them no comfort; Elias was gone, he could speak no consolatory word; yet when Jesus said, "Be not afraid," their fears vanished. All the comfort, then, that any troubled heart wants, it can find in Christ. Go not to Moses nor Elias, neither the old covenant nor to prophecy: go straight to Jesus. He was all the Saviour and Master they wanted.

He was enough as their power for future life, as well. They needed not to ask Moses to lend them official dignity, nor to ask Elias to bring them fire from heaven; Jesus would give them of His Holy Spirit, and they should be strong enough for every enterprise. And all the power you and I want to preach the gospel, and conquer souls to the truth, we can find in Jesus only. For "Jesus only" shall be our reward. To be with Him where He is, to behold His glory, to be like Him when we shall see Him as He is, we ask no other heaven.

Let us now think of what we desire may happen to all now present. I do desire for my fellow Christians and for myself, that more and more the great object of our thoughts, motives, and acts may be "Jesus only." I believe that whenever our religion is most vital it is most full of Christ. Moreover, when it is most practical, it always gets nearest to Jesus. If I want to labor much, I must live on Jesus only; if I desire to suffer patiently, I must feed on Jesus only; if I wish to wrestle with God successfully, I must plead Jesus only; if I aspire to conquer sin, I must use the blood of Jesus only; if I pant to learn the mysteries of heaven, I must seek the teachings of Jesus only.

O look to Him! Though Moses should condemn you, and Elias should alarm you, yet "Jesus only" shall be enough to comfort and enough to save you. May God grant us grace, every one of us, to take for our motto in life, for our hope in death, and for our joy in eternity, "Jesus only!"

U

Pure Passion, Pure Motive

Painted fire never burns, and an imitated enthusiasm is the most empty thing that can possibly exist in a preacher.

In the true sermon there must always be passion. But the passion must be something that is created by no conscious effort. It must come out of what we are declaring, and out of our consciousness of it. Half the sermons today—may I be forgiven if I am cruel—are failing because they lack the note of passion. Our Lord's testimony concerning John, His forerunner, was this: "He was a burning and a shining light" (Jn. 5:35). It is one thing to shine; it is quite another to burn as well.

There is a tale told of that great English actor, Macready. An eminent preacher once said to him: "I wish you would explain something to me."

"What is it? I don't know that I can explain anything to a preacher."

"What is the reason for the difference between you and me? You are appearing before crowds night after night with fiction, and the crowds come wherever you go. I am preaching the essential and unchangeable truth, and I am not getting any crowd at all."

Macready's answer was this: "That is quite simple. I can tell you the difference between us. I present my fiction as though it were fact; you present your fact as though it were fiction."

I leave that story right at this point. Of course the question comes, whether a man can preach these things without passion if they are truth to him. I don't know; I must not sit in judgment on other men. But our theme as preachers of the Word has to do with the glory of life—with the tragedy of sin, and its remedy; I cannot see how anyone can really

handle these things until he is handled by them. A man was formerly said to "handle his text." If he handles his text he cannot preach at all. But when his text handles him, when it grips and masters and possesses him, and in experience he is responsive to the thing he is declaring, having conviction of the supremacy of truth and experience of the power of truth, I think that must create passion.

I am not arguing for mere excitement.

Painted fire never burns, and an imitated enthusiasm is the most empty thing that can possibly exist in a preacher. Given the preacher with a message from the whole Bible, seeing its bearing on life at any point, I cannot personally understand that man not being swept sometimes right out of himself by the fire and the force and the fervor of his work...

The preacher should never address a crowd without remembering that his ultimate citadel is the citadel of the human will. He may travel along

the line of the emotions, but he is after the will. He may approach along the line of the intellect, but he is after the will. When preaching becomes merely discussion in the realm of the intellect, or—forgive my use of the word—fooling in the realm of the emotions, and when preaching ends in the intellectual or emotional, it fails. It is successful only when it is able to storm the will, under the will of God. The preacher comes with good news; but he does not come with something to be trifled with. His message has an insistent demand, because he comes on behalf of a King.

*Our Lord's testimony regarding John:
He was a burning
and a shining light.*



U

Preach the Word



A young Christian got up to say something for Christ in the open air. Not used to speaking in public, he stammered his way through the first few minutes until an atheist called out, "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, standing there making a fool of yourself like that."

"Well," the young man replied, "You're right. I am ashamed of myself, but I'm not ashamed of Christ." The answer shut the atheist's mouth.

How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:14-15

My grand point in preaching is to break the hard heart, and to heal the broken one. —John Newton

Evangelist W. W. Martin taped a sign above the clock at a rescue mission with these words: "83 a minute." At last some of the workers insisted it be removed because the message was too convicting. They knew that it meant that eighty-three souls a minute were passing into eternity.

(1996 World Almanac reports that in 1994 in America alone there were more than 2,286,000 deaths.)

Preach Christ, O Men!

Preach Christ, O men—His blood, His saving power!
Never the need was greater in an hour
Than in this hour! Cry out His blessed name.
O preachers, teachers, set the world aflame
For Christ, that those who walk earth's darkened roads
May feel His hand beneath their heavy loads;
May come to know Him as their Saviour, Friend,
Who will walk with them until the journey's end.

Preach Christ, O men! Their hunger is so great!
The days are swift—there is no time to wait..
You hold the bread of life within your hands,
And the living water for their thirst. The lands
Of earth cry out for what you have to give:
The living Christ—preach Him that they may live.
—Grace Noll Crowell

And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. Daniel 12:3

5 WAYS TO GET RID OF THE PREACHER

1. Sit up front, smile, and say "Amen" every time he says something good. He will preach himself to death.
2. Pat him on the back and tell him that his work among the Christians and in the community is appreciated. He will work himself to death.
3. Give him an unexpected generous gift of fellowship. He will die of shock.
4. Tell him you'd like to join him in his visitation and help him win souls for the Lord. He'll have a heart attack.
5. Get the whole assembly to band together and pray for him. He will become so effective that he'll have calls from all around the country inviting him to visit them. That will take him off your hands.

To love to preach is one thing—to love those to whom we preach, quite another. And to love Him of whom we preach is the greatest of all. —Richard Cecil

Truth has no special time of its own. Its hour is now—always.
—Albert Schweitzer

Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine. Titus 2:1

There are some men who preach so well in the pulpit, that it is a shame they should ever come out of it; and when they are out of it, they live so illy that it is a shame they should ever enter it. —Wesley

A Double-Edged Spade for the Digging

*In a word,
from first
to last
the true
Bible student
needs to keep
in the presence
of its Author,
who is its only
adequate
Exegete,
Commentator,
Interpreter.*

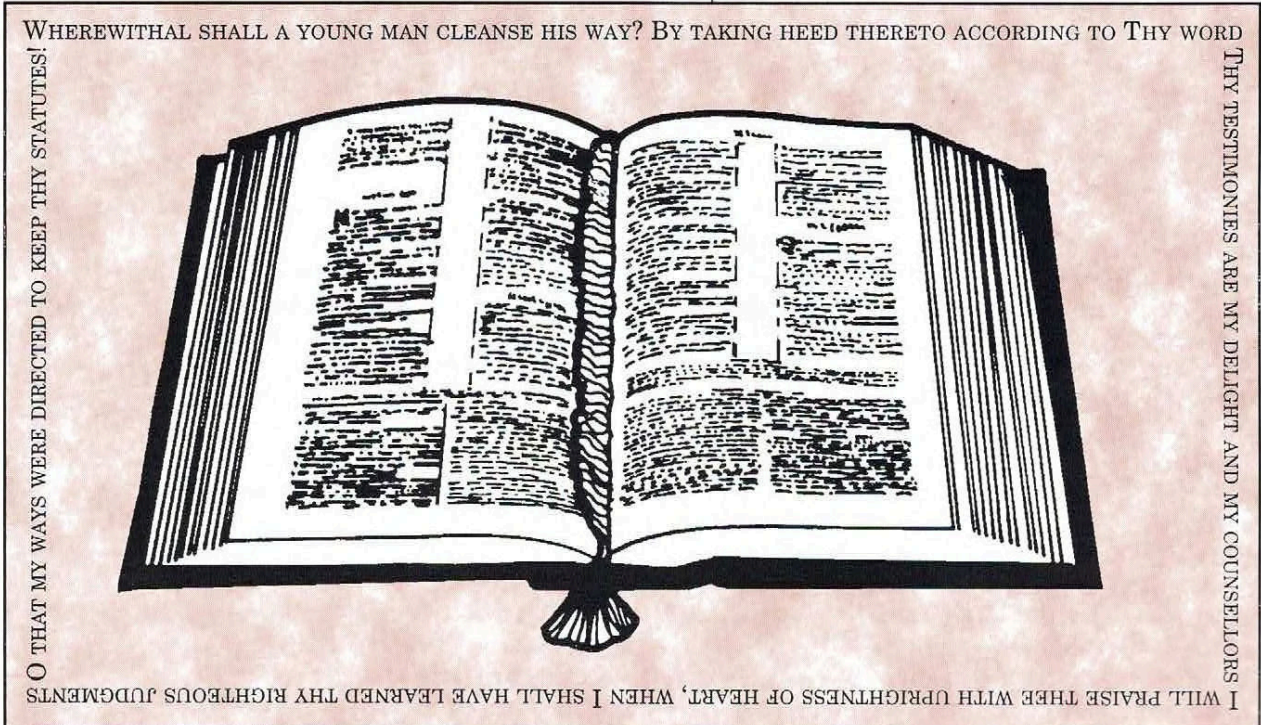
There are some principles which underly all powerful preaching. These we would thrust into the front rank, that a true basis may be laid for the knowledge and use of divine truth. These principles have to do first of all with the art of Bible study.

There are three rules which cannot be too strongly emphasized: *search, meditate, compare.*

Search. The truths which stamp this Book as divine, putting between it and every other an impassable gulf, do not always lie on the surface like pebbles on the beach, to be easily picked up; but rather like gold or gems, in hidden veins or mines, to be dug up. No other book so rewards patient, untiring study. He who searches discovers, even in oft-trodden ground, what is surprisingly new, beautiful, valuable; and such discovery has no limit. The field is inexhaustible in wealth; exploration becomes explanation, with ever fresh disclosures of rich meaning.

Meditate. There is a study, akin to rumination, which yields results of singular richness. God bids the reader, like Joshua, "meditate therein day and night;" to be "like a tree, planted by the rivers of water," with roots reaching down where they habitually drink up the celestial moisture. This is a study that demands *time* to make its deepest impression. He will be a "forgetful hearer" of the Word, or a superficial reader, who rests content with a hasty or casual glance. Into this mirror—the Perfect Law of Liberty—one must *continue* looking. Unlike the sensitive film in the camera, the mind takes few instantaneous impressions which prove lasting; it needs the time exposure and the fixing solution.

Compare. The Word of God is its own interpreter; one part corrects or confirms another. Often the Book is its own lexicon, defining its terms, and its own commentary, expounding its meaning. It reflects its Author's unity, but it is a unity in diversity: unless there be care-



ful comparison of its various teachings, the diversity is seen without the unity, so that, instead of all roads leading to one golden milestone, diversity seems divergence; what God meant as counterparts and correspondences appear as contradictions. But, when we search, meditate, and compare, what at first seemed blemishes become beauties, challenging further investigation, which in turn is repaid by new disclosures and revelations.

These three rules, however important, are not exhaustive. There are three others to be put beside them, which are, if possible, more vital to the best results: *pray, believe, obey*.

Pray. The devout frame is the secret of clear vision: "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law!" This is a Temple of Truth of which the Builder holds the key, and unlocks only to the praying soul its secret chambers. The "princes of this world," in their pride of worldly wisdom, stand without; while the little child who is self-distrustful and humbly seeks to be taught of the Spirit, goes within. Here we best "advance on our knees." The arrogant pretentiousness of unsanctified learning, which levels the Word of God to the human plane, and assumes that there is in it no supernatural element, is, in the matter of Bible study, a sort of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which hath no forgiveness. Whatever else a preacher does in preparing for the pulpit, let him above all pray. Otherwise, like Elisha's servant, who at first saw nothing, though the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire, he will remain blind to the highest verities. There is no clarifier for spiritual vision like prayer. It is God's eye salve.

Believe. It is a unique law of spiritual life, that knowing is not the path to believing, but believing is the path to knowing. Faith is not so much the result, as the condition, of the highest knowledge. Disbelief and unbelief have a strange power of arresting spiritual intelligence and hindering spiritual instruction. Persisted in, they produce incapacity, putting fetters on the understanding.

God sent Isaiah to say to Ahaz, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (Isa. 7:9).

Here is a delicate play on words, difficult to convey by translation: "If ye will not confide, surely ye shall not abide." The deep meaning is that if they would not believe, they would not be established in *knowledge*.

The mere scientist prides himself on his incredulity: he believes only what he scientifically knows, and laughs at Christian faith as credulity. But the docile disciple learns that only by implicitly trusting the Word of the Lord can he climb to the loftiest heights of certainty. Doubt dims the eye; distrust cramps and cripples the spirit. When a preacher begins to doubt, his pulpit loses its dynamic, and becomes destructive of faith, rather than constructive.

Obey. Nothing can be more important, even to the understanding of the truth, than to practice it. "If any man will *do* His will, he shall *know* of the teaching" (Jn. 7:17). Obedience is the great organ of spiritual revelation. Doing the will of God is the divine condition of spiritual light—of further illumination. Disobedience brings darkness, and *is* darkness. The preacher must himself practice what he preaches, otherwise spiritual vision will be dim, and, if the blind lead the blind, only the ditch is before both.

To translate into holy living what one is learning is the supreme secret of teaching the truth to others. The experimental element imparts strange authority and unction to testimony: it enables the preacher to speak as a witness—one who knows. Then it is that the tree, planted by the river of God, transmutes into sap the water of the living Word, and so makes possible the leaf, bloom, and fruit of abundant service.

In a word, from first to last, the true Bible student needs to keep in the presence of its Author, who is its only adequate Exegete, Commentator, Interpreter. None can explain His own Textbook like the Master Teacher Himself; and to be a docile pupil in His school is to acquire that spiritual learning which fits for spiritual teaching, and for which the best instruction of human schools can never be a substitute. Indeed, unsanctified scholarship rather makes the Cross of Christ of none effect.

None can
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Jeremiah Meneely

We live in a generation that has never witnessed the phenomena of revival. Many are unaware of the spiritual revolution that past generations of saints saw such as the 1859-60 revival in Ireland. There was spiritual depth and lasting fruit.

“We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done...That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God” (Ps. 78:4-7).

From an awakening in New York State in 1858, a torch was passed across the Atlantic to a band of praying men in Ulster and Wales. The awakening in Wales seemed to stay with Wales, and did not have the effect on the British Isles like the work in Northern Ireland. Ulster was to be the epicenter of a movement that radiated into Scotland and parts of England.

Among the common saints who did extraordinary things at this time was a farmer named Jeremiah Meneely (1832-1917). When Jerry was a young man, theological liberals had made a push to legitimize Unitarian heresies in Northern Ireland. To battle this threat, God raised up Henry Cooke, who ably debunked these evil doctrines. As other orthodox men shook off their lethargy and stood for truth, young believers were emboldened, giving themselves to prayer and preaching. The church of God in Northern Ireland had come too close to the precipice, and godly believers saw the need to reclaim lost ground.

In the words of one Ulsterman, “God’s promise is, ‘I will pour water upon him that is thirsty; and floods upon the dry ground.’ But He declares, ‘I will yet for this be inquired of...to do it for them.’ To your

posts then at the throne of grace, all ye that be the Lord’s remembrancers! Jehovah has promised floods—let us not be satisfied with drops.”

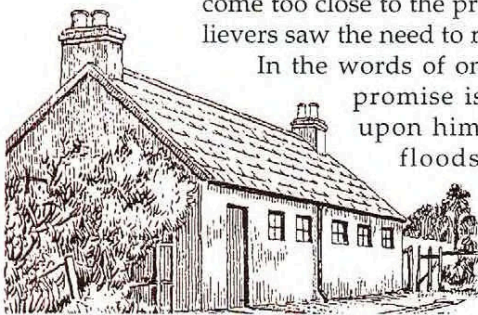
Jeremiah’s conversion was tied to the experience of his close friend, James M’Quilkin, who was won to Christ in December, 1856. A Christian from England, named Mrs. Colville, had been witnessing in the area, and was told by Meneely, James M’Quilkin was a fatalistic Calvinist who feared that Mrs. Colville was not teaching straight Calvinistic doctrine. He asked her whether she was a Calvinist or not.

“I would not wish,” she replied, “to be more or less a Calvinist than our Lord and His apostles. “But,” she continued, “I do not care to talk on mere points of doctrine. I would rather speak of the experience of salvation in the soul. If one were to tell me what he knows of the state of his heart toward God, I think I could tell him whether he knows the Lord Jesus savingly.”

While James groped for an answer to Mrs. Colville, a woman interjected with her own questions to the woman. As James listened, he realized that this woman’s problem was identical to his own. As the woman unburdened her story, James wondered what Mrs. Colville would say. After a brief pause, she bluntly said, “My dear, you have never known the Lord Jesus.” James then knew that the same could have been said to him. A few weeks later, James believed the gospel.

Jeremiah Meneely was speaking to a friend about the change that James experienced. Besides abandoned various worldly pleasures, the disturbing thing to them was that he had stopped raising roosters for cock fighting, and that he claimed “God had cleansed him from all his sins.” To these hyper-calvinists this was intolerable presumption. Jeremiah took James aside to reason with him, but instead discovered that a supernatural change had occurred with James.

Not long after, Jeremiah was sitting in his farm house reading John 6, saying, “If only I knew I was one of the elect.” Reading verse 37, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me,” he broke in, “there it is again, how can I know I am a given one?” Then he read



The Kells schoolhouse, County Antrim

the second half of the verse, "And him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." And he seemed to hear, "What are you doing now; aren't you coming to Me?" He slapped his knee and shouted, "I see it now" and he stood up, sure that God had forgiven him, too. The year was 1857.

This was the beginning of the prayer meetings in Kells schoolhouse. James had begun reading *George Muller's Narrative* which related God's answers to prayer in maintaining the Bristol orphan work. James was challenged, and prayed for a spiritual companion. At the start, four met: Robert Carlisle, Jeremiah Meneely, James M'Quilkin, and John Wallace. They knelt to pray regularly in the old school house in Kells, County Antrim. One by one new converts joined the group and all the men were encouraged to participate as they met for Scripture reading, prayer, and meditation.

In *The New York Observer*, they read the news reports of a great revival sweeping America, and they passed around *Finney's Lectures on Revival*, *Muller's Narrative*, and Bonar's *The Memoirs of Robert Murray M'Cheyne*. Their prayers took on focus, as they realized that God was willing to answer as He did George Muller, Finney and M'Cheyne. The tales of the Kilsyth and Dundee Revivals in 1839 under William Burns also encouraged them to trust God for similar blessings.

Meneely said the purpose of the Kells prayer meeting was for a work of the Holy Spirit similar to these reports. "The prayer meeting was started in the autumn of 1857, and continued for three months before there were any visible results. Two more men joined in the prayer meeting during that time. One was an old man named Marshal and the other was a young man named Wassan. On New Year's Day, 1858, the first conversion took place as a result of the prayer meeting, but after that there were conversions every night. At the end of the year 1858, about fifty young men were taking part in the prayer meeting...This was the one great object and burden of our prayers. We held right to the one thing and did not run off to anything else. The Presbyterian minister (John H. Moore) was favorable to us all the time, but many of the people ridiculed our praying for the outpouring of the Spirit, saying that He had already been poured out on the day of Pentecost. But we replied that the Lord knew what we wanted, and we kept right on praying until the power came."

At first the hush of God was upon these meetings. Without any spectacular outbreak, spiritual thirst and prayerfulness took hold, and burned with a quiet, steady intensity. John Moore's brother, Samuel, counted 16 prayer meetings held nightly, or about 100 weekly, in his parish.

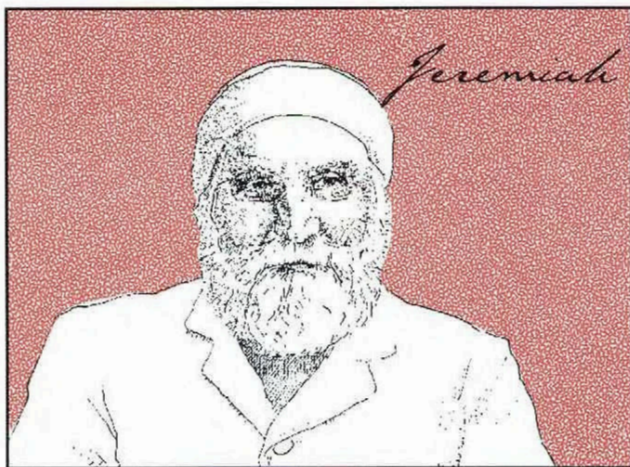
The four original participants of the prayer meetings became the leaders of a band of converts. Seeing crowds of unconverted come out the four bantered among themselves who should preach to them. With his clear strong voice Jerry Meneely was chosen to speak. He agreed on the condition that the others would pray. It was a remarkable meeting, as Jerry reported afterwards, "I yelled, they prayed, and God worked."

How did God work? By deep conviction of sin. In Ballymena, Samuel Moore said, "I found the town in a state of great excitement. Many families had not gone to bed for two or three previous nights. From dozens of houses, night and day, you would hear when passing along loud cries for mercy by those under conviction, or the voice of prayer by kind visitors, or the sweet soothing tones of sacred song. Business seemed at a standstill."

Shoemakers, carpenters, sawyers, and laborers gave up almost their entire time, day and night to minister the Word. And Meneely was there. Asked to speak at a hall in nearby Haryville, he had to run almost five miles to get there. Arriving at a building crammed with people, he squeezed to the front and began to pray and preach. After one full message, he told the gathering that the meeting was dismissed. No one left. Revived a bit himself, he gave a second message, and at the end announced that the meeting was dismissed. Again, no one left. This happened four times, after which he stepped outside, removed his coat, and took off his shirt and wrung a stream of perspiration out of it. Putting his shirt and coat back on, he went back inside to preach another message before he walked the five miles home.

He had not been home long when he heard a knock. It was past midnight; a man was standing there asking how he could be saved. Meneely went to his neighbor, John Craig's house, banged on the door loud enough to wake him and shouted, "What, lying in bed and souls seeking Christ!"

Before the end of 1858, this work in the Connor district began to spread locally. By the beginning of 1859 revival fanned out northward, westward, and



Jeremiah Meneely

southward. Meneely was at the opening of The First Presbyterian Church in Ahoghill.

On March 26, 1859, the *Ballymena Observer* gave this report: "...He spoke by the command of a power superior to any ministerial authority. Defying every effort at control, he proceeded to vociferate religious phrases with a rapidity and fluency which excited the most intense astonishment, and created a panic of very serious alarm among the audience. A rush was made toward the front of the galleries, and under an apprehension that they might possibly break down, the presiding clergyman gave a peremptory order that the house should forthwith be vacated. A scene of terrible confusion immediately ensued...the streets of Ahoghill presented another scene which baffles all powers of description, and such as the oldest inhabitant had never witnessed. The leading 'convert'—who is a comfortable farmer...addressed the people, then numbering about 3,000...the immense assemblage appeared to be thoroughly paralyzed. Amid a chilling rain, and on streets covered with mud, fresh 'converts,' moved by the fervency and apostolic language of the speaker, fell upon their knees in the attitude of prayer."

This was the lit match to the kindling. The converts from Connor stood in the chill downpour and preached. It was here that people began to fall prostrate under deep conviction of sin. In May, the work in Ballymena burst forth "with the rapidity of a prairie fire" through the country districts, townships, and soon invaded the larger cities. By June, it came to Ballymoney, Coleraine, and Portrush in the north, and in the south of Connor strange things were happening in and around the capital of Belfast, in Antrim and the adjoining counties of Down and Londonderry. From that point, it was impossible to gage the speed and span of this work.

A number of godly Presbyterian ministers such as the Moore brothers went to work, but as they said, twelve urgent requests from different places would

come at once. It was too big for these clergymen, and so men like Meneely became prominent workers in the revival. In this way the revival spread through the counties of Tyrone and Conegal, of Monaghan and Cavan, and later broke forth in county Armagh. By September every part of Ulster was effected.

Standing alongside evangelists like Brownlow North, Meneely spoke to vast open air gatherings. At Dunmull, he spoke to about six thousand. A brother Sutherland said of that meeting, "It was a day of wonders in this season of wonders, done in the name of the Holy Child Jesus. You could almost say before the service began, judging by the prayerful and devout aspect of the people, 'There is the sound of abundance of rain'...Instead of there being any organized system of excitement, the prayers and addresses were calm, simple, judicious, and strictly scriptural, yet the arrows of conviction flew thick, and fixed that day in the hearts of many of the 'King's enemies.' Meneely was directing them to the Lamb of God, and telling his own experience, and the happy termination to his soul-distress, when, like Christian, he got a view of the cross, and his burden fell from him."

One sure proof of the spirituality of this awakening is the conclusion made about it in the annual meeting of the Unitarian Association. They ridiculed the revival. Failing to see any of the fruits of the Spirit springing from this work they condemned it as an abominable thing. Once again, paying little heed to his detractors, Jeremiah Meneely went on from strength to strength. He was used to establish an early assembly in N. Ireland. The locals called that assembly's meeting place "Jerry's Hall." Meneely saw in Scripture that baptism should be carried out by the immersion of a believer, and this put him outside the pale of Presbyterianism. Many of the new believers saw the same thing Meneely had, also submitted to baptism and so began a flourishing assembly work in the North of Ireland. Two of Meneely's sons became prominent Christian workers in building this assembly work. Our brother was buried near the old school house where the revival began.

MATERIALS FOR THIS ARTICLE HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM:

J.G. Hutchinson, *Sowers, Reapers, Builders*, Gospel Tract Publ.
S.J. Moore, *The Great Revival in Ireland*, 185 pp. Plantation Press
John Weir, *Heaven Came Down: The 1859 Revival*, Ambassador Productions



Getting the Most from the Message

The public preaching of the Word of God is a significant part of assembly life. That God has blessed His Word in this way is self-evident.

God cares for His people through gifted men* speaking His truth. It is true that those who publicly preach the Word of God have an obligation to deliver the highest quality ministry to the best of their God-given ability. It is also true that listeners have an equal obligation to listen to the best of their God-given ability. Here are some suggestions on getting the most out of the message.

1. *Pray for the preacher.* A prayed-for preacher is a better preacher. It is strange that the prayer meeting is the least attended meeting. You would almost think we don't believe in prayer. Or worse, we never pray at home. When I allow the preacher to get up to speak without my prayer support, I share responsibility for unprofitable ministry (Eph. 6:18-19).

2. *Listen to the preacher.* Peter tells us, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). W. E. Vine explains the word *oracle* this way, "The utterances of God through Christian teachers." We believe that when a man stands to preach, his sole purpose is to deliver a message from God. He is not there to advance himself or merely fill a calendar date. No, the preacher is there as a steward of God. Listen!

3. *Take notes from the preacher.* Even if those notes do not become part of your personal Bible study notes, the process of taking notes helps you follow the order of thought that may not be obvious by simply listening. This concentration of mind helps in your meditation on the Scriptures as you learn how others think about the Word. Taking notes forces the mind to understand the message, rather than lazily dreaming about other irrelevant things (1 Tim. 4:15-16).

4. *Encourage the preacher.* Timothy was exhorted to stir up his gift (2 Tim. 1:6). You get the impression from Paul that Timothy was easily disheartened and needed the encouragement to go on. When a man speaks a message from God, we may assume mistakenly that the man himself is full of confidence and

enthusiasm, when all the time it is the message that is strong. The preacher may be on the verge of quitting. Not that we should seek self-confidence or the praise of men. But there is much to discourage a man in his ministry, and encouraging him will go a long way. The Lord will keep him humble; we don't need to.

It is easy for us to attend the meetings when a preacher with a well-developed gift is speaking, but if we never encourage those courageous enough to attempt to stir up their gift, then the caliber of ministry will remain weak through lack of development.

5. *Support the preacher.* One of the beauties of the assembly is the equality among believers. There is no clergy-laity distinction according to the New Testament. This provides, through variety of gift, a rich banquet of spiritual food given by gifted men. Many assemblies enjoy a healthy diet of truth presented by elders and others in the assembly. This should not be taken for granted.

Others, however, are called to special service for God and in so doing are permitted to be relieved of the normal demands of secular employment for the purpose of serving the Lord. It is not that they don't work, but their work is different. We are commanded to provide for their care, and support them financially. There are several examples of this in the life of Paul (2 Cor. 11:9; Phil. 2:25). There is nothing in this teaching to support the lazy or those who would use the work of the Lord as a means to raise funds. It is, however, a call to us to remember our responsibility, and receive the promised blessing of investing in another's ministry. In these days of complicated tax reporting, we have moved away from spontaneity in giving directly to those who minister to us. But you appreciate a man's ministry more if you invest in it.

*In another article we will consider the distinctive roles of men and women. For this article, I will refer to men addressing the whole church. But these principles apply equally to women speaking to women as well.

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I Like Peter!

It is necessary to understand this story for you to be introduced to Peter. Would you agree with me when I say that with the exception of Jesus Christ Himself, Peter is the man in the New Testament that people most like. When I read John and Paul their power and perfection could discourage you, but Peter is bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh.

And now Peter sat without in the palace" (Mt. 26:69). There are three ways to read this text.

The first is to place the emphasis on the word "now." If you emphasize this word you have the account of the man's downfall, and it seems that you have here lifted up before you the sharpest warning in the New Testament.

Second, you may read the verse "Now Peter sat." That was a dangerous thing to do. The psalmist says, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." It is unsafe to stand in the presence of temptation; it is still more dangerous to sit by the fire of the enemy.

Third, you may read, "Now Peter sat without." There is a circle in which Peter and the rest of us find ourselves if we are to be true to the Master—the circle of faithfulness. That circle is composed of several concentric circles. It is bounded by prayer. It is bounded by Bible study. One single verse of Scripture, constantly meditated on, is a secret source of strength and power. It is bounded by faith and service. You know your danger was not when you were serving Christ, but when you were in idleness.

I have certain things for you to notice about Peter. First of all, he was so sincere. Second, I like him for his courage—when all the other disciples had forsaken Christ completely, Peter had the courage to "stand not far off." I like him because of his enthusiasm. If you say that this is the reason he so often failed, I will answer you that the world does not owe so very much to its overcautious people. Peter was a man desperately in earnest.

I like him also for his writings. The epistles of Peter are said to be written in the purest Greek of any in the New Testament. To me they are like nothing so much as a precious diamond. Where did Peter get this diamond? I will tell you.

A long time ago a stranger took passage on an ocean steamer without registering his

name. One evening when the ship's orchestra was playing, the stranger stepped up to the conductor and said civilly, "If you would make the tempo a little faster, it would improve the piece you are playing." The leader paid no attention to the intruder, but the next night the stranger had procured from the steerage somewhere an old violin, out of tune, and damaged. He again presented himself to the leader, and said, "Now I will show you what I mean." The musicians were expecting some sport and let him play, but it was not a moment before they knew they were listening to an artist. The violinist was Ole Bull. The violin was nothing, but the violinist was everything. Peter was only a fisherman, but Jesus Christ was the musician, and Peter's epistles are just the spirit of Jesus manifesting itself in him.

Then I want to say a word about Peter's denials. The first was at the wicket gate. "I am not a disciple of Jesus," said Peter. The second denial was at the fire, where Peter said that he knew not the name of Jesus. I think that it is a sad thing that we people in the Church that have seen Christ must warm ourselves at the enemy's fire. The third denial was when Jesus was being led away. Peter had again denied Him and He turned and looked at Peter.

You find all the stages of Peter's downfall here. Peter was *boastful*, "Though all men should be offended I will never!" Again Peter was *not watchful*. Third, Peter, and all the disciples *forsook Him*. But then you have all done that. How about the day you let go past without reading your Bible? How about the day you let go past without prayer? That is forsaking Jesus. Men, you go down in the world not because you are weak, but because you do not keep step with Jesus Christ. It was this that led Peter to follow "far off."

Have you denied Christ? If you have, do not be discouraged. He was the Saviour of John, of Paul, of all the rest; but it is the most encouraging thing of all to remember that he was the Saviour of Peter.

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The Christian Name

John Wesley is said once in a dream to have found himself at the gate of Heaven, and when he asked God earnestly: Are there many Wesleyans inside? Not one. Who then, Presbyterians? Not one. Catholics? Not one. Then who are inside? Only Christians.

The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." And what were they called before that? It was nearly twenty years after the commencement of the Christian movement before this name was invented. Our text says, "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." They were called disciples before they received the name of Christians. You know what it means: learners or scholars.

One of the characters in which our Lord appeared on earth was that of a teacher, who gave utterance to thoughts of extraordinary originality; and those who followed Him for the purpose of hearing His teaching were called His disciples. This is still a mark of His true followers—they are learners. They are interested in such subjects as Jesus came into the world to speak about: God and the soul, sin and salvation and eternity.

But the relation of discipleship implied more than mere learning. Disciple is a manlier name than scholar or pupil. We do not speak of the disciples of a schoolmaster, but of a thinker or philosopher. Those who were the disciples of Socrates or Plato frequented those great teachers, not so much for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, as for the inspiration that is received from contact with an original mind. It is good to be near a big soul; there is nothing better than to feel the pressure of a noble character. This, too, was the secret of Jesus; and this is what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Those who got near Him said to each other, "It is good for us to be here." And this is still the higher blessing of discipleship; those who behold the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image.

Another name that was given to the followers of Christ before they were called Christians was *brethren*. As long as the Master was present the name that prevailed was the one that expressed their immediate relation to Him; but when He had departed, they began to use the name that expressed their relation to one another. Brethren are, of course, literal-

ly the sons of the same father; and this tie of nature is a very strong one. Even brothers who fall out among themselves, will rally to one another's aid against a common foe. But outside the circle of the family it is difficult to get men to acknowledge the claims of their fellowmen on their love and help.

Many attempts have therefore been made to make men feel more kindly to one another by forging new bonds among them, and men have called each other brethren because of these relationships. But in comparison with the tie of blood most of these relationships have been but figures of speech. But when the early Christians called each other brethren, it was no mere figure of speech. This is the foundation of the love between Christians—it rests on a life which is common to them and derived from the same Father.

I may mention also two others which occur frequently in the New Testament although perhaps they came into vogue subsequently to the invention of the name Christian.

When we get into the Epistles of Paul we come pretty often on the name *believers*. The word "believer" means one who has faith. Faith was what Christ demanded in all with whom He met; and when it was forthcoming, He welcomed it with irrepressible joy. He came among men with infinitely greater claims and promises than anyone has ever ventured to make; He promised to save men from their sins. Some denied that He could do anything of the kind; those who credited His testimony, and acted accordingly, were believers. Jesus Christ is still going about through the world; He comes to your door and mine; He offers to confer on us the greatest boon in existence—to save us from our sins and lead us back to God. Have you credited this offer and closed with it? This is what it is to be a believer.

There is another term which Paul uses still oftener than believers: it is the word *saints*. Thus, in writing to the Romans, he addresses himself to the saints at Rome; and in the same

way he commences his Epistles to the Corinthians, and to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians; indeed, this name abounds in all his writings.

Saints are possessors of sanctity or holiness; and this implies three things: (1) separation, the first meaning of holiness in Scripture—separate from the common or unclean. Then it also implies (2) purification. To separate oneself from others is an idle thing if it be a mere outward standing apart. It is because the followers of Christ have been purified from the sin of the world that they separate themselves from the world, so that they may be kept pure. But there is (3) consecration: he who has been purified and separated from the world is sent back into it again, to pervade it with the spirit of Christ. All these elements are united in sainthood.

In the Church of Rome, it is applied only to a few of the dead who have been deemed worthy of canonization; and among Protestants it is rather a nickname than a name. Of all the signs that mark the followers of Christ, holiness is the most august. A single holy life assures hearts made skeptical by the worldliness of an unspiritual society that there still exists on earth the power of God. I express only my own opinion when I say that in my belief that a saint, the humblest saint, is more precious to the Church than ecclesiastic, orator, or scholar.

Such then were the names for members of the Church which prevailed in New Testament times—disciples, brethren, believers, saints. But our text commemorates the invention of the name which was destined to top them all. In every clime to which the gospel of Christ has penetrated, *Christian* has come to be the standing name for a follower of Him.

In view of its universal adoption, it is singular to note that it was not originally invented by the Christians themselves, and did not for many years after its invention come into common use among them. It occurs only thrice in the New Testament; and every one of them it is applied to Christians by non-Christians. In fact, it seems it first to have been a term of reproach. In the very circumstances of this name's bestowal, indeed, there may seem to have lain a prophecy of its universal diffusion. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."

Antioch, a city on the Orontes, was in those days the common mart where East and West met; and in its streets representatives elbowed one another of every nation under heaven. The Roman ruled it, the

Greek directed its commerce, and the Jews' synagogue had its modest place among its temples. A name originated in Antioch might easily be blown over the earth.

Still more clearly did such a prophecy seem to lie in the structure of the word. It certainly did not come from the Jews, for the idea of the Christ embodied in it was to them too sacred to be put into a nickname, or connected with a sect they hated. Their name for Christ's followers was Nazarenes, a word derived from Nazareth, out of which, according to their proverb, no good thing could come. Yet there was a Jewish element in the name, for it was in Israel that the great hope of the Christ arose. There was a Greek element in it too, for the Jewish term, Messiah, had to be translated into Greek, the universal language of the ancient world, before this new name was coined out of it. And there is a Roman element in it also, for the word Christian, while having a Greek root, has a Roman ending. We may guess that it was invented by a Greek-speaking Roman to characterize the strange new Jewish sect that was making a stir in the city. But little did he imagine how long this child of his lips would live, and how far it would travel beyond where Rome's eagles ever flew.

Thus, just as the inscription in Hebrew and Greek and Latin on the cross of Christ was an unconscious prophecy of the universal significance of what was being transacted on that tree, so too Hebrew, Greek, and Latin elements in the word seem to have foretold its universal use. But it has owed its diffusion chiefly to the fact that it is a better name than any one of those which precede it. It emphasizes what is most central and vital in all other names.

Are Christians disciples or students of truth? The name Christian emphasizes the fact that Christ is the center of all truth. Are they brethren? It shows that they are connected with one another by being first connected with Him. Are they believers? He is the prime object of faith. Are they saints? Likeness to Him is the standard of sanctity, and union to Him its source. Thus this name includes all the rest, and besides, it contains the name that is above every name.

Are we Christians? What is your answer? My answer is this: Oh! for more of the disciple's thirst for truth, more of the love of the brethren, more of the faith of the believer, more of the holiness of the saint; Oh! for more, far more, of Christ!

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Struggling and Seeking

If we may trust the superscription of this psalm, it was written by David at one of the very darkest days of his wanderings, probably in the cave of Adullam, where he had gathered around him a band of outlaws, and was living, to all appearance, a life commonly like that of a brigand chief in the hills.

The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good" (Ps.

34:10). One might have pardoned David at such a moment in the wilderness of his life if some cloud of doubt or despondency had crept over his soul. But instead of that his words are running over with gladness, and the psalm begins, "I will bless the Lord at all times, and His praise shall continually be in my mouth." Similarly here he avers, even at a moment when he wanted a great deal of what the world calls "good," that "they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

There were lions in Israel in David's time. Very likely they were prowling about near the rocky mouth of the cave, and he weaves their howls into his psalm: "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good." Here, then, are two thoughts: the struggle that always fails and the seeking that always finds.

The struggle that always fails: "The young lions do lack and suffer hunger" are taken as the type of violent effort and struggle, but "they lack and suffer hunger." The suggestion is, that the men whose lives are one long fight to appropriate for themselves more and more of outward good, are living a kind of life that is fitter for beasts than for men. A fierce struggle for material good is the true description of the sort of life that hosts of us live.

What is the meaning of all this cry that we make about the murderous competition going on around us? What is the true character of the lives of people in a city, but a fight and a struggle, a desire to have, and failure to obtain? Let us remember that that sort of existence is for the brutes, and that there is a better way of getting what is good; the only fit way for man. Beasts of prey, naturalists tell us, are always lean. It is the graminivorous order that meekly and peacefully crop the pastures, that are well fed and in good condition—"which are an allegory."

"The young lions do lack and suffer

hunger"—and that just states the fact that is every man's experience. For there is no satisfaction or success ever to be won by this way of fighting and struggling and scheming and springing at the prey. For if we do not utterly fail, which is the lot of so many of us, still partial success has little power of bringing perfect satisfaction to a human spirit.

In every way it is true that the little annoyances, like a grain of dust in a sensitive eye, take all the sweetness out of mere material good. And I suppose that there are no more bitterly disappointed men in this world than the perfectly "successful men" as the world counts them. They have been disillusioned in the process of acquirement.

You remember the old story of the Arabian Nights, about the wonderful palace that was built by magic, full of treasures, but an enemy looked on all the wealth and suggested a previously unnoticed defect by saying, "You have not a roc's egg." The owner had never thought about getting a roc's egg, and did not know what it was. But the consciousness of something lacking had been roused, and it marred his enjoyment of what he had, and drove him to set out on his travels to secure the missing thing.

There is always something lacking, for our desires grow far faster than their satisfactions; and the more we have, the wider our longing reaches out, so that as the wise old Book has it, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loveth abundance with increase." You cannot fill a soul with the whole universe if you do not put God in it. The greatest work of fiction of modern times, as I take it, ends, or all but ends, with a sentence something like this, "Ah! who of us has what he wanted, or, having it, is satisfied?" "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger" and the struggle always fails—"but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

The seeking which always finds: Now, how do we "seek the Lord?" It is metaphorical expression, of course, which needs to be careful-



ly interpreted in order not to lead us into a great mistake. We do not seek Him as if He had not sought us or was hiding from us. It is a short search that the child by her mother's skirts, or her father's side, has to make for mother or father. It is a shorter search that we have to make for God.

We seek Him by desire. Do you want Him? A great many of us do not. We seek Him by such a turning of thought to Him, as will prevent our most earnest working upon things material from descending to the likeness of the lions' fighting for it. We seek Him by desire, by communion, by obedience. And they who thus seek Him find Him in the act of seeking Him, just as certainly as if I open my eye I see the light. For He is always seeking us.

That is a beautiful word of our Lord's to which we do not always attach all its value. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him." Why put the emphasis upon the "such," as if it were a definition of the only kind of acceptable worship? It is that. But we might put more emphasis on the "seeketh" without spoiling the logic of the sentence. Thereby we should come nearer the truth of what God's heart to us is.

If we do seek Him we shall surely find. In this region there is no search that is vain, no desire unaccomplished, no failure possible. We each of us have precisely as much of God as we desire to have. If

there is only a very little of the Water of Life in our vessels it is because we did not care to possess any more. "Seek, and ye shall find."

We shall be sure to find everything in God. Look at the grand confidence, and the utterance of a life's experience in these great words: "Shall not want any good." For God is everything to us, and everything else is nothing; and it is the presence of God in anything that makes it truly able to satisfy our desires. Human love, sweet and precious, dearest and best of all earthly possessions as it is, fails to fill a heart unless the love grasps God as well as the beloved dying creature. And so with regard to all other things. They are good when God is in them, and they are ours in God. They are naught when wrenched away from Him.

You remember the old rabbinical tradition which speaks a deep truth, dressed in a fanciful shape. It says that the manna in the wilderness tasted to every man in the wilderness just what he desired, of whatever dainty or nutrient he was most wishful. The one God is everything to us all, anything that we desire, and the thing that we need. "Seek ye first the kingdom...and all these things shall be added unto you."

Let us begin, dear brethren, with seeking, and then the struggling will not be violent, nor self-willed, nor will it fail. If we begin with seeking, and have God, be sure that all we need we shall get, and that what we do not get, we do not need. It is hard to believe it when our vehement wishes go out to something that His serene wisdom does not send. It is hard to believe it when our bleeding hearts are being wrenched away from something around which they have clung. But it is true for all that. And he that can say, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire but Thee," will find that the things which he enjoys in subordination to his one supreme good are a thousand times more precious when they are regarded as second than they ever could be when our folly tried to make them first.

Now, all that is very old-fashioned truth. Dear brethren, if we believed it, and lived by it, "the peace of God which passes understanding" would "keep our hearts and our minds."

There be many that cry, "Oh, that one would show me any good." The wise do not cry to men, but pray to God: "Lord, lift Thou the light of Thy countenance upon me."

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Paul as a Preacher

How will he meet Jewish theology and bigotry, Greek civilization and philosophy? How will he appeal to the eloquence and self-conceit of the learned? What can he do in a city famed for its immorality?

Here are some thoughts gleaned in reading Paul's account of himself in 1 Corinthians 2.

Paul came to Corinth with a message. It was a message from God, for he came declaring unto them "the testimony of God." It was a message that God has for sinners. He was only a messenger, and he knew only one thing, and that one thing was a Person and the work He had accomplished. Paul says, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Paul came to Corinth after he had an experience. Directed by God to bring the gospel to Europe, he was imprisoned in Philippi, smuggled out by night in Thessalonica, hounded from Berea, and disappointed in Athens. Then he wended his way to Corinth and took up tentmaking with a certain Jew named Aquila.

Paul, the tentmaker, preached in the synagogue and sought to persuade the Jews and the Greeks. They never knew that he was a highly educated man, a graduate of a most noted school of learning, well acquainted with Greek literature, a former member of the Jewish council, a Roman citizen of no mean city.

Picture the preacher. He is sick. He has an

infirmity for which there is no cure—three earnest prayers didn't remove it. He is naturally timid and fearful, and he trembles nervously as he speaks. He pictures himself in his letter to them: "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling."

What is this "weak" man going to do in Corinth? How will he meet Jewish theology and bigotry, Greek civilization and philosophy? How will he appeal to the eloquence and self-conceit of the learned? What can he do in a city famed for its immorality? Paul tells us what he did *not* do, and then he tells us what he *did* do.

What was it that Paul did *not* do in Corinth?

1. He determined *not* to know anything but *one thing* (v. 2).
2. He did *not* use excellency of speech or of wisdom (v. 1).
3. He did *not* preach with enticing words (v. 4).
4. He did *not* owe anything to the wisdom of man (v. 5).
5. He did *not* speak the wisdom of this world (v. 6).

What was it that Paul did in Corinth? He did what Christ had sent him to do. And what was that? "Christ sent me to preach the gospel." *We preach Christ crucified.* To the Jew that was a stumbling block; to the Greek it was sheer foolishness; but to Paul there was nothing beside.

My message, he declared, is a biography, *the biography of a man who died and rose again.* Everything centers in His cross. *Grace* is manifested there, and *glory* circles round its head. The cross of Christ is "my gospel," Paul proudly and constantly claims in the face of all comers. "The cross of Christ," he declares, "is the one and the only gospel that I preach, and there is none other, even though an angel from heaven should declare otherwise." The cross of Christ was the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the middle and the end of all Paul's preaching.

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He was taken into a poorly furnished room and pointed to a spot where the carpet was worn shabby and bare, near a window that looked out toward the mountains. The minister said, "Brother, that's where I got that sermon. My heart was heavy for men. One evening I knelt there and cried for power to preach as I had never preached before. The hours passed until the midnight struck, and the stars looked down on the sleeping valley and silent hills; but the answer came not. So I prayed until at length I saw a faint gray shoot up in the east. Presently it became silver, and I watched and prayed until the silver became purple and gold, and on all the mountain crests blazed the altar fires of the new day; and then the sermon came, and the power came. I lay down and slept, and arose and preached, and scores fell down before the fire of God; that is where I got that sermon."