

UPLOOK

JULY-AUGUST 1997

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

Healthy, Wealthy & Wise

J. B. NICHOLSON, JR.

Technically, I'm a one-aunt man. My father had one sister, Ellen, who was caught Home as a child, and my mother had only one sister, my dear Aunt Helen.

Through the years she has borne more than her share of sorrow with the regal dignity of the King's daughter that she is. Her countenance reflects heaven's sunshine even on dark days; I regret I have not spent more time with her.

My wife received a note from her the other day (she is a great letter writer). Included was the following paragraph to Yours Truly:

"Will you pass on to the editor of UPLOOK that there is a ministry I feel is lacking in our assembly writings today. There are lots of doctrinal and biblical articles, but very little of a devotional nature (men who wrote like W. Pell and L. Sheldrake, etc.). In our assembly we have eighteen elderly sisters who are widows, and most of us need solace and simple heart messages. So many long for comfort, especially as age creeps up on us. Hope I'm not speaking out of turn."

And my July-August issue was planned to be on Doctrine! Well, Aunt Helen, this UPLOOK is for you, and your seventeen widow friends, and all the other aching hearts behind those brave smiles out there. Almost a dozen devotional articles just for you. (Sorry, none by Will Pell or Leonard Sheldrake, but we'll keep looking.)

As a child, I often heard the adage, "Early to bed, early to rise, Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise." Is that what does it? I have my doubts, even though I don't question the salutary effects of disciplined living. And even if such living did bring health, wealth, and wisdom, something vital would still be missing. Jeremiah declares:

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight,

saith the Lord" (Jer. 9:23-24).

Paul gives the secret in 1 Corinthians 14:3, where he speaks about the threefold effect of the ministry of the Word of God: "edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

What is edification? The word *oikodome* comes from two words meaning, "to build" and "a home." One result of the Word finding a place in our hearts is "the promotion of spiritual growth" (Vine). The building up of the saints and of assemblies of believers is one of the objectives of this ministry.

What is exhortation? Primarily, *paraklesis* means "a calling to one's side." It is akin to the word used for the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. However, unlike the word for comfort in our verse, exhortation is always prospective, urging the believer to pursue a path that follows the Word in the future. The word for comfort is retrospective, finding a present answer in the Scriptures to a trial already experienced.

What is comfort? In 1 Corinthians 14:3, Paul does not use the familiar word already translated exhortation; instead he uses *paramuthia*, "a speaking close to anyone." It denotes, says Vine, 'consolation, comfort,' with a greater degree of tenderness" than is found in *paraklesis*.

That's what my dear aunt is looking for! This was what she meant when she spoke of "solace and simple heart messages." They are the soft whispers of the Saviour to those who have learned to lean on His breast.

If we want to be healthy, you'll need the edifying ministry that the Bible gives. Then you can boast, not in your own might, but in the strength that comes from knowing the Lord. If you want to be wealthy, the enriching life comes by submitting ourselves to the exhortative work of the Word of God. But if you want to be wise, you need to listen to the gracious "speaking close" that the Saviour does when we withdraw long enough from the hurried, worried world in which we live to hear the whispering of our Master as He comforts and consoles His own.

P. S. It's also good to listen to your aunt.

I was having a hard time putting this issue together until a letter arrived from my aunt. A man's best critics are the ones who love him the most.



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Let Each Be Fully Convinced

DONALD L. NORBIE

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; in Him they are in perfect balance. Only as He governs our hearts and minds will we discover the secret of being as strong in our charity as in our convictions.

In Romans 14, Paul is dealing with the differences among the Christians of his day concerning food. Some from Jewish backgrounds were still sensitive about dietary issues. From birth they had been warned not to eat certain foods that were forbidden by the Law. They also still wanted to observe special days that had been part of their heritage. The Gentiles had no such background and felt no compunction about eating food or observing the Jewish holy days.

Paul's advice is: Do not judge. Be tolerant. These are not basic areas upon which there must be unity in order to have fellowship. "One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5, NKJV).

There are certain other areas upon which it would be wise to be tolerant concerning other Christians. One area is that of politics. Many of us were brought up with the teaching that since we are "strangers and sojourners" with "our citizenship" (Phil. 3:20) in heaven, we should have nothing to do with the political process in a democracy, not even to vote. Others feel quite free to vote, even to run for office. Are such to be condemned as unspiritual?

It might be well to remind ourselves that in biblical days the prevalent form of government was a monarchy. Hence Peter exhorts, "Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:17). People were not allowed to be involved in choosing their leaders as in a democracy. The Bible has nothing to say about voting for your king. The concept was foreign.

Peter's advice gives the Christian's sense of priority. God is to be revered and obeyed above all. Human government is to be respected and obeyed where it does not conflict with God's standards. This accords with what Peter had heard the Lord Jesus teach years before: "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's" (Mt. 22:21).

Paul was keenly aware of his dual citizenship of heaven and Rome. When he was about to be beaten to elicit a confession, he was quick to ask, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" (Acts 22:25). He asserted his rights as a Roman citizen to have a fair trial before being punished.

Later, to escape the sentencing of the Jews, he appealed to Caesar, the highest court to which a Roman citizen had recourse (Acts 25:11). Repeatedly Paul claimed his Roman citizenship in Acts.

Since Israel in Old Testament days was in a unique relationship with God as His covenant people, no reference will be made to their political structure. But when Israel went into exile, Daniel and some of his friends were very active in the governing process of Babylon and also of Persia (though they were civil servants, not elected officials). They kept their priorities straight; God was always first. But they seemed to prosper. "Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon" (Dan. 2:48). One can be sure their influence was for good in the kingdom. To keep from compromise with evil in such a position requires a resolute decision to put God first in all decisions and to do what is right.

Ezekiel was a priest and a prophet, a contemporary of Daniel in Babylon, but with a very different calling. His mission was to be the channel for God's message to man; there is no higher calling. But Ezekiel, the prophet, spoke warmly of Daniel three times in his



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book (14:14, 20; 28:3). He links him with Noah and Job as great men of God. There is no expression of disapproval of the life and work of Daniel, only commendation.

In view of this, perhaps one needs to avoid dogmatism today on the matter. Let those who feel it is contrary to their calling and heavenly citizenship to be involved politically be convinced in their own minds. Let those who feel free to vote and perhaps even to run for office be fully convinced before God. If elected, they must determine to put God first and never to compromise their convictions.

Another area where there is disagreement is the matter of the use of money. The words of the Lord Jesus are very strong: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Mt. 6:19-20). Some feel this means it is wrong for the godly Christian to save money at all, whether for a future purchase, such as a car, or a college education, or for retirement. All funds above one's immediate needs should be given to the Lord's work at home and abroad. This is a little easier to do if one is single.

Others feel that while one should give generously to the Lord's work, to save for future needs is not wrong but prudent. "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Tim. 5:8). How should one provide for his own family? Is it better to save for a car or buy one on time? Is it better to pay rent or buy a house? Which will be the better use of the Lord's money? Is it wrong to have social security? If one has no social security, is it wrong to have a retirement account? Is it unspiritual to have a savings account for the education of one's children?

Each Christian needs to have a keen sense of stewardship of all that the Lord gives him. He needs to live frugally and to give generously. This is a world full of

needs, spiritual and physical. To live carelessly and in luxury can hardly please the One who "though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). Most of us live too well, too selfishly. Many Christians do not even give a tithe, ten percent. In these matters let each be exercised in heart and be fully convinced in his own mind.

Another area where it might be well to exercise some tolerance is the area of eschatology, the teaching concerning the last times. While all true Christians do believe Christ is returning, not all see eye to eye on the details of His return. Paul describes Christians as those who "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:9-10). Jesus Himself urged His followers always to be ready and waiting. But of that day and hour no one knows (Mt. 24:36). Yet some foolishly continue to set dates for Christ's return.

Every generation is to heed the exhortation: "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him" (Mt. 24:44, NKJV). Each Christian can have that hope living in his heart; Christ is returning! While His coming is imminent and impending, it is not necessarily

immediate. Christ prepared His disciples for a long wait (Mt. 25:19). Peter knew he would die before Christ would return (Jn. 21:19; 2 Pet. 1:14). But in every age the prayer of the saints has been, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

Having said this, it must be recognized that the details surrounding His coming are not agreed upon by those who love His appearing. Perhaps it will be like our Lord's first coming when the details only became clear later. They had a real struggle then, believing that the Messiah must first suffer (Lk. 24:25-26). Let each Christian study the Scripture for himself, seeking to be open to what the Word says. And let each be fully convinced in his own mind and live as one waiting for his Lord to return.



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FRONT LINES

▷ MID SOUTH LABOR DAY BIBLE CONFERENCE

Horton Haven Christian Camp in Chapel Hill, Tennessee will host the annual Labor Day Bible Conference Aug. 29-Sep. 1. We are looking forward to ministry from Bill MacDonald from San Leandro, CA. Plan now to attend this special time for the family. The newest facility on the campgrounds is a lodge that will accommodate 54 people in motel-type accommodations, and will be available for the conference. For more information, call the conference grounds at (615) 364-7656.

▷ CONFERENCE IN WICHITA

The Westside Bible Chapel in Wichita, KS, is planning a Bible conference for Sep. 19-21. The invited speakers are Dan Smith (IA) and Bob Clark (TX). If you have further inquiries, please contact Arnold Burkle at (316) 721-3354.

▷ TORONTO LADIES ANNUAL MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

Plan to attend "Challenge '97" on Saturday, September 27, to be held at Don Valley Bible Chapel, Toronto, ON. This annual ladies' missionary conference includes an exciting program for girls grade 2 and up. Speakers expected are Elva Brooks (Zambia), Esther Frey (Puerto Rico), Catherine Hanks (France), and Betty Brooks (Russia). For further information or accommodations, contact: Sheila Henderson
50 Barksdale Ave.
North York, ON M3H 4S5
(416) 630-8726

▷ STORY BOOK LODGE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

All friends of Story Book Lodge

Christian Camp (Gilbert, MN) are invited to come and celebrate its 50th anniversary on September 13-14. The celebration begins with a noon meal, followed by an annual business meeting. After supper there will be a slide presentation and lots of good camp singing. Sunday includes a morning Remembrance meeting, sharing from the Scriptures and a banquet.

Reservations for the celebration are requested. Sleeping accommodations will be provided for as many as the camp will hold, at no cost. Reservations at a nearby motel, the Biwabik Lodge, can be secured for \$60 per night for a room with two double beds. Contact:

Roxanne Rodgers
(218) 865-6663
larryrod@rangenet.com

▷ FALL FOLIAGE CONFERENCE

Dr. David Reid (IA) will the

speaker at a Fall Foliage Conference scheduled for Sep. 22-26. Dr. Reid is well-known for his monthly newsletter, *Devotions for Growing Christians*, and his tape ministry, *Talks for Growing Christians*, heard on radio stations across the country. His topic is "The Life of Jacob." Camp-of-the-Woods is located in Speculator, NY, in the Adirondacks. Contact:

Mark Kolchin
Honeyrock Ministries, Inc.
P. O. Box 315
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

▷ SAN FRAN AREA

Spend a week in California at Mount Hermon Christian Center, Oct. 6-10, 1997. Speakers: J. Boyd Nicholson (ON) and Jabe Nicholson, Jr. (MI). Contact:

Henry Kamena, Registrar
1400 W.13th St. Sp.91
Upland, Ca. 91786-2970
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▷ LAND OF THE SKY BIBLE CONFERENCE

The saints of the Asheville Gospel Chapel and of the Waynesville Christian Fellowship will host the annual Land of the Sky Bible Conference on Oct. 18 from 10:00 am to 3:30 pm. In the will of the Lord, J. B. Nicholson, Jr. (MI) will be ministering the Word of God. A light lunch will be served. The chapel address is:

350 Old Haw Creek Rd.
Asheville, NC 28805

▷ WOMEN'S MISSIONARY CONFERENCE

The Keystone Heights, FL, 30th Annual Women's Missionary Conference is scheduled at Park of the Palms for Oct. 24-25, 1997. Expected speakers: Geraldine Tillman (NY), Danita Rayhuck (Congo), Anne Vanderlaan (India). Contact:

V. Marion Barr
635 Hebron Avenue
Keystone Heights, FL 32656

▷ THAT'S A-MAZE-ING!

Two years ago, Jim and Miriam Whitter were asked by the American Maze Co., if they would grow a corn field specifically to be made into a giant maze. They did, and 25,000 people showed up to walk the maze by following clues provided along the way. The event was featured on the Discovery Channel and *Good Morning, America*.

This year they are doing it again, but this time the maze is to be carved into the shape of Noah's ark. Forty thousand people are expected by the organizers. The Whitters are planning a gospel outreach to the visitors to their farm (near Shippensburg, PA) with a tent called, "The Biblical

Connection." The gospel will be presented through Creation Research films on the Flood, personal witness, and gospel literature. The event is held each weekend through August and September. Pray for the outreach, and maybe you can stop in!

▷ BIBLE LANDS TOUR

Randy Amos (NY) and Mark Kolchin (NJ) will be conducting a 13-day Bible Lands Study Tour scheduled, D.V., for May 11-23, 1998. Included in this tour will be two days of visiting ancient sites in Rome, three days in Egypt, and eight days in Israel. Contact:

Mark Kolchin
P. O. Box 315
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734

▷ AV EQUIPMENT NEEDED

John Small is in need of a reflectograph machine which projects photographs onto a screen. If anyone has one available, please contact:

John Small
607 N. 37 Ave.
Yakima, WA 98902

▷ PASSING INTO LIFE

ANTHONY ROSS MCCONKEY was taken Home on May 17, 1997, after being confined to the Care Unit of Pittsboro Christian Village for two years. His wife, Gladys, preceded him to glory a few years ago.

Brother McConkey, born in Canada Apr. 15, 1900, knew little of the Bible. But as a result of an industrial accident, he was able to do little but read. His wife found him a Bible, which his godly grandmother had given him. During his second reading of the New Testament, he was saved, and soon pointed his wife to the Lord. Ross was used to start at

least one assembly in Canada, and ministered the Word for many years in that country. Later he ministered in North Carolina and Michigan.

MRS. MERLE BUTCHER, widow of George Butcher, passed into the Lord's presence from Vancouver, BC, on May 11 at the age of 95 years. Born as a twin at only 1.5 lbs., in Little Ireland, ON, she later trained as a nurse and in 1936 went with her husband to Northern Rhodesia as a missionary, helpmeet and mother. She will be deeply missed by her three children and their families. Her funeral was taken by her two sons and son-in-law.

▷ COMMENDATION

The Christians at University Bible Fellowship, Cedar Falls, IA, are pleased to commend BRUCE COLLINS to the grace and keeping of God in an itinerant work in the gospel and Bible teaching.

The saints at Slidell Bible Chapel, Slidell, LA, join with those at Lake Park Chapel in Belle Chasse, LA, in commending ELIZABETH CLARK to the Lord as she seeks to serve Him in Spain, especially among the youth of that needy country.

▷ ADDRESS CHANGES

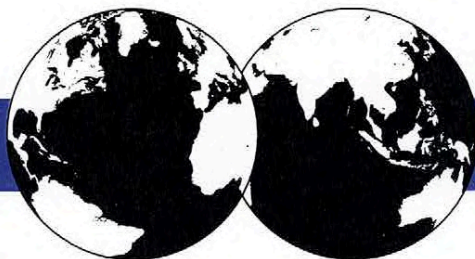
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c/o Joe Ebert
R.R. # 4
Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0
Phone (519) 283-6321



"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD"

WHAT'S GOING ON?



▷ MAROONED

A recent poll asked, What book would you most rather have if you were shipwrecked on a desert island? The top choice was the Bible, though it garnered only 17 percent of the respondents. Second choice, at four percent each, was a thriller by Stephen King or John Grisham. Apparently, those respondents considered a desert island to be a day at the beach. The Bible as emergency reading was equally popular among both sexes and all ages, with the significant exception of those between 18 and 29 years old. —*World*

▷ FOR OUR U.K. & IRISH READERS

We understand a special Bible teaching weekend has been planned with Prof. David Gooding and Dr. John Lennox at Scargill House, near Kettlewell, North Yorkshire, England from Sep. 5-8. The target group is the 18-35 age range and the topic is: "I am not ashamed of the gospel." Brochures available from:

Echoes of Service
1 Widcombe Crescent
Bath, England BA2 6AQ

Also, we understand a number of believers from the other side of the Atlantic and Pacific are making plans to join us at Rise Up & Build 97 in Dearborn, MI this December. We welcome you to share the blessing with us!

▷ ISRAEL IN THE NEWS—AGAIN!

An anti-missionary law is presently before the Knesset (Israeli parliament) that, if passed, would ban the possession, printing, and distribution of materials that are de-

signed to persuade someone to change his religion. The penalty is one year in prison. This would effectively outlaw every indigenous expression of faith in Jesus as Messiah, including personal witness and public worship. If you would like to express your concerns (with meekness and fear—1 Pet. 3:15), write:

Mr. Benyamin Netanyahu,
Prime Minister of Israel
c/o The Israeli Embassy
3514 International Drive, NW
Washington, DC 20008
with a copy to:

The U. S. Secretary of State
Madeleine Albright
c/o U. S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

▷ WORLDWIDE CHANGE?

The National Association of Evangelicals accepted the Worldwide Church of God into membership on May 7. Denominational leaders of the controversial group founded by Herbert W. Armstrong have rescinded many of their earlier doctrines. NAE President Don Argue (yes, that's his name) said, "The Worldwide Church of God did not rest in the refuge of their historically held doctrines, but sought the truth through careful study of the Scriptures—even at significant cost to the denomination."

Argue may be referring to the hundreds of ministers and thousands of members who have left the WCG in recent months, some forming splinter groups.

One obvious question: do these WCG members become true Christians now that their leaders have fashioned a new statement of faith that repudiates its former denial of

the Trinity and teaching that Sabbath-keeping is necessary for salvation?

▷ IS RUSSIA'S DOOR CLOSING, TOO?

The Russian Duma voted overwhelmingly June 18 to pass legislation restricting religious freedom. Under the law, which still awaits final passage, all religious organizations formed within the past 15 years will lose their legal status. According to the Law and Liberty Trust, an organization promoting religious liberty in Russia, the bill will "wipe out hundreds of recently registered... churches, seminaries, and charities," leaving "only religious organizations registered during the Soviet period." The bill would also prohibit non-Russians from forming religious associations. —*World*

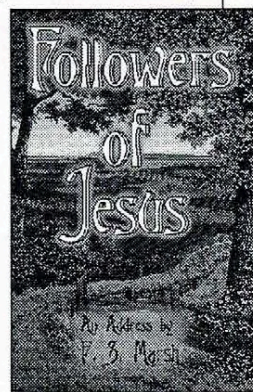
▷ A GOOD BOOKLET NOW AVAILABLE

Prospect Publications has issued an excellent sample of the ministry

of F. S. Marsh, a highly appreciated minister of the Word from the UK. This 36-page study traces a line of thought that runs through John's Gospel, on Christ's invitations to come and follow Him.

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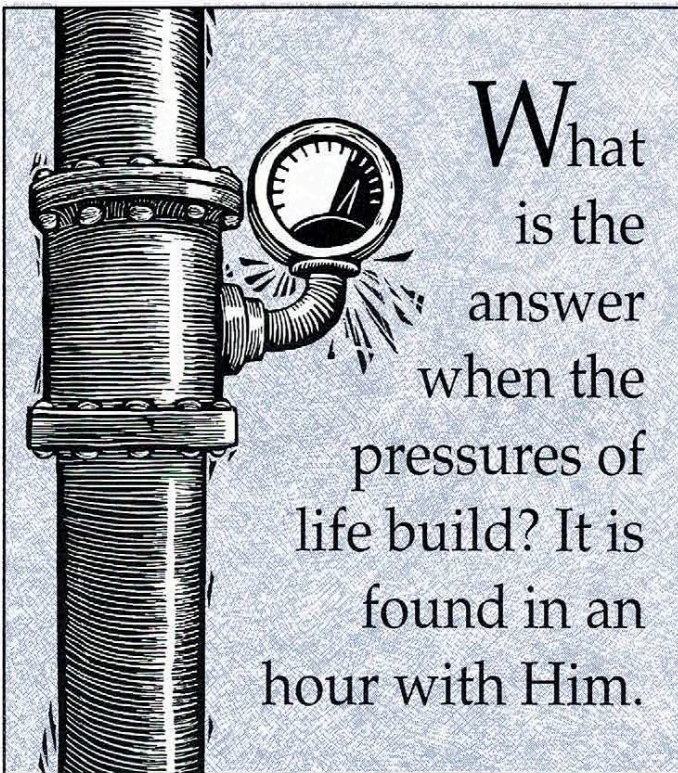
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One Hour

ALEXANDER WHYTE

“What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?” is a question that, after 2,000 years, has not lost its pathos or its convicting power.

Our Redeemer was in the Garden of Gethsemane. His hour was come. He knew that His agony was fast approaching Him, and He felt a longing for two or three of His disciples near Him. But even that slight support was to be denied our Saviour in that awful hour. His three chosen disciples were within a stone's-cast of the scene of His agony; but they were all three fast asleep, that the Scripture might be ful-



so employed, would have been more to Peter's lonely Master than an angel from heaven strengthening Him. But as it was—when He came to Peter, He found that disciple three times fast asleep. Peter! who had protested at the table, only an hour before, that, as for him, he would die with his Master.

Are these things not written for our admonition “on whom the ends of the world are come”? And it is not for nothing that our Lord here lays such pointed stress on “one hour” of watching and praying, that night in Gethsemane. I do not think it is possible for any of His true disciples to read this solemn Scripture without having his conscience struck with that rebuking word—“one hour”—that night of our redemption.

Yes, you may depend on it—this remonstrance here addressed to Peter has been recorded not for his sake alone but for our instruction also. Peter needed that hour of prayer that night, and, neglecting it, and turning it into sleep, his temptations and his opportunities, all that night, and all next morning, descended upon him, and found him utterly unprepared to meet them.

Now you may be another Peter; and if you are, one hour alone with Christ, every day, will be the making of you. You will never come to your potential by keeping late hours with the men and women of the world. No, nor staying at home and reading, late at night, the books and papers of the world.

But on the other hand, if you are content to remain characterless and unrecognizable among the multitude; then you may, with the multitude, escape Gethsemane, and all its late and lonely hours of watching and prayer. Only, make up your mind, and count the cost. For, in that case, escaping the preparation, you must not expect to be found able ever to suffer much, or to do much, in any way, for Jesus Christ, and for His

filled: “I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with Me.”

Their Master did not arm the seventy and set them to defend the garden gate. He did not ask the eight, even, to do more than just to sit down and wait inside the gate, to see what the end of that midnight would be. And He only asks Peter and James and John that they shall stay within earshot of Him for “one hour,” and keep awake for His sake. No, if Peter alone would “watch” with Him, He will be satisfied. If He had returned, and found Peter on his knees when He Himself rose off His face in a sweat of blood, the sight of Peter,

Church in this world.

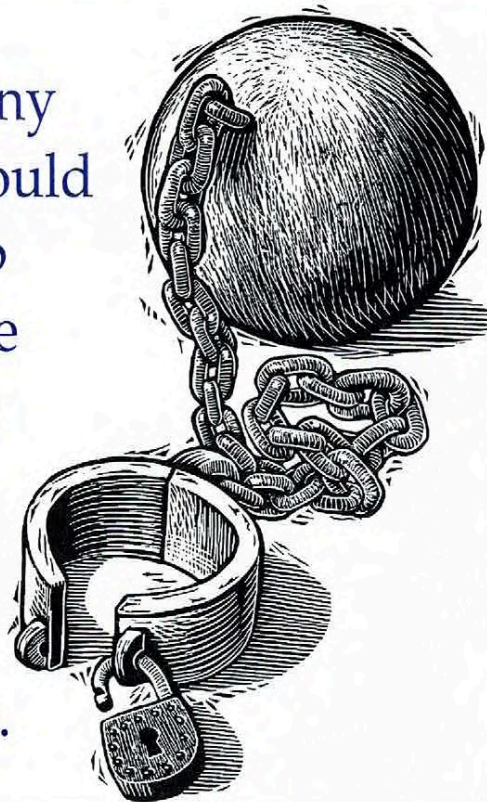
Now a whole hour, it must be admitted, is a long time. But it is not so much the length of the time: it is rather this—that we really do not know what to do with ourselves for a whole hour. We are like Teresa. She made use of an hourglass; and she tells us, in her autobiography, how she used to glance at the glass to see if it was not nearly run down yet, so that she might escape her place of prayer with a good conscience. Now, like Teresa, we have it on our conscience that we ought to be alone with God for some decent length of time every night; but then, there is no hour of all the twenty-four that goes so slowly, and that hangs on our hands so heavily, as just the hour of secret prayer. So much is that the case that it is an immense service done to us when any author, or any preacher, directs us how to get that dreary and guilty hour filled up, so as to make it somewhat less of a task, less of a torture.

You might begin by cutting down the hour. If a whole “hour” is too long for you—take half an hour: or even to begin with, take a quarter. Christ is not a hard taskmaster. He will not bind you to a hard-and-fast bargain— if you are unwilling. And besides, you can get through a great deal in half an hour; or even in a quarter of an hour. You can name a great many forgotten people, and a great many forgotten things during that time. You can go over your past day, in a rough way, in much less than an hour.

Then again, there is this to lighten and alleviate the strain. You do not need to lay it on your conscience that you must be on your knees all the time. Not at all. Rise up. Walk about the room. Go out and look up at the stars. Say, “What is man that Thou art mindful of him?” Come in again. Sit down. Lift up your hands. Lift up your eyes. Recite a promise. Sing a psalm. Say over an Olney or a Wesley hymn to yourself.

Prayer is the most elastic exercise possible. Communion with God has no hard-and-fast rules and regulations. And if, at the end of the half-hour, you are be-

The tyranny of time should never keep us from the enjoyment of eternal realities in our daily walk.



ginning to have some liberty, and possibly to feel some delight—go on. You have still another half-hour before you. Never mind the clock striking. Tell it to strike loud for those who should be home by this time and in their beds. Say to it as Teresa said afterwards: “Strike on, for by thy striking thou art but telling me that I am another hour nearer my Heavenly Bridegroom!”

There is your Bible to help you to fill up your hour. And once you have begun, really, to read your Bible—one hour each night will be far too short. You will forget hours and everything else many a night over your Bible—once you have begun to read it to yourself alone. The Psalms, for instance. The best of the autobiographic and experimental Psalms were written late at night, and when the Psalmists were alone with God. And as they were written, so they must be read.

Take your Bible, then, to help carry you through your hour of prayer. And as you sit down, say: “Come, my Lord: for I have an hour free tonight for Thee, and for my own soul.” And I will promise you that you

also will soon have proved it true, "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness: and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips, when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches."

Then again, there is this well-approved way of filling up the hour, and of giving an intense interest to it:

*"Let not sleep come upon thy languid eyes,
Before each daily action thou hast scanned.
What done; what left undone; what done amiss,
From first to last examine all; and then,
Blame what is wrong; in what is right rejoice."*

Now if Pythagoras, a pagan philosopher, whose lot was cast by God's providence five centuries before Christ, practiced that self-scrutiny for an hour every night, and taught the devout habit to all his disciples, what manner of person in that matter ought we to be? And Xenocrates also, Diogenes tells us, used to meditate with himself several times a day, and always allotted one hour of each night to silence.

There is one class of people among us who should have no difficulty in filling up their one hour every night of watching and prayer. "Hast thou considered my servant Job?"—the Hearer of prayer asks all fathers and mothers among us. For when Job's sons and daughters were invited out to a supper, did Job go to sleep, do you suppose, at his usual hour, and with his usual repose of mind? Far from that. What do we find written concerning Job? As soon as Job's children had started off in their high spirits, their old father that moment went out to his flock, and took a lamb according to the number of his sons and daughters, and offered sacrifice for them all to God. "For who knows," he said, "what temptations my children may meet with before they return home?" And then he sprinkled the atoning blood in the direction of the house of feasting,

and ceased not from his intercessions till he saw his children home.

And not on their nights of late hours only, but every night, as our children grow up around us, what a privilege, what an absolute necessity, it is for a father and a mother to have an hour set apart in which to reflect, and to plan, and to pray, concerning their children. You might do this, my friends, an hour every night. How many children has God given you to bring up for Him? You might take Susanna Wesley's way. She read and prayed both "with and for" her whole family, an hour each night. When they were old enough, they shared their mother's work among the younger children. You might begin to do something like that; and who can tell how God would pay you your wages?

The hour may hang heavy on other people's hands. It cannot possibly hang heavy on a parent's hands. Go over, towards God, the things in your children that are causing you anxiety. The things that, if they go on, will yet bring down your gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. As also, go over the things in yourself, that are destroying your influence with your children. "I will behave myself," said the Psalmist, "wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt Thou come to me? And I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

Whoever you are—parent or child, old or young, sinner or saint—give yourself to prayer. Let no distaste for prayer turn you away from it. Let no want of practice, let no difficulty in it, make you give it up in despair. Let no greatness of sin, or frequency of sin, frighten you away from the Throne of Grace.

Begin tonight: and never, on any account, give it up. Whatever else you do, or do not do—in God's name I beseech you to pray. Pray, and you will pray yourself into a life of pardon and holiness, till you pray yourself into heaven itself. Yes, begin tonight. Try one week of it, and then judge for yourselves.

U

*Are there not twelve hours in the day?
If any man walk in the day, he stamleth
not, because he seeth the light of this world.*

JOHN 11:9

Wonderful

ARNO C. GABELEIN

Seven hundred years after Isaiah announced Him as Wonderful, the Lord Jesus appeared in human form. Now we know by revelation in the Word of God that He is wonderful in His Person and in His work. But how wonderful?

No mind can fathom, no heart can grasp, no pen describe how wonderful the Saviour is. He is wonderful if we think of Him as the Only Begotten of the Father. He is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person. How wonderful such a One, who ever was, with no beginning, One with God!

How wonderful His humiliation. Wonderful condescension that He who created the angels should be made lower than the angels and lay His glory by, to appear in the form of man on earth!

Wonderful is He in His incarnation, "that holy Thing," as the angel announced Him, truly God and Man. Born of the woman, resting on the bosom of the Virgin as a little child, and yet He is the One who ever is in the bosom of the Father.

Wonderful was that blessed life He lived on earth. Wonderful are the words which came from His lips. Wonderful is He in His moral glory, His untiring service, His love, His patience, and everything which the Spirit has been pleased to tell us of His earthly life.

The more our hearts contemplate Him, the more wonderful He appears. But still greater and more wonderful is it that He went to the cross to give His life as a ransom for many, that the Just One should die for the unjust. He is wonderful in His great work on the cross, the depths of which have never been fathomed.

And how wonderfully He has dealt with us, with each one individually. How wonderful is it that He knows each of His sheep, that He guides each, provides for, loves, succors, stands by, restores, never leaves nor forsakes each who belongs to Him. How wonderful is His grace, the supply and fullness of it!

"One evening," said C. H. Spurgeon, "I was riding home after a heavy day's work, weary and sore depressed, when suddenly, as a lightning flash, came: 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' And I said: 'I should think it is, Lord,' and burst out laughing. It seemed to

make unbelief so absurd.

"It was as if some little fish, being very thirsty, was troubled about drinking the river dry; and Father Thames said: 'Drink away, little fish, my stream is sufficient



for thee.' Or it seemed like a little mouse in the granaries of Egypt after seven years of plenty, fearing it might die of famine, and Joseph might say: 'Cheer up, little mouse, my granaries are sufficient for thee.' Again I imagined a man away up yonder on the mountain saying to himself: 'I fear I shall exhaust all the oxygen in the atmosphere.' But the earth might say: 'Breathe away, O man, and fill thy lungs ever. My atmosphere is sufficient for thee.'"

In His coming manifestation He will be wonderful. Wonderful He will be when we shall see Him and stand in His presence. What a day it will be when we see Him face to face! Then we shall know all the loveliness and wonder of His adorable Person and His wonderful ways with us. With what delight we shall then behold Him.

And when He comes with His saints, when the heavens are lit up with untold glory, when He comes to judge, to establish His Kingdom, to speak peace to the nations, to restore creation to its right condition, when He reigns and all His redeemed ones with Him—oh, how wonderful it all will be!

He is altogether lovely, and He is altogether wonderful. Glory to His name! Well has one said: "He pervades the whole of the New Testament with His presence, so that every doctrine it teaches, every duty it demands, every narrative it records, every comfort it gives, every hope it inspires, gather about His Person and minister to His glory. So dear does He thus become to the heart of the believer, that Luther may well be excused for exclaiming, 'I had rather be in hell with Christ, than in heaven without Him.'"

May the Holy Spirit fill our hearts and eyes with Himself and reveal to us through the written Word more of the matchless beauty of the wonderful Person of our Saviour and Lord.

U

God's Love

LeBARON W. KINNEY

God has given us many words to express His love, but the riches of it often lie unnoticed in these words of Scripture. Men understand when they are told of the love of a young man for a woman.

They understand how such love may burn like fire and may cling to the very life as an iron band. God has given us a word in the Hebrew, *chashaq*, which tells of such love. He has woven this word through the stories of the burning desires of men and then has applied it to His own love for the lost.

The word *chashaq* is first found in Genesis 34:8, where it is rendered as "*longeth*." "And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel... And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem *longeth* for your daughter: I pray you give her to him to wife."

This first occurrence of the word comes to us in a sad story of a longing love that did not obtain its object. Then in order to teach us more about this word *chashaq*, God use it next in Exodus, where it is translated "fillets" and "filleted." The pillars of the tabernacle were "filleted" with silver, "the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver" (Ex. 27:10-11). "All the pillars of the court were filleted with silver" (Ex. 27:17). The fillets were used to bind the pillars together.

The word means "to bind, to cleave." Gesenius says the word means "to be attached with very great

The love of God for His own is so wonderful that it is beyond our ability to understand. Our mind tells us we cannot comprehend it, but our heart says that we must try!

love, as though it were to be joined to anyone." He renders this word "fillets," as "*joinings*," in Exodus 27:10-11. It is the same word that is rendered "spokes" in 1 Kings 7:33. The spokes of a wheel join the parts of a wheel together. What more beautiful picture could we have of a love which binds together, holds together, and joins all as one?

Then, after we have a picture of the meaning of this beautiful word, God uses it to tell of His love for His people. "The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you" (Deut. 7:7-8). The word *chashaq* is here rendered "*set His love upon*." God's love is joined to His people Israel as the spokes of a wheel join the rim and hub together. His love for them can never be broken; it is eternal. In spite of the fact that they are charged in Acts 3:15 that they "killed the Prince of Life," yet His promises to them shall be fulfilled. He will bring them to Himself just as Joseph brought his brethren to him and blessed them. He loves them with a love that is far beyond human understanding. The reason for His love is not in them but in Himself. Thus they were not to look for a reason for that great love in themselves, but in Him. He knew what they would do to His Son when He chose them, nevertheless He "set His love upon them."

It was in God's plan that He should allow Adam the capability to choose, and therefore to sin. God is not to blame for it, nevertheless He knew of it before Adam was created. And it was in God's plan that our Lord should die for our sins. He was condemned by both Jews and Gentiles to die. But if He had not died, there would have been no redemption for us. Why then should men blame the Jews?

We cannot blame God, for He has shown that He did not trifle in making man. He bore all the punishment and suffering for our sins in His own body on the



tree. In the light of the cross we cannot blame God nor charge Him with being without feeling for us. Just as Joseph comforted his brethren as to how they sold him into Egypt by telling them that it was all of God, that life might be preserved (Gen. 45:7), so will He comfort the Jewish nation in the last days after they have been brought back to Him. God loves the Jews even now.

He used this remarkable word *chashaq* to tell them about it. How He loves to pour into the ears of His people His own love language. The verse before the one quoted above is an example of this. He says: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people (or treasure) unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6).

Then in Deuteronomy 10:15, we have this word *chashaq* rendered *delight*. "Only the Lord had a *delight* in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day." He delights to draw His people to Himself, to hold them and bind them until they are as one with Him.

The word is used only once more in Deuteronomy. In this passage we are reminded of how a man may be drawn to love a beautiful woman: "And thou seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife" (Deut. 21:11). Men must see something desirable in the object of their love, but God loves because He is love. How unchangeable is His love for us! If God could only love us when He thought we were lovely, how sad would our case be! We abide in His love when we are keeping His commandments, but that is speaking of a fellowship and enjoyment of His love

(Jn. 15:10). He loved His own unto the end.

The word *chashaq* is used to speak of the "desire" of King Solomon to build in Jerusalem (1 Ki. 9:19). The desires of a King! Our King has gone to prepare a place for us. Beloved, I believe He is taking great delight in building that place for you.

But the best verse comes last in Scripture. "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back" (Isa. 38:17). Literally this reads, "Thou hast loved my soul (and hast drawn it up) from the pit of destruction." The word for "loved" is *chashaq*. He *chashaqed* my soul from the pit of destruction, joined Himself to me, and drew me to Himself in one act; He bound me to Himself as the spokes of a wheel bind all together.

He set His love upon me as a Lover. "The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instrument all the days of our life in the house of the Lord" (v. 20). It is one thing to know that our Lord saves, but quite another to know the love He puts into it. How beautifully those pillars were bound together to make the tabernacle the place where God dwelt. It was the *chashaqim* that bound them together. Someday we shall know more fully the meaning of that promise: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more" (Rev. 3:12). He loved us to Himself from the pit of destruction, He drew us to Himself. How near are we drawn to Him in this great love-binding? "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones"! What wonderful love is His! Beloved, don't you long to see Him?

U

Heaven's Embrace

O love of God, how strong and true,
Eternal, and yet ever new;
Uncomprehended and unbought,
Beyond all knowledge and all thought.

O love of God, our shield and stay,
Through all the perils of the way;
Eternal love, in thee we rest,
Forever safe, forever blest.

Cobbling for Christ

H. A. IRONSIDE

When I was a boy, I felt it was both a duty and a privilege to help my widowed mother make ends meet by finding employment in vacation time, on Saturdays and other times

when I did not have to be in school. For quite a while I worked for a Scottish shoemaker, or "cobbler," as he preferred to be called, an Orkney man, named Dan Mackay. He was a forthright Christian and his little shop was a real testimony for Christ in the neighborhood. The walls were literally covered with Bible texts and pictures, generally taken from old-fashioned Scripture Sheet Almanacs, so that look where one would, he found the Word of God staring him in the face. There was John 3:16 and John 5:24, Romans 10:9, and many more.

On the little counter, in front of the bench on which the owner of the shop sat, was a Bible, generally open, and a pile of gospel tracts. No package went out of that shop without a printed message wrapped inside. And whenever opportunity offered, the customers were spoken to kindly and tactfully about the importance of being born again, and the blessedness of knowing that the soul is saved through faith in Christ. Many came back to ask for more literature or to inquire more particularly as to how they might find peace with God, with the blessed results that men and women were saved, frequently right in the shoeshop.

It was my chief responsibility to pound leather for shoe soles. A piece of cowhide would be cut to suit, then soaked in water. I had a flat piece of iron over my knees and, with a flat-headed hammer, I pounded these soles until they were hard and dry. It seemed an endless operation to me, and I wearied of it many times.

What made my task worse was the fact that, a block away, there was another shop that I passed going and coming to or from my home, and in it sat a jolly, godless cobbler who gathered the boys of the neighborhood about him and regaled them with

lewd tales that made him dreaded by respectable parents as a menace to the community. Yet, somehow, he seemed to thrive and that perhaps to a greater extent than my employer, Mackay. As I looked in his window, I often noticed that he never pounded the soles at all, but took them from the water, nailed them on, damp as they were, and with the water splashing from them as he drove each nail in.

One day I ventured inside, something I had been warned never to do. Timidly, I said, "I notice you put the soles on while still wet. Are they just as good as if they were pounded?"

He gave me a wicked leer as he answered, "They come back all the quicker this way, my boy!"

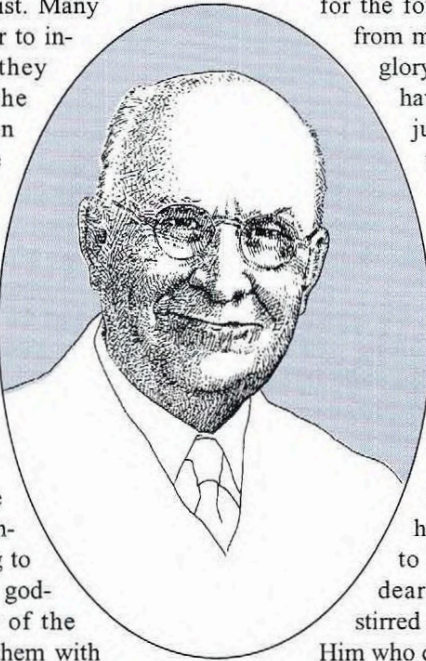
Feeling I had learned something, I related the instance to my boss and suggested that I was perhaps wasting time in drying out the leather so carefully.

Mr. Mackay stopped his work and opened his Bible to the passage that reads, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

"Harry," he said, "I do not cobble shoes just for the four or six bits (50 or 75¢) that I get from my customers. I am doing this for the glory of God. I expect to see every shoe I have ever repaired in a big pile at the judgment seat of Christ, and I do not want the Lord to say to me in that day, 'Dan, this was a poor job. You did not do your best here.' I want Him to be able to say, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

Then he went on to explain that just as some men are called to preach, so he was called to fix shoes, and that only as he did this well would his testimony count for God. It was a lesson I have never been able to forget. Often when I have been tempted to carelessness, and to slipshod effort, I have thought of dear, devoted Dan Mackay, and it has stirred me up to seek to do everything as for Him who died to redeem me. **U**

Harry Ironside was a skilled communicator. This story from his own life is a classic example of an illustration that actually illustrates.



For Such a God is Mine

DOUG KAZEN

Here is a privilege and opportunity available to the child of God living in this present world that is not available anywhere else in the universe. The opportunity must be embraced now, or it will be lost forever.

It is a present possibility to learn of God in a special way while living in a realm of chaos, challenge, and sin. We cannot so learn to know our God in heaven, for those elements which afflict the flesh here are not to be found there.

We shy away from earth's problems. It is natural to do so. We do not seek pain or loneliness or poverty or sorrow. But they come anyway. Across each path such shadows fall. But it is in those very circumstances which we so much dread that we can get to know our heavenly Father in the most precious way possible—if we will only stop and listen to His voice.

He says: Fear not! He will never say that in heaven, for there, there is nothing to fear. This beautiful statement falls only on the ear of one whose passage is where danger lurks. We know that our arch enemy is stalking nearby. We do not know what snare awaits our next step. We hear the rising volume of human madness gushing from a world that is insane with sin. But our Father says, "Fear not."

Our trembling hearts ask: Why should I have no fear? Listen as He responds: "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers" (Isa. 40:22). So often it is those inhabitants that bring us fear. But to Him they are merely as grasshoppers. Fear not!

Our fears often come from forces we cannot control. But listen as our Father says: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things" (Isa. 40:26). So I must fear not; for He made them and the greatness of His might holds them still.

But I am so weak. My vision clouds when it needs to be clear. My tongue is dumb when it ought to shout. My feet grow weary as soon as the path starts uphill. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength" (Isa. 40:29).

Oh, but the trembling heart falters on the edge of fear. Yet, again, our Father's voice speaks in the dark-

ness: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (Isa. 41:10).

Where is He when I need Him? He could not be closer—right at my side. Who is He? He is "thy God." What does He do in my moment of need? He strengthens and helps and upholds His child.

Still our trembling heart asks, Are these mere words? Have I a present, personal, heavenly Father who so tends His own? The answer comes through experience! We must obey the command, "Fear not." The troubled hand must grip His mighty hand. We must believe, and proceed, in His promise: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned." He is not watching from a distance; He is there, with His own. He never abandons, never withdraws, never forsakes.

Nowhere else, except in this troubled lifetime, can we know His presence with us in the floodtide. Nowhere else will one cross a rushing river by His strength alone! Nowhere else shall fire yield its consuming nature and burn us not, except here, while our Father is with us in the trial. In heaven there is neither rising flood nor rushing river nor burning fire. Only here, amidst the elements that make mere men quake with horror, can we learn the reality and the peace of hearing our heavenly Father say: Fear not.

It is such learning of Him in life's darkest hour that builds the child-Father relationship into an eternal and personal treasure. We hear Him call us by name. "Thou art Mine! For I am the Lord thy God...thy Saviour!" Then, as the night darkens, as the valley deepens, as the heart and body grow weary, as the chill world crouches to do us in, we learn to grip His hand a little tighter; we put our foot right in the print He has made as He steps ahead, and we triumphantly pass onward, leaning on the everlasting arms!

No, even in heaven I shall never be able to learn of Him in this delightful manner. Here, the trials draw Him nearer. Here, our personal needs are met by His sustaining grace. Here, where the darkness still abides, we hear Him say in the dead of night: "Fear not, for I am with thee."

U

The Excellencies of Emmanuel

A. CHARLES ROSE

The Name above every name is found written in simple majesty on the first and last pages of the New Testament, and those whose eyes have been anointed with the Spirit's salve can trace it from the beginning to the end of Holy Scripture. That name is Jesus, "Jehovah Saviour."

It is in the Epistle to the Hebrews especially, by contrast and comparison, that His excellences are displayed; to the Hebrews, to whom He was unattractive and unwelcome. They gazed on the root sprouting from the dry ground, thought of their bygone brambles, and longed for the cedars of Lebanon (Jud. 9:14).

The inspired writer quickly gets to the heart of things, and says, "He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name" (Heb. 1:4).

A MORE EXCELLENT NAME

That is one clause in his eloquent description of our Lord Jesus, "God over all blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5), and truly "the noblest Man who ever lived in all the tides of time." The excellent Name connotes the excellent character of its Owner. The Father has bestowed on Him the "Name which is above every name, that at the Name of JESUS every knee should bow" (Phil. 2:9-10). By all the rights of His eternal being and atoning work, He bears the grandest name that perfect love and power could bestow. Ages before the Bethlehem advent, a prophet had declared, "His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). But to this bright galaxy another has been added—JESUS.

True it is that wise men in their day called Him "The Nazarene," that the drunkards shouted His Name in ribald song; that often He was denied the common courtesy of a name, and spoken of as "this fellow" and "that deceiver." Yet today, amidst the world's upheavals, and after the wear and tear of centuries, to a countless multitude His

Earth has her excellences; the scroll of time is engraven with many a name, the luster of which shall endure as long as earth's foundations. But there is one super-excellent name destined to outlast them all.

Name is "as ointment poured forth" (Song of Sol. 1:3). Time and again it has proven a stronghold triumphant over the most hideous powers of hell. It has lingered on the parched lip of the martyr at the stake, robbing death of its sting. It lightens the pilgrim's load, and lures him onward to his goal, the Home "eternal in the Heavens."

But this is not all; that pre-eminent Name, so richly merited and adorned, is very soon to be shared with those who narrowly escaped being written down in letters of everlasting infamy; those who at length answered to their rightful title—"sinners." For our Lord has pledged Himself, saying, "Him that overcometh...I will write upon him the Name of My God, and the name of the city of My God...and I will write upon him My new Name" (Rev. 3:12). Marvellous destiny for these who were "by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3). Well may our hearts bow in adoring worship, and yield to Him in glad surrender at the realization of such amazing love.

*Jesus dishonored and dying, a felon on either side;
Jesus, the song of the drunkard, Jesus the Crucified.*

*Name of God's tender comfort,
Name of His glorious power;
Name that is song and sweetness,
The strong, everlasting tower.*

*Jesus, the Lamb accepted; Jesus, the Priest on His throne,
Jesus, the King who is coming; Jesus, Thy Name alone.*

A MORE EXCELLENT MINISTRY

"Now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry" (Heb. 8:6). This is the burden of the Holy Spirit's message through many chapters. He alternates from Throne to Cross. He travels from the mighty present down into the misty past, and then upward and onward to the eternal future but there is a constancy in His task—the unveiling of the excellences of Emmanuel,



The Excellencies of Emmanuel

“God with us” and for us (Mt. 1:23).

Now He has traced Him back to the right hand of the majesty in the heavens (Heb. 8:1), and proclaims Him the Minister of the New Covenant. Hitherto Moses had represented the high-water mark of mediatorial ministry. The Hebrews looked up to him as the author of their ancient covenant. They saw him forsaking the treasures of Egypt for the desert wilds. They reviewed his return to the court, striking terror to Pharaoh’s heart, until he allowed their bondmen ancestors to march out in triumph. By faith they beheld him on the heights of Sinai, Pisgah, and Nebo, sharing their burden and blame and cheerfully dying on the very threshold of success. No wonder they revered the man and were jealous for his sake.

But now Moses’ glories have paled before the meridian splendor of that other Prophet whose coming he himself had heralded. The hands of Moses were red with the blood of his Egyptian foe; the hands of our Lord Jesus with His own precious blood. Moses descended Sinai with gleaming countenance, the Lawgiver of Israel. Christ ascended Calvary with a visage marred more than any man’s, the Lover of a lost world. Moses struck the second rock with loud complaints. Christ was stricken, and reviled not. Moses died on Nebo in utter silence and secrecy. Christ died on the hilltop in utmost publicity and pain. Moses’ task ended with his decease; but our Lord Jesus entered on a fresh phase of service which has made Him a bright reality to every pilgrim heart. It is good to magnify His manger birth, His peerless Manhood, and His dying love; but do not forget His excellent ministry, apart from which we would be miserable indeed.

How nobly He performed His task down here! How nobly He perfects it there! He is not only the Friend at Court, He is the Advocate proud to hold a brief for every needy soul, and no case committed to Him can ever be lost. Happy those who are beginning to know His worth and enjoy His matchless ministries. Still His delights are with the sons of men. That great heart has not changed since the night when He waited, a towel-girt King, to wash Peter’s feet. The motto on the banner of His love is still “I serve,” and that amazing promise stands, “Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that *He shall gird Himself, and make them to*

sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them” (Lk. 12:37).

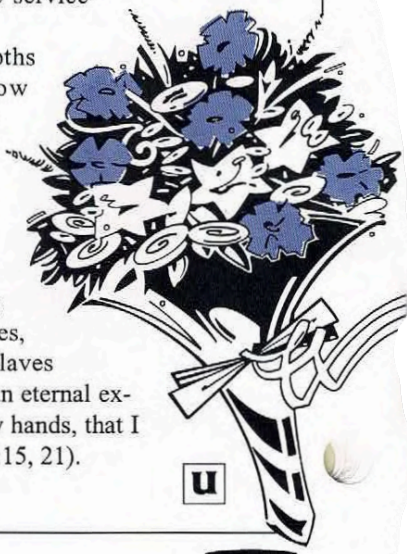
A MORE EXCELLENT SACRIFICE

Finally, we consider His “more excellent sacrifice,” of which Abel’s is a symbol (Heb. 11:4). By virtue of His Godhead, the Son summoned creation into being, and sustained its vast concerns. His dwelling place the Father’s bosom; His Person the sum of all perfection; but even He could not bear the name of JESUS, or fill the vacant post of Daysman, to bridge the gulf between a rebel world and a righteous God, until He qualified Himself by becoming truly man in order to bear in His own body the relentless stroke of justice.

Behold the stainless Judge arraigned in the felon’s dock, condemned to suffer the felon’s doom! See Him grappling with that unheard-of combination of woes—the wrath of God, the sin of the world, the hatred of men and demons. Suffering an eternity of agony in a few hours, yet dying to conquer, rising in triumph, in every detail pleasing His Father and securing an honorable place in His family for every penitent sinner.

Heaven’s occupied throne is proof positive that there are no outstanding claims. But that excellent sacrifice is the pioneer of a countless host of acceptable offerings, each one a sweet savor of Christ. On His behalf the apostle pleads, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1).

What heights and depths of grace are these! How heartening the prospect to those who are determined to walk in that “more excellent way” of love (1 Cor. 12:31). How glorious to hear His well-known voice ringing above the strife of tongues, saying to the erstwhile slaves of sin: “I will make thee an eternal excellency...the work of My hands, that I may be glorified” (Isa. 60:15, 21).



Bible or Basketball?

BRIAN GUNNING

There is a high degree of spiritual appetite among many of the next generation. One assembly I know just completed four weeks of intensive Bible study for the young people, led by a senior man in the assembly. They went for three hours each night. Another assembly's young people recently spent a Saturday night delivering "meals on wheels" to some of the senior Christians. *Rise Up and Build* in Lexington witnessed the enthusiasm of more than 400 young people going all day in Bible exposition seminars, finally shutting down at 11:00 PM with Dr. David Gooding in a question and answer session.

We have a golden opportunity to commit the truth to the next generation. Are we doing it? Here are some suggestions:

1. Cater to the highest spiritual level, not the lowest. For many years, young people's activities were designed to reach the carnal and unspiritual. It was a responsibility the assembly assumed for the rebellious; the spiritual kids had to fend for themselves. Thriving young peoples' groups today place a high emphasis on Bible study and practical service. It may require a transition; there will be some disruption of the status quo. But it will pay rich dividends among the youth when the spiritual is given emphasis.

2. Make the Bible, not basketball, the focus of young peoples' meetings. Now there is nothing wrong with some good, healthy, physical activity, especially for young people. The problem in the past was that 'activities' were made the primary focus for young people, leading them to think the Christian life and assembly life was a mere social function. Young people today want to understand the Bible and to live it. The more we demand, the more they like it. Make the Bible the first order of business. However, this will require some example setting. There is a major difference between a good basketball game to relax after serious Bible study or a brief sermonette after a serious basketball game.

3. Encourage practical service. There is a great deal to do in the assembly. Visit the elderly, clean up the assembly building and property,

help the missionary class, give out tracts, to name a few. The joy of fellowship in the service of the Lord develops lasting friendships and needed encouragement for both the servants and the served.

4. Encourage attendance at all assembly meetings. More and more we are noticing assembly meetings have a high percentage of attendance by young people. They are becoming the reliable attenders. Don't let young people fall into the bad habit of another generation—making assembly meetings optional.

5. Encourage the development of gift. Timothy was encouraged to "stir up" his gift. Young people need opportunities to develop. Some youth show potential in public ministry, others in private. Both should be encouraged. One assembly I know allowed the young people to open the Sunday night meeting. In the past, experienced preachers often invited a young man to give a brief message at the beginning of the meeting.

Older women need to help younger women develop their gift, too. The whole assembly should be behind them. This will take grace and patience for the inevitable mistakes. Some will want to go beyond their ability in their enthusiasm, others will be reluctant to attempt something for the Lord. Both will need gentle, loving correction.

6. Pray for our young people. The Christian life has sufficient resources for the close of the 20th century. Sure, things are bad around us. The world is a terrible place with many snares. But this is not new. Immerse our young people in prayer. God can keep them. Through our prayers the Lord will equip and preserve them.

7. Love them. Let them see genuine Christian love in action. The fellowship among believers knows no age barrier. Young people don't want you to be like them, but they can't resist your love for them. This will speak volumes to them. They will do the same for others.

Kids today! We have been given a tremendous opportunity to "commit...to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Let's not miss our only shot.

Of course there are always factors that could discourage us in the work of God. But one of the many encouraging signs today is found in many of our young people.

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The Bright Side of Growing Older

F. R. HAVERGAL

"And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning" (Job 11:17).



I suppose nobody ever naturally did like the idea of getting older, at least after he had left school. There is a sense of oppression and depression about it (Eccl. 1:4-5). The irresistible, inevitable onward march of moments and years without the possibility of one instant's pause—a march that even while on the uphill side of life is leading to the downhill side—casts an autumn-like shadow over even many a spring birthday. But how surely the Bible gives us the bright side of everything. In this case it gives three bright sides of a fact which, without it, could not help being gloomy.

First, it opens the sure prospect of increasing brightness to those who have begun to walk in the light (1 Jn. 1:17). Even if the sun of our life has reached the apparent zenith, it is no poetic western shadows that are to lengthen upon our way: our age is to be "clearer than the noonday." How suggestive that word is! The light, though intenser and nearer, shall dazzle less: "in Thy light shall we see light." We shall be able to bear much more of it, see it more clearly, see all else by it more clearly, reflect it more clearly. We would have said, "At evening time there shall be shadow." God says, "At evening time it shall be light" (Zech. 14:7).

Also, we are not to look for a dismal afternoon of life with only some final sunset glow, for He says it "shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). "More and more" leaves no dark intervals; we are to expect a continually brightening path. "The future is one wish of brightness and blessedness" to those who are willing only to walk in the light (Jn. 8:12). Just think, when you are ten or twenty years older, that will only mean ten or twenty years' more experience of His love and faithfulness, more light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6), and still "more and more unto the perfect day" will be opening out before us!

The second bright side is increasing faithfulness. Do not confuse works and fruit (Mt. 7:20, 22). Many a saint in the land of Beulah is not able to do anything at all and yet is bringing forth fruit to God (Rom. 7:4) beyond the busiest workers. Even when we come to the days when "the strong men shall bow themselves" (Eccl. 12:3), there may be more pleasant fruits for our Master, riper and fuller and sweeter, than ever before. For "they shall still bring forth fruit in old age" (Ps. 92:14); and the man who simply "trusteth in the Lord"

"shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

Some of the fruit of the Spirit seems to be especially and peculiarly characteristic of sanctified older years; do we not want to bring them all forth? Look at the splendid ripeness of Abraham's faith in his old age (Rom. 4:19, 21); the grandeur of Moses' meekness when he went up the mountain alone to die (Deut. 34:1, 5); the mellowness of Paul's joy in his later epistles; and the wonderful gentleness of John which makes us almost forget his early character of "a son of thunder" wanting to call down God's lightnings of wrath (Lk. 9:54). And the same Spirit is given us that we, too, may bring forth fruit that may abound, and always more fruit (Jn. 15:2).

The third bright side is brightest of all: "Even to your old age, I am He"; always the same Jehovah-Jesus; with us all the days (see Mt. 28:20), bearing and carrying us all the days; reiterating His promise—"even to hoar hairs will I carry you...even I will carry and will deliver you" (Isa. 46:4), just as He carries the lambs in His bosom. For we shall always be His little children, and doubtless He will always be our Father. The rush of years cannot touch this (Heb. 1:11-12).

*Fear not the westering shadows,
O children of the Day,
For brighter still and brighter
Shall be your homeward way.
Resplendent as the morning
With fuller glow and power,
And clearer than the noonday
Shall be your evening hour.*

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The Ministry of Tears

L. W. G. ALEXANDER

Each member of the human race usually begins life weeping, for weeping is one of the first signs of life in a newly born babe, and the entire path of life is in measure soaked with tears. We may rest assured that this is not God's purpose for man. No, an enemy has done this. God placed man, His perfect creature, in Eden. Man found in God everything that his sinless nature could desire. Man was perfect; his environment was perfect; his joy was perfect. God joyed in man, and man joyed in God. Heaven stooped to kiss earth, and earth rose to welcome the embrace of Heaven. Thus the bridal bliss of earth and Heaven was consummated in joy and ecstasy.

But, alas, a malignant being beheld that blessed scene with hellish hate, and purposed its destruction. Quickly he compassed man's fall; by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Man's fair paradise has been lost, and this world has been turned into the Vale of Tears.

Sin has not only affected man, it has affected God. Sin has moved the Godhead as nothing else in the universe has done. Sin brought the Son of God to earth; sin was the occasion of His being here in human form to ransom and redeem. His life below bears witness to God's deep concern for the woes of mankind.

Three times at least it is placed on record in Scripture that the Son of God wept during the days of His flesh. Surely the fact that He—the Source of life and joy—should stoop from His Godhood glory and shed human tears on this sin-burdened earth, tells of grace and compassion that surpass comprehension.

TEARS OF SYMPATHY

"Jesus wept" (Jn. 11:35). More wonderful words than these are nowhere to be found in Scripture. The verb translated "wept" is not found elsewhere. Literally it is: "Jesus shed tears." These were tears of sympathy with the bereaved—Heaven's gems sparkling on the cheeks of Emmanuel, revealing to mankind the very heart of the Eternal.

The Lord stood by the tomb where a loved and only brother had been laid, and where two broken-hearted sisters mourned the one they had loved and lost. Could He not have prevented this sorrow? Yes. Could He not have come earlier and robbed death of its triumph? Yes. But this sorrow was permitted for the glory of

Man was created in God's image, and of him it has been truly said that his chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever. Yet one of man's most common experiences in life is that of weeping.

God. How true the words of the sisters: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here my brother had not died!" For His own His absence makes death and sorrow possible. Death cannot abide His presence nor can tears flow there.

WHY TEARS ARE PERMITTED

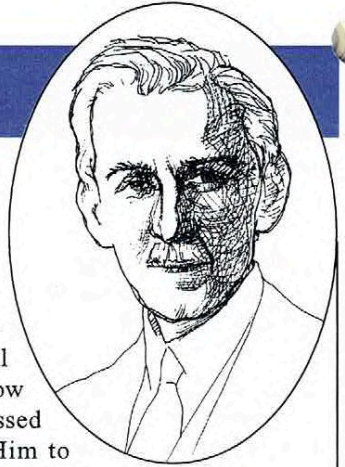
Here, then, we find it clearly taught that God permits death and sorrow to come upon His loved ones that He may be glorified thereby. This is a fact worthy of deep pondering. Had Lazarus not died, these words would never have been written, "Jesus shed tears." Had Lazarus not died, these silent witnesses to the anguish that tore His heart in view of human loss and sorrow had never flowed. Had Lazarus not died, this special revelation of the heart of God would never have been granted to men to support them in the hour of anguish and sorrow. The death of Lazarus has enriched the race with a vision of God, the glory of which can only be discerned through tear-dimmed eyes.

These sisters had seen Him often. They had ministered to His wants; they had listened to His words. They loved to welcome Him to their home and to gaze on His face. He brought the sunshine of Heaven with Him, and diffused its peace around. He touched them in their joy; can He touch them also in their sorrow? They had seen that face radiant with holy joy; they must see it likewise clouded with anguish and behold the teardrops coursing down. Thus would He teach them, and us, how to "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15).

THE BROTHERHOOD OF TEARS

Fellowship in tears ought to be an easy matter for the sons of men, for tears, sooner or later, are the lot of all. We reach a common bond in the brotherhood of tears. I weep with my brother at morn; he weeps with me at night. May the tears of the Son of God at the tomb of Lazarus not appeal to our hearts in vain! He

The Ministry of Tears



has placed a holy dignity upon tears.

The tears of the Lord at this time are all the more wonderful as we contemplate the fact that He knew He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead and restore him to these sisters and thrill their hearts with an unexpected joy. Not for them alone, therefore, were these tears shed. They were shed to assure our hearts that He sees and understands. For true it is that

*"Our fellow-Sufferer yet retains
A fellow-feeling of our pains;
And still remembers in the skies
His tears, His agonies, and cries.*

*In every pang that rends the heart
The Man of Sorrows had a part;
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief."*

Of nothing are we better assured from Scripture than that the Lord is still able to enter into the sorrows of His people, as He did during the days of His flesh, to sympathize with them in bereavement, and to send them divine succor from on high. To this very end did He suffer when here below. It behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest.

The words of the angels to the disciples after His ascension were: "This same Jesus" (Acts 1:11). He sits on the throne of God, having been absent in person from our world for nearly two thousand years, but these words prove that He is still unchanged, that He abides the "same Jesus." True it is that He now is where tears can never flow, but the compassion that caused Him to shed tears in the days of His flesh remains unchanged, and by the Spirit He draws near to assure our hearts of His divine sympathy.

TEARS OF PITY

"When He drew nigh, He saw the city, and wept over it" (Lk. 19:41). The word "wept" in this case differs from the one found in John 11:35. There the evidences of His grief were alone to be seen in the silent tears that rolled down His cheeks. Here, however, the word implies that His grief was accompanied with outward signs of mourning and lamentation. In John 11, however poignant His grief, He knew that presently

that sorrow would be turned into joy; but here is a grief upon whose night no ray of light shall ever shine; and the shadow of that darkness oppressed His soul and caused Him to weep and lament.

His omniscient eye could scan the future, and the unparalleled woes that were to overwhelm His people—because they knew not the day of their visitation—were all unveiled to His gaze. The appalling spectacle oppressed Him; the city destroyed, the temple burned, the people slain, the remnant scattered. Yet how often would He have gathered them together as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but they would not. The light of God they had deliberately rejected; their doom was sealed; the things that pertained to their peace were forever hidden from their eyes.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF TEARS

The Lord is not alone in His grief and tears on account of the impenitence of men. His servants in all ages have been permitted to share with Him in this fellowship of tears.

Pre-eminent in this respect was Jeremiah. What his eye beheld affected his soul (Lam. 3:48-49), so that he could say: "Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. Mine eye trickleth down and ceaseth not, without any intermission."

The apostle Paul frequently refers to his tears: "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears" (Acts 20:19). "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31). "I wrote unto you with many tears" (2 Cor. 2:4). "Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18).

Such, then, was our Lord. Such were His apostles and prophets. They served God with many tears. How, then, shall we account for the dearth of tears in our day in this respect? A modern writer has said: "We have tears for everything but the infinite loss of those who have rejected the gospel. For this, alas, no single drop trickles along the dry watercourses. We are smitten

with a terrible drought, our hearts a very Sahara, our water-springs frozen by remorseless cold or scorched by relentless heat."

THE POWER OF TEARS

In losing the power of tears we have lost one great power of causing them. It is by broken hearts that hearts are broken, by wet eyes that eyes are made to brim over with the waters of repentant sorrow. The picture here is not overdrawn. Tears are practically unknown.

Is it that the dangers which assail the Church of God are fewer than in the apostle's days when he warned everyone of them night and day with tears? Is it that the hardness and impenitence of men has passed away, and that they are more urgent in their response to the pleadings of God? No! Is it rather that the preaching of old was impelled by a dread "woe is me," coupled with the constraining power of the compassions that filled the heart of Christ, and that the preaching of today is too often degraded to the level of mere professionalism? Yet the promise stands true: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:5-6). Might not a revival of apostolic tears yet bring to us a revival of apostolic power! Might not a revival of prophetic weeping yet bring to us a revival of prophetic vision!

TEARS OF AGONY

"Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death" (Heb. 5:7). Our Lord wept in sympathy at the tomb of Lazarus; He wept in pity over doomed Jerusalem; He wept in agony in Gethsemane. This latter is a weeping in which we cannot share except insofar as we yet are enabled by God to weep with Him who wept. The agony that caused His anguish with strong crying and tears must be borne by Himself alone. The dreaded hour has come, and the dark shadow of Calvary presses upon His soul. His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, and in this agony He wept and prayed. Moreover, He looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but

He found none. Yes, we may not enter here; but we may, with unshod feet, draw near to gaze and search the secret of His woes.

There were two companies around the Cross. "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (Jn. 16:20). The world's joy ends in sorrow; our sorrow issues in joy. It is clear from these words that the disciples did weep and lament for their Lord. They wept with Him who wept. He had won their hearts, and in His death their hopes were crushed.

This aspect of the fellowship of tears is an extremely blessed and touching one. To us also is given the opportunity of weeping with Him who wept. Whose heart has never been touched to tears as he contemplated the sufferings of Christ? Ah! here perhaps is the point at which the tide of tears has too long been stayed, and where again that tide must flow.

A REVIVAL OF TEARS

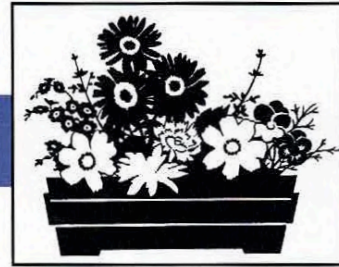
Surely there is abundant room and opportunity for a revival of tears in view of the love of Christ, the sufferings of Christ, and the Cross of Christ. Then it would be easy to weep over a doomed world and to shed tears in sympathy with every human woe.

The Lord's words to the disciples were: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice" (Jn. 16:22). This points to the resurrection morn. The first words placed on record as spoken by our Lord in resurrection were not addressed to any of the apostles, but to a lone woman disconsolately weeping for her lost Lord: "Woman, why weepest thou?" (Jn. 20:15). There is "a time to weep, and a time to laugh" (Eccl. 3:4), and in their place joy and rejoicing are as fitting as weeping is in its place. Mary's weeping was turned into joy as she gazed on her risen Lord, and heard from His lips these cherished words: "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God" (Jn. 20:17). As with her, so with us, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Ps. 30:5).

*"'Why weepest thou?' thus saith the Saviour still,
And speaks to thee, O heart, by tempests torn;
Soon, in the glory, joy thy heart shall fill;
The darkest night of woe precedes the brightest morn."*

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OUR HEARTS IN HEAVEN



“For God so loved the world”
 —Heaven’s brightest beam;
 “That He gave His only begotten Son”
 —Earth’s greatest theme;
 “That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish”
 —God’s simplest theme;
 “But have everlasting life” (John 3:16).
 —Life’s purest stream.

—Notes, Quotes & Anecdotes

*Tell me about the Master!
 I am weary and worn tonight,
 The day lies behind me in shadow,
 And only the evening is light.
 Light with a radiant glory
 That lingers about the west,
 My poor heart is weary, weary,
 And longs like a child for rest.*

*Tell me about the Master!
 Of the wrong He freely forgave,
 Of His love and tender compassion,
 Of His love that is mighty to save.
 For my heart is weary, weary,
 Of the woes and temptations of life,
 Of the error that stalks in the noonday,
 Of falsehoods and malice and strife.*

*Yet, I know that whatever of sorrow,
 Or pain or temptation befall,
 The Infinite Master hath suffered,
 And knoweth and pitieth all.
 So tell me the old, old story
 That falls on each wound like a balm,
 And my heart that was burdened and
 broken
 Shall grow patient, and strong, and calm.*
 —Author Unknown

Mr. A. McLay, a believer from Cardiff, Wales, was exposed to a virulent attack on Christ at a table of business associates. Knowing his Christian stand, someone said, “Mr. McLay, haven’t you anything to say to this?”

He replied: “...This man in his ignorance and blindness presumes to speak these untrue words against the One who is infinitely more to me than the closest earthly friend, One who has died for me, which no one else could have done. My reply is that I declare my heart’s allegiance to my Lord Jesus Christ, crucified for sinners, now made both Lord and Christ at the right hand of the throne of God.”

*Only for Jesus! Lord, keep it forever
 Sealed on the heart and engraved on the life;
 Pulse of all gladness, and nerve of endeavor,
 Secret of rest, and the strength for our strife.*

—F. R. Havergal

We are shaped
 and fashioned
 by what we
 love.

—Goethe

My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto Thee among the nations. Psalm 57:7-9

On one occasion when in London, I was walking home from a meeting. Part of the way I was accompanied by the Marquis of Aberdeen (who had presided) and the Lord Bishop of Norwich (who had been one of the speakers). Being an American, and unaccustomed to titles, I felt embarrassed as to how I should address men of their position. I expressed my perplexity, and the Marquis replied, “My dear brother, just address us as your brethren in Christ. We have no higher honor than that.”
 —H. A. Ironside

We love Him, because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19

Love ever gives, forgives, outlives; and ever stands with open hands; and while it lives, it gives. For this is love’s prerogative: to give and give and give.

The Central Place of the Cross

HAROLD ST. JOHN

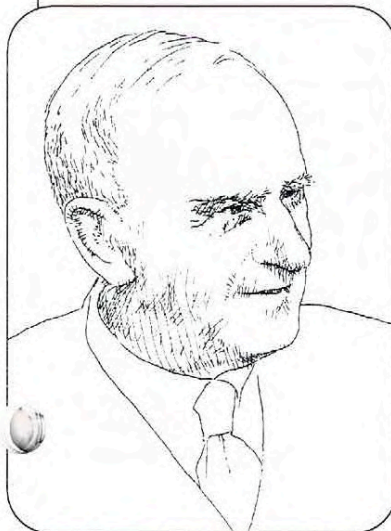
Three centuries before the Apostle Paul lived and suffered, there was a migration of Celtic tribes from Gaul. These, passing across Europe, settled in Asia Minor (now Turkey), and gave their ancient name to their new home (Galatia simply being a corruption of Gaul-[in]-Asia); thus France and Turkey were first linked in human history.

In the light of this, it is interesting to notice how the familiar traits of the modern French character may be traced in this epistle, written to their forefathers. Chivalrous and self-sacrificing love, a tendency to fickleness, revelry, and vainglory, may all be found in Galatia as clearly as in Paris today (4:15; 1:6; 4:18; 5:21, 26).

To these districts came Paul, preaching "his gospel" with wide acceptance and success. But shortly after he had left, other teachers entered and sowed tares in God's wheat fields, and the Galatian churches found themselves facing the dire and dual peril of a mutilated gospel, taught by time-serving teachers.

On hearing this, Paul came to the rescue, and by this epistle flung the whole weight of his power into the task of proving, first, his own consistency in contrast with the vacillations of Peter, the instability of Barnabas, and the cunning carnality of those who would pervert the gospel of Christ, and after devoting two chapters to this, he then reveals the central place of the Cross in the faith of the Church, as well as in the salvation of the soul.

I want to write of his interpretation of the Cross, as given in this epistle ("a letter about Calvary"), because the same peril that threatened Galatia is overshadowing modern Church life, and today even good men misunderstand the Cross, while bad men emasculate and degrade its teaching until we are left with merely "a supreme example of self-sacrifice."



The two-fold theme of the Galatian epistle is the grace of Christ and the gospel of Christ (1:6-7). Both are displayed in their fulness on a hill outside Salem's gate.

The truth is that, while the Resurrection is the highest physical miracle, the Cross is the deepest moral wonder in history; it is not merely a martyr bearing appalling bodily suffering, not simply a Man offering Himself as a target for Satan, nor even He who was God, manifest in Manhood, suffering the awful sense of moral distance from One whose Fellow He had been from all eternity and thus experiencing spiritual woe.

The Cross contains all these, but, more profoundly still, we see in it an ordered crisis in the Godhead. On the one hand God in unsullied holiness, on the other, Deity standing in the place of sin. It is righteousness in God demanding satisfaction and a sacrifice, love in God freely offering itself as a victim. It reveals the Father suffering as, from the heights of His holiness, He surveys the sorrows of His Son; and that Son suffering as He is made sin, and from the depths of His abasement, looking up to see a darkened Heaven and Himself forsaken.

It declares that God in Christ loved me so deeply that He gave His Son to die for my sake, and that that Son entered the atmosphere of the curse, dying there in the dark, and then rose in triumph in the power of an indissoluble life. So swiftly does one follow the other that one is reminded of an arctic sunset, in which the light dies away in the west and the watcher turns to the east to find that the first shafts of dawn are already rising on the horizon.

The reception of such a message must involve an earthquake in the experience of its recipients, and my aim is to show how the Cross readjusts certain relationships of life in ways which appear to have been in the mind of the author of this letter.

THE CROSS AS A CORONATION STONE FOR CHRIST (2:20)

I cannot remember where I read or heard the above phrase, but it seems to enshrine the idea of this verse. Turn to the story of the "days of His flesh" and see

The Central Place of the Cross

how three times He deliberately chose the Cross—at His baptism, when He was numbered with the transgressors; in Luke 9:51, when He set His face to go to Jerusalem; and again in John 12:27 when He declared “for this cause came I unto this hour.”

Again, three times He was tempted to turn aside and to take a short-cut to glory, namely, in the desert, at Caesarea Philippi, and in Gethsemane; in these cases the voices of Peter, Satan, and His own will were heard, but He held on His way, rejecting the apostle’s well-meant words, the seductions of Satan, and choosing the Father’s will and not His own.

To those who have worshipfully weighed these things, only one course is open, and that is to abdicate life’s throne (1 Pet. 3:15, RV) and to crown Him as Lord: as we descend the steps He ascends, and Tenyson’s longing finds its fulfillment:

*“Oh that a Man might arise in me
That the man I am might cease to be!”*

Augustine tells us how, in the early days of his Christian life, passing along the streets of Milan, he saw one of the companions of his old dissolute days coming towards him. Immediately he began to run in the opposite direction; his former friend gave chase, crying, “Augustine, why do you run? It is I!”

Looking back over his shoulder, he called to her, “I run because it is not I.” He knew that Christian life means the substitution of Christ for self, and that is still our highest wisdom.

Are you afraid that an enthroned Lord would make demands upon you that would shatter your life plans and crush your cherished hopes and ambitions? This may well be if these are unworthy ones, but while I can say nothing as to what He may do, I know this:

*“He is stronger than the strongest,
He’s far better than the best,
And His love has lasted longer,
It has stood the hardest test.
The sinfulest may trust Him,
Nor their welcome ever doubt,
For He’s pledged His faithful promise
That He never will cast out.”*

*He is tenderer than the tenderest,
He’s the fairest of the fair;*

*He will be thy soul’s Defender,
Thou mayest rest in safety there.
Though fierce enemies surround you,
And you sink in life’s alarms,
He will surely place around you
His strong, everlasting arms.”*

THE CROSS AS A CAUSTIC FOR SIN (5:26)

I use the word caustic in its ordinary medical sense, as a corrosive substance used to destroy diseased tissue (for specimens of such tissue, see vv. 19-21).

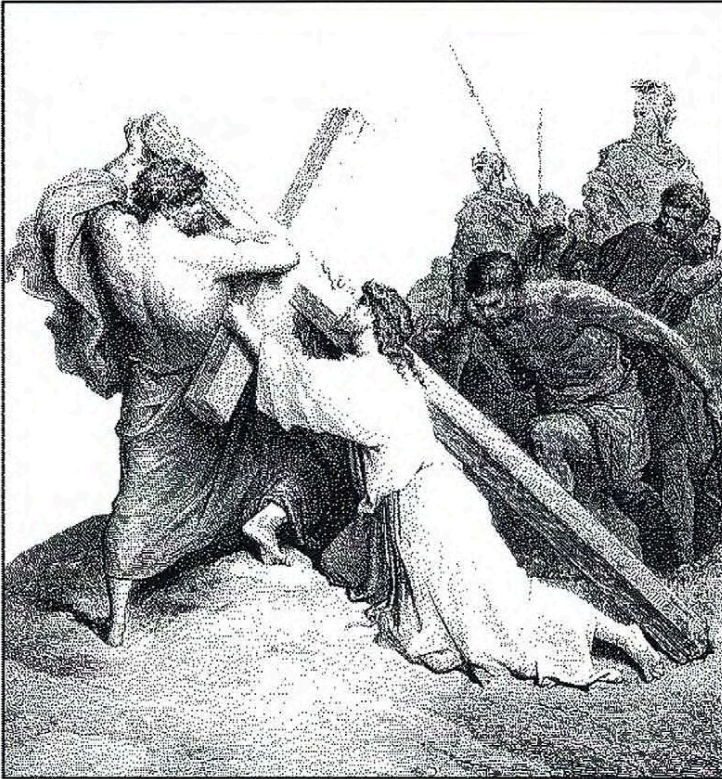
In the days of John Bunyan’s imprisonment there lived at Bedford a wicked old man, named Ned Bratt, with his equally evil wife, and they tell us how one day, when the justices were sitting in the Bedford Assizes, there was a great tumult at the door of the court, and presently old Ned Bratt and his wife walked in hand-in-hand, groaning and weeping, and although a case was being tried begged to be allowed to ease their conscience by telling their crimes to the court; and on permission being given they told how they had been to the prison and had seen a certain tinker there, and how his words had so pricked their hearts that they must immediately cleanse themselves of their sins by confessing to murder and a whole heap of black and evil stuff.

When we stand in the presence of John Bunyan’s Lord, and in the clear light of His Cross, we, too, are naked and ashamed as we learn that not hammers, nor nails, nor Roman soldiers held Him to the tree; that these were merely blind material instruments of His agony, but that it was love for me and hatred for my sins that brought Him to such a place; then, I say, I begin to hate sin, and apply the burning caustic to all life’s “diseased tissues,” and rejoice that “sin shall not have dominion over me” “I live, and yet not I.”

The results of this are given in the immediate context of our passage; in the lives of those who have crucified the flesh is produced the fruit of the Spirit, and they “walk in the Spirit.”

I remember how, in South America, on one occasion some engineering works had been begun, but owing to malaria had to be abandoned; the ground was thickly wooded forest land, and before leaving the engineers set light to a broad belt of land, hoping thus to cleanse the infected area, and for months the brush-

The Central Place of the Cross



wood was smoldering; about two years after the workmen returned to resume operations and were surprised to find the blackened ground covered with a new and unknown type of plant with an exquisite blue flower.

Specimens were gathered and forwarded to the Botanical Gardens at Washington and elsewhere, but no one could identify this apparent product of the action of the fire. How many times have I seen this in the realm of the soul, a crucified, cauterized life giving birth to new flowers and fruit of the Spirit.

THE CROSS AS GOD'S FRONTIER BETWEEN THE WORLD AND THE CHRISTIAN (6:14)

Here Paul reproduces the scene of Calvary and shows us three Crosses: one, that of our Lord Jesus Christ in the center; by its side another on which the world is hanging like the impenitent thief, nailed there by the hands of Paul; finally, on a third is seen Paul himself, crucified by the world and looking across to His Lord. The life of Paul was that of a crucified man,

and there lay the secret of his success; too often ours is not. We try to make the best of both worlds, plowing with the ox and the ass in one yoke, and sowing our fields with divers seeds.

And yet, thank God, here and there surrendered hearts are finding out the reality of Christ's Lordship and, pushing back the near horizon, cede more and more territory to Him and less to the world. Once we wrote our letters when and how we would, now we have to bow our heads first and ask what He wants us to say; once we read what we pleased, now He stands over against our bookshelves; once we went to preach wherever we willed, but now we can only go where He sends us; once we ate according to our appetite, now we remember the restraint of His presence; once we built up our businesses according to the world's standards, now we are content to be undersecretaries to His praise.

There is a price to pay for these deep joys. Thomas said to His Lord, "Except I see the marks of the nails in His hands I will not believe;" and the world says it still, not to Christ, but to Christians, and she has a right to demand these "marks of the Lord Jesus" in us (v. 17). Our faith is not a mere genial picnic, begun and ended with a reckless forgiveness of the past, but a crusade in which our Leader demands unqualified and unreserved obedience.

There is no future for any movement unless it can count on the support of people who are willing to suffer for it, and we must know where we stand; if we are able to trust Him and one another we may expect times of costly blessing, but "if one member suffer (or sin), all the members suffer with it."

*"Dole not thy duties out to God,
But let thy hand be free;
Look long at Jesus, His fair love,
How was it dealt to thee?
The perfect way is hard to flesh,
It is not hard to love;
If thou wert sick for want of God
How quickly would'st thou move?"*

U

Never Man Spake Like This Man

GEORGE GOODMAN

Our Lord stated that by his words a man is justified. James adds: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man." This being so, we are right in applying the Lord's own test to Himself and judging Him by His words. Is He the Perfect Man?

Four simple men were used by God to record the history of One who called Himself the Son of Man, who walked familiarly among men, eating and drinking, and conversing with them. They tell their story in plain, straightforward language, each in his own style, scarcely commenting on what is recorded, but writing as those who narrate what they saw, and tell what they heard.

No one suggests that they have been in collusion. There are too many marks of diversity to allow that theory; yet it is the same Divine Person who is depicted, who speaks in the same marvellous way. It is impossible to conceive that four ordinary men, writing separately, could each have invented such a perfect Character or could have put such words into His lips.

Matthew, the publican; Mark, the servant; Luke, the physician; and John, the fisherman, record for us in a candid and open manner the words of Him who spake as "never man spake."

The words themselves, as recorded, are comparatively few. We have no long dissertations, no elaborate treatises. The longest discourse takes but fifteen minutes to read aloud. The whole of His words could, I suppose, be printed in a pamphlet of sixteen pages, and yet those words are such that they have astounded the whole world, and established His reputation. "The same is a Perfect Man." More than this, "Truly this was the Son of God."

There is no spot or blemish in them, no confession of sin, no mistake, no uncertainty, no hesitation. Such terms as "Perhaps," "I think," "It is possibly so," or other evidence of fallibility is indiscoverable. All is authoritative, calm, and decisive. He spoke as one having authority: "I say unto you."

The style is perfect. Not a vestige appears of sentimentality, no weak emotion, no plea for pity, no mock heroics, no posing for effect, no lightness or trifling, no irritation or hastiness. There is no dead fly in the oint-

ment to mar His reputation for wisdom.

These four writers hold up for admiration nothing that the world gloried in. It is doubtful if they had any intention or thought of depicting a hero or great man—they told a simple story of One whom they had seen and loved, and whose words had reached their hearts.

Let us take the collection of His words in our hands and look at it. We need not be enthusiasts or devotees, we need bring no prejudice, nor look at it through colored glasses. It bears examination. It seems to say to all: "I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say" (1 Cor. 10:15). Let us judge this unique Volume first from the lowest of men's standards.

HIS WORDS AS ORDINARY LITERATURE

We discover at once that here is narration unequalled in the world. Read the parable of the Prodigal Son. It has attained worldwide fame. Note its simple pathos, its powerful appeal to the heart. Tears of thousands have been shed on the pages. It has turned untold sinners to a new life. In order to test its excellence by comparison, search through all the great writers of the world for something to compare with it for simplicity, dignity, and excellence.

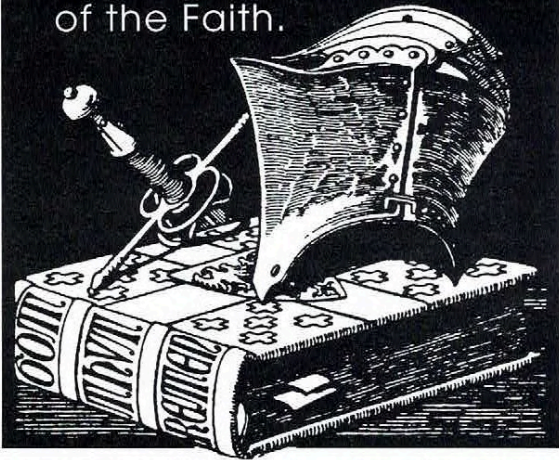
In the Greek it contains but 396 words, not one of which could be spared as mere verbiage. Can Shakespeare, Milton, Dante, Schiller, Goethe, or the more homely Longfellow, and Wordsworth, or any of our prose authors supply anything to compete with it?

But the same gracious lips told the story of the Lost Sheep, the Good Samaritan; the parable of the Sower; the Publican and the Pharisee; the Great Supper for the poor, blind, and lame; the Ten Virgins; and the Rich Man and Lazarus. Where in all the field of literature shall we find anything to compare with, much more to surpass, these masterpieces of literary art?

Who is this that at once steps above all the world's greatest writers, to be acknowledged superior to them all? Surely judged by this lowest of standards, "never man spake like this Man."

The supreme excellence of true art is strength, beauty, and simplicity. It is recorded that once Leonardo da Vinci visited a young artist friend. He found his friend was absent, but on the easel in his studio there was an untouched canvas ready for use. Leonardo took up a chalk, and with one sweep of the hand drew a circle on

The Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate Defender of the Faith.



the canvas. On his return, the young artist at once exclaimed, "Leonardo has been here!" No one else could have drawn that simple but perfect figure.

It is so with Christ. The dignity and grace, the power and truth of the stories He told cause one to exclaim, "The Lord has been here," for "never man spake as this Man."

Now let us judge the words that fell from His lips by another standard.

THE MORAL EXCELLENCE OF HIS WORDS

There have been many moralists in the world, and many codes of honor, and much sound advice as to conduct. Good moral teaching has been the common property of the sages of the past, but which of them can compare with the exalted wisdom and heart-searching purity of the Sermon on the Mount?

The ideals that have been held up to men for their admiration and emulation are quietly set aside. The warrior in shining armor gives place to the blessedness of the gentle, the merciful, to the love of enemies and a desire to do them good. The accumulation of wealth is rebuked as not representing truly that in which a man's life consists, rather it is in giving and lending, while no return is looked for. The Heavenly Father will supply the present need and the reward will be in Heaven, with not even "the cup of cold water" forgotten.

The pride and show of religious display and love of applause are rebuked. Prayer, fasting, giving are only

means to an end, and that end not self, but a walk of communion with God, and loving thought for others.

The searching demand for purity that is of the heart, that governs even the restless eyes; and the love that regards hatred as murder; the truth that makes the "Yea, yea," and the "Nay, nay," and needs no oath to strengthen it; the obedience that hears and does, and thus builds the life on a foundation of rock. Such is the exalted morality that places the words of Christ out of reach of any competitor, and causes us still to exclaim, "He taught as One having authority!"

Think, too, of their sympathy and encouragement. Again we must exclaim, "Never man spake as this Man." Moralists are confessedly stern men, hard in their words and harsh in their judgments, often cynical and satirical in their criticisms of their times. But this Man, though His words are often weighty in their burden (see for example Mt. 23, with its eight "Woes"), He was never accused of being cold, harsh, or unfeeling. Even the chapter of "Woes" ends with tender words of compassion: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mt. 23:37).

The common people heard Him gladly, and marvelled at His gracious words. Sinners wept at His feet, and the brokenhearted were comforted and their wounds bound up. Did ever man speak to sinners as He? "Thy sins be forgiven," "Go in peace," yet with no laxity of morals. "Go, and sin no more."

But we have to recognize in this Volume of His words greater marvels than those. It is impossible to close our eyes to the fact that in His words we find the most stupendous claims and a self-assertion that is beyond anything in knowledge or experience.

HE PREACHED HIMSELF

He claimed Himself to be the Salvation He came to bring. His use of the words "I AM" was equivalent to the assumption of Deity. It identified Him with Jehovah who appeared in the burning bush—the "I Am that I Am"—and called forth the wrath of the Pharisees, who accused Him of "making Himself equal with God" (Jn. 5:18), a charge which He did not refute, but confirmed by the words, "All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father" (Jn. 5:23).

Never Man Spake Like This Man

The Jews knew and loved Psalm 23 dearly, as any Christian does. "Jehovah is my Shepherd." What then must have been their feelings when they heard this Man say, "I am the Good Shepherd" (Jn. 10:11)? They knew that this involved a claim to be Jehovah.

The "I AM" was constantly on His lips. "Before Abraham was, I AM" (Jn. 8:58). "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man then shall ye know that I AM" (John 8:28). "If ye believe not that I AM, ye shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24). Perhaps the most remarkable use of the words was in the Garden of Gethsemane, when they came to take Him. "Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I AM. As soon then as He had said unto them I AM, they went backwards and fell to the ground" (Jn. 18:5-6). The majesty of His word overpowered them.

His Claim as Saviour: As we ponder the words before our eyes, we can only exclaim with Simeon, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" (Lk. 2:30). Is a sinner seeking access to God? He says, "I am the Door, by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (Jn. 10:9). Is a hungry soul longing for satisfaction? He says, "I am that Bread of Life" (Jn. 6:48). Does one long to know his way Home through the darkness? He says, "I am the Light of the world" (Jn. 8:12).

Is one troubled with the confusion of voices in this Babylon with its higher critics, its philosophers, its modernists? He quiets the strife with the word, "I am the Truth." Does one long for nourishment for the soul that shall produce fruit in the life? He says, "I am the True Vine, ye are the branches" (Jn. 15:1). Does one want assurance? He says, "I am the Good Shepherd..." My sheep... "shall never perish" (Jn. 10:14, 28).

Do men tremble by the open grave? Then hear His words, matchless above all that even He spoke, "I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (Jn. 11:25).

For any other to use such language was to expose himself to ridicule. Yet "this Man" used the words with authority and undiminished dignity and grace.

His Claim as the Great Rest-Giver: Did ever man use such words as these? "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:28). Many teachers in the past have exhorted men to take their advice; to carry out their laws; even to follow their example; but who among the sons of

men ever said, "Come unto Me, and I will give (not teach merely) you rest"?

A Christian distributing tracts in France gave a text on a card to a gentleman, who read it curiously. It had upon it the words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There was no indication who had said those words, and the reader showed some surprise that he should be invited by a stranger in such terms. Looking at him earnestly, he said, "Well, here I am!" What a dilemma to be in! Who can give another rest? It took some time to explain Who it was that could give men such an invitation, for no man spake like this Man.

His Claim to Deity: He answers prayer. "If ye shall ask anything [of the Father] in My Name, I will do it" (Jn. 14:14). Who is this whose Name is so powerful and who Himself answers prayer: "I will do it"?

He Claims to Raise and Judge All Men: "Many shall say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord" (Mt. 7:22). Who would dare to speak thus? Or, "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (Jn. 5:28-29).

He Claims Life Itself: Think of this worldwide demand: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Lk. 14:26). Who is entitled to make such a claim as this? Never man spake like this!

We can not only wonder at the claim, but at the greater wonder that, down through the ages, millions have accorded it to Him, for never has man been so loved as this Man, never have life and possessions been so willingly sacrificed for other, as for His sake. Truly this is the Son of God.

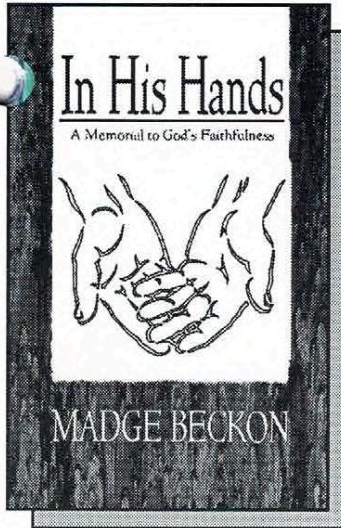
And sweetest of all words to His own, "this Man" who ever liveth, has said, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself."

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."



George Goodman

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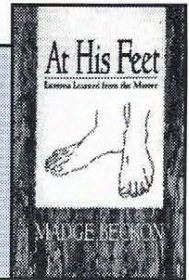
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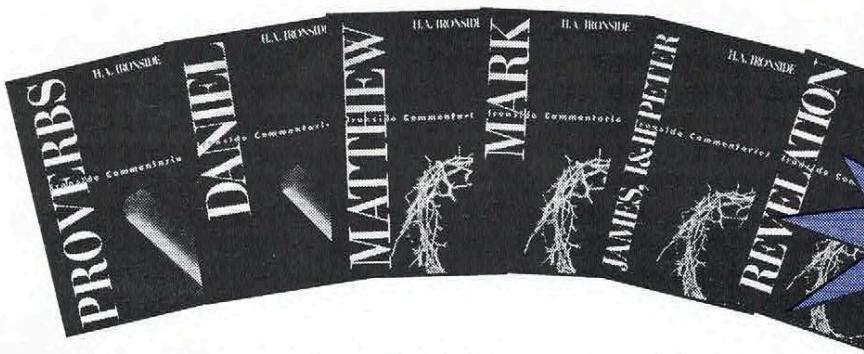
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THE SINNER'S GUEST

*"He is gone to be guest with a man
that is a sinner."*

LUKE 19:1-10

It was hurled as an accusation; it has been treasured as a garland. It was first said in contempt; it is repeated in adoration. It was thought to reveal His earthliness; it is now seen to unveil His glory. Our Saviour seeks the home of the sinner. The Best desires to be the guest of the worst. He spreads His kindnesses for the outcasts, and He offers His friendship to the exile on the loneliest road. He waits to befriend the defeated, the poor folk with aching consciences and broken wills. He loves to go to souls that have lost their power of flight, like birds with broken wings, which can only flutter in the unclean road. He went to Zacchaeus.

Yes, the Lord went to be "guest with a man that is a sinner," and He changed the sinner into a saint. The worldling found wings. The stone became flesh. Gentle emotions began to stir in a heart hardened by heedlessness and sin. Restitution took the place of greed. The home of the sinner became the temple of the Lord.

—J. H. Jowett