

# Bulletin Articles of Henry Mahan For the Year 1982

## A Story About Judson

I read in Spurgeon's "Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit" of a story about Adoniram Judson, the American missionary to Burma. He had passed through untold hardships and great trials during his over thirty years of preaching the gospel in that country. He returned to America and was to speak before a large crowd gathered in his honor. He rose at the end of the usual service, with every eye on him and every ear tuned to hear his message, and spoke of the precious Saviour. He spoke of Christ, our Surety; of Christ, our Righteousness; of Christ, our Sacrifice; and of Christ, our Mediator. His message rang clear on the merits of the blood of Christ.

On the way to the hotel that night, the young man who accompanied him said to Judson, "The people were disappointed tonight. They wondered why you did not speak of something else." "Why were they disappointed?" Judson replied. "What did they want to hear? I presented to the best of my ability the most interesting subject in the world." The young man replied, "But they wanted something different, a story!" "Well, I gave them the most thrilling story that can be told." "They had heard that before. They wanted to hear something new and exciting from the man who had spent thirty years in the jungles."

Judson stopped, faced his companion, and said, "I am glad that they now have it to say that a man coming from the Antipodes had nothing better or more wonderful to tell than the wonderful story of Christ's love for sinners and His precious blood that maketh atonement for our souls. My business is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ; and when I can speak at all, I dare not trifle with my commission. When I looked upon those people tonight and remembered where I should next meet them, how could I stand up and furnish food for vain curiosity? How could I tickle their fancy with amusing stories? That is not what Christ meant by preaching the gospel. And then how could I hereafter meet His fearful charge, 'I gave you one opportunity to tell them of ME, but you spent it in describing your own adventures!'"

Spurgeon added, "If Judson could find nothing better to tell after thirty years in Burma, I will just go back also to this old subject, which is always new and fresh; the precious blood of Christ."

## **We are Ambassadors for CHRIST**

*"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God"*

2 Cor. 5:20

We preachers need to listen to our own sermons often and determine whether or not we are doing what we were sent to do! Are we being, as Paul said, "*ambassadors for CHRIST*"?

Paul also said, "*I preach CHRIST...I determine to know nothing but CHRIST.*" There is a great temptation to preach *about* the gospel instead of preaching the gospel. There is a tendency to preach the doctrines of election, atonement, and second-coming, sending our hearers away convinced of the truth of the doctrines but not in love with, and in awe of, the Son!

Christ must be the end of all preaching. "*We are chosen in HIM.*" All things are in Christ. "*Christ in you*" - that is the hope of glory!

## **Ye Must Be Born Again**

John 3:1-6

Why must a man be born again? There was a time when man's soul could make spiritual music to God, but that was before sin broke the strings. No music can be made now until the strings are restored and the instrument is put in tune again. A ship must have a rudder to guide it in a straight line; even so, a man cannot walk the straight line of holiness until the principles of righteousness are in his heart.

How can a man act in a divine manner until he has received the divine nature? A beast cannot act like a man without the nature of a man; even

so, a sinner cannot act like a holy man unless he partakes of the nature of Christ and has a holy image created within him.

A man must be born again, be must become a new creature and receive a holy nature in order to perform the duties of a Christian or enjoy the privileges of faith. "*Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*" The stream will be the same as the fountain. If the heart be right, the motives and deeds will be right.

## **"Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."**

I Cor. 9:16

I will soon be 56 years old. I have been in the ministry for 34 years and pastor of the same church for 31 of those years. We have evidence that God has been pleased to bless our efforts to *make Christ known*. How many years we have left to labor together in this ministry, only God knows!

I have been doing some heart searching these past two weeks and I am more determined than ever before to "*know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified*." There are all sorts of temptations from the enemy of God to depart from the simplicity of Christ; to deal with current events, intellectual and interesting sidelines, prophecy, and religious themes! But, "*He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him*."

Let us be about the Father's business and that business is to "*preach Christ and Him crucified*." My heart is fixed and I challenge my brethren in the ministry, "Let's go back to Bethel, where the ladder led to the throne, where the voice of Cad spoke to our hearts in covenant promises, where the waters were sweet, and where every message rang with ruin, redemption, and regeneration." God, blessed it then and He will bless it again!

## Faith

*“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not”*

Rom. 7:18

The strongest faith is subject at times to doubts, shaking, and trouble just as the greatest ships are tossed by the waves and the brightest stars are sometimes covered with the clouds. Therefore, believers, if at times, you are NOT sensible of any growth of faith do NOT conclude that you have no faith.

Faith may be in the heart when it is not seen in the act. There may be life in the root of the tree even when there are no leaves, blossoms, or fruit on the tree. The leaves and fruit will be seen in the spring and summer.

Our confidence is not in this flesh but in the Lord Jesus Christ. If my assurance of an interest in Christ rested on my feelings, I would have little or no assurance, *“for in my flesh dwelleth NO good thing.”*

## Alone with God

Old Ambrose once said, "I am never less alone than when I am alone; for then I can enjoy the presence of the Lord most freely, fully, and sweetly, without interruption."

A lack of private devotion and meditation will lead to dead, formal duties. A man's public prayer, worship, and preaching is best when he has spent much time in private devotion.

It is impossible to speak to men in the name of God if we have not pleaded with God in the cause of men.

## **In Whom You Trusted**

*"In Whom YE ALSO TRUSTED after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation"*

2 Tim. 1:12

Where there is God's purpose, there will be a FULFILLMENT of that purpose.

Where there is an election, there will be a Divine CALL.

Where there is a Redemptive work accomplished by Christ, there will be someone REDEEMED. Where there is an invitation, there will be a RESPONSE.

Where there is a bridegroom, there will be a willing BRIDE!

I cannot conceive of our Lord being disappointed or defeated in anything that He decrees or wills. The sheep come willingly but they will come; He hath ordained it! (*Psalms 110:3*).

## **Love and Faith**

A genuine love for others is an evidence of redemption. It is not the CAUSE but the SIGN, for no one sincerely loves others except he is regenerated by the Spirit of God.

The love of natural men is self-love. I verily believe that the two strongest evidences of true salvation are love and perseverance in faith.

Oh, for a heart to love and a faith that will not fail.

# Happy Homes Don't Just Happen – They Are Made!

*"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it"*

Eph. 5:24-25

Paul speaks to wives and says, "*Submit yourselves to your husbands.*" This subjection is not only in body but in heart and spirit. Wives should love their husbands, think well of their husbands, speak respectfully of them, as well as respectfully to them, take care of family matters according to the husband's will, imitate him in that which is good, and bear patiently that which is not so agreeable. Paul adds, "*As unto the Lord.*" The Lord has designated authority in the husband and commands obedience to and respect for that authority. To the husbands the apostle simply says, "*Love your wives.*"

This is still and always will be the key to any happy relationship! Because Christ loved us, He gave Himself for us. Because we love Christ, His yoke is easy and His burden is light. If a husband loves his wife, he will show affection for her, delight in her, seek her happiness and contentment, speak kindly to her, conceal her faults, and prefer her above his parents, children, and friends! You don't need to go to a marriage counsellor to solve your differences; you need to go to the cross and learn the meaning of LOVE.

## Love in Deed and Truth

*"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."*

I John 3:18

The thing that troubles me most, when it comes to the validity of our profession of Christ, is that we talk, preach, and sing of love, mercy, and forgiveness but then, when the opportunity comes for us to love the

unlovely, forgive the offender, and bind up the wounded heart, we join the circle of Pharisees, clutching our stones, ready to wound and maim.

A profession that does not produce is a false profession.

## The Gospel Minister is to be Esteemed

*"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves"*

I Thess. 5:12-13

Paul speaks here of faithful pastors and preachers. He exhorts believers TO KNOW THEM.

1. To recognize, acknowledge, appreciate, and respect them for what they are: ministers of God.
2. Make yourselves known to them, converse freely and honestly with them, so that they may know the state of your souls and speak a word in season.
3. Esteem them, holding them in high and affectionate regard, in appreciation for their faithful work among you.
4. Be at peace among yourselves in regard to the ministry. Do not find fault, disagree, or take offense over trivial matters. To do so is to make the minister's work more difficult and hinders the unity and growth of the church.

These men LABOR among you. No honor or respect is due the lazy, idle preachers who neglect prayer, study, and the faithful preaching of the Word.

THEY PRESIDE OVER YOU in the Lord but they are not lords, but leaders, by the authority of Christ.

THEY ADMONISH YOU. They teach, warn, reprove, and exhort you in the Word of God, and it is in this respect that they are to be obeyed and followed.

It is the solemn responsibility of THE VOICE to speak the truth in Christ. And it is the solemn responsibility of THE EAR to hear, THE HEART to believe, and THE FEET to walk in paths of righteousness and faith.

## **With What Measure You Deal to Others**

*"Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete"*

Mk. 4:24

*"May life always be as beautiful for you as you make it for others!"*

Let us read that brief word over and over until it is burned into our hearts. The poet's pen simply repeats the Master's promise, *"With what measure you deal out to others it shall be dealt to you."*

## **The Good Providence of God**

Murmuring against the providence of God is a great sin. The Lord likened it to idolatry. *"Avoid covetousness which is idolatry"* (Col. 3:5). *"Be content with such things as you have"* (Heb. 13:5).

The Lord has been so good to us and we ought to be thankful and continually praise Him. Besides this, even our trials and difficulties are for our eternal good.

Begin today to suppress the tendency to complain and give thanks instead. This is well-pleasing in His sight.

## Keep Control of the Tongue

*“And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.”*

James 3:6

He who can keep and control his tongue is a mature person and, if he can control his tongue, the rest of his body will give him little trouble. The tongue is the helm of the ship and if the helm is under control, the ship will be steered right.

The tongue can be the best thing in the world when it bears good tidings, kind words, and encouragement, but it can also be our worst enemy, "*a fire, a world of iniquity.*" This small member can serve the glory of God or the cause of Satan, depending on the grace or the evil in the heart of its owner.

Let my words pass through three checkpoints before they are sent forth on their mission of either mercy or destruction:

1. Are they true?
2. Are they kind?
3. Are they really necessary?

## Exhort One Another Daily

*“But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin”*

Heb. 3:13

The word "*exhort*" carries several meanings; entreat (or beseech) one another to watchfulness, prayer, and holiness; instruct and edify one another in the Word of God and the way of life. But two other words stand out to me; they are ENCOURAGE and COMFORT one another daily.

The believer has burdens enough, trials, and temptations aplenty; all grow weary, not OF the way but IN the way. There is not one of us who does

not need encouragement and comfort daily. The Spirit of God is our chief comforter and the Word of God is our foundation of hope but how good and helpful are the smile, handshake, and words of affection and encouragement from a faithful friend.

And see that ye abound in this grace also: GIVING; not only your material possessions but of yourself for Christ's sake.

## The Holy Law of God

*"Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?"*

(Gal. 4:21)

The holy law of God does not require that you do the best that you can; it requires you to do the best that God can do! The law does not command you to love God as you are able but that you love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength! The law does not demand that you show love to your neighbor but that you love him as you love yourself! The law does not only require that you DO no evil but that you THINK no evil. The law does not require a good life but a PERFECT LIFE! Except your righteousness EXCEED the best that any man has done so far, you will in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20).

The true believer loves the law of God and delights in all His Word and commandments, but he in no way seeks to be justified by that law or to find in it his sanctification. When he comes to some understanding of God's holiness and the righteousness of God's law, he throws up his hands in guilt and helplessness, crying for mercy, grace, and righteousness in Christ.

Nothing shuts a man up to CHRIST ALONE like a view of God's holiness and the requirements of His law. Nothing makes the obedience and death of Christ so precious as to see Him as our Representative before the justice of God.

## The Best Promoter

The way of salvation by grace is the best promoter of holiness in all the world. A man once said, "I went to hear Spurgeon in the Tabernacle this morning, and he was crying out against salvation by works. The worst results will come of his teaching, for men will find in free grace an excuse for sin." No! No!

They will not! Salvation by grace promotes good works far better than the teaching of salvation by works ever did. Those who hope to be saved by their works generally have scanty works to be saved by while those who put works aside altogether as their ground of hope, looking instead to grace alone, are generally the most zealous to perform good works.

Who loved Christ best at the Pharisee's feast? Simon the Pharisee, who had kept the law, or the woman at His feet seeking grace and mercy? Simon gave Him no kiss, no oil, and no water for His tired feet (a common courtesy). The woman served Him with her entire self and possessions.

The case is clear and closed!

## Fulfill Our Calling

Paul told Timothy to do the work of an evangelist. Our Lord's commission to His disciples was to go into all the world and preach the gospel. This is the very thing that sends me forth in response to every invitation to *come over and help us*.

I do not enjoy being away from home most of the time, nor do I feel good about being out of my pulpit on Wednesday night; but our time to labor in the Lord's vineyard is short and mine gets shorter all the time. We must make full proof of our ministry; that is, we must FULFILL our calling and commission.

I wish that all of you could be with me in these meetings and conferences and meet the people who come from miles around to hear the Word. Many of them, who have been blessed by our tapes, I meet for the first time. They bring their friends and family to hear me. They rejoice in the hope that we have in Christ Jesus. The influence of this church and its

ministry grows every day. At the end of this year I will have preached in nearly 30 different churches and assemblies in 52 weeks.

God has given us an able and gifted assistant pastor and several young preachers who labor with me here and who are being used of the Lord in other places. I thank God for him and them! Brethren, in answer to those who ask, "Does 13th St. mind the pastor being away so much?" I reply, "They do not mind at all because they thank God for what He has done here and rejoice that He is pleased to effectually open doors for us to share the good news of our Redeemer with others."

We all pray, "*Here am I, Lord, SEND ME.*" (Is. 6:8).

## **That I May Know Him**

Philemon 3:7-10

I cannot know Christ through another man's mind. I cannot love Him with another man's heart. I cannot believe on Him with another man's faith. I cannot hear Him with another man's ears or see Him with another man's eyes!

I pray that He will reveal Himself *to* me; that He will come and dwell *with* me; that Christ may be formed *in* me! It is not enough that I know of His historical life; it is not enough that I give mental agreement to His doctrines; it is not enough that I approve of His laws. I must gain an interest in Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, but His.

The fact is, I no longer have my own life, it is His! I am not my own master; He is my Master. God's terms of surrender are unconditional!

## **The Church of Christ**

"If only the people of this church could realize and continually thank God for what He has given to them in the gospel ministry; a church dedicated to His worship and glory, Christian fellowship, and peace among believers." This thought was expressed to me by a brother who

has recently moved to another city and has been visiting other churches in an effort to find a place to worship and hear the Word preached.

In my heart I know what we have and so do you. But Satan is a great adversary who opposes all who call on Christ. He will attack us in any way and area in order to disturb, disrupt, and confuse. I pray that I will NOT be his instrument of division, whether in the home, among friends, or in the congregation.

I urge all of you to love Christ more, one another more, and to protect with great jealousy this testimony for truth. When we get our priorities and values in the right order then we will know what we must do. And this order is Christ, His glory and gospel, His church and its fellowship, our families, and friends - and last of all - myself! I bow to these principles and IN THIS ORDER.

## **Will You Also Go Away?**

*“Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?”*

Jn. 6:67

We are always grieved when members of the fellowship of believers quit attending the worship services and withhold their support of the gospel. I realize that what they are doing is expressing their displeasure with the pastor or some member for something they do not like by boycotting the church! They are using their absence and withholding their finances as means to punish the offending party. This is called "leverage" or "means to accomplish a purpose."

But the matter is much more serious than it appears at the first. If the pastor is called of God and the church is His body, boycotting them is to take a stand against God. It is to say, "If I had my way I would silence His message, close down His house, put the television program off the air, and bring home the missionaries." A church is not a building; it is people. So ask yourself, "What kind of church would my church be if all the members were just like me?"

Let them all get their feelings hurt and pout when I pout. Let them all get offended and stay home when I stay home. Let them all withhold their gifts for preaching and missions when I withhold mine. No church could

survive! There would not be a gospel witness left, neither here, nor on the mission field. We all operate from week to week, as God's faithful people supply the means.

This is why I have absolutely no patience with this type of conduct any more than approval of a soldier who lays down his arms in the face of the enemy and goes home. The army calls them deserters; I thank God for you who are faithful.

We are not perfect, but neither are you. Thank God for the person who can be counted on to fill his place and carry his share of the load; who requires no recognition, no praise, and never uses carnal leverage to gain his own end.

Young people, look to these loyal servants of Christ. They are not wandering stars; they are always in their places bearing a testimony for their Redeemer and His gospel; imitate them!

*"Will you also go away?"* The Master asked. *"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."*

## Love is Kind

1 Cor. 13:1-4

Love is not equipped to injure, intimidate, or discourage. It has not acid nor no dragon-fire. It carries no sword.

Love is kind; it is sweet with praise, fragrant with encouragement, and is gracious to help.

“Almighty Lord, my heart prepare,  
The Saviour to embrace.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Toplady, Augustus. *None but Jesus*. 1759. Reprinted in *Our Own Hymnbook*. London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1883.

## **Worship Him and Hear His Word**

*"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord"*

Ps. 122:1

We know that the living God is a Spirit and can never be confined to a building, an organization, or even to a nation. His eye is in every place and He causes it to rain on the just and the unjust. He is the provider of all men, especially of them that believe.

But there are times and places where men meet together to worship the Lord, to praise His name, to give thanks for His mercy, and to preach His gospel. This is what we are endeavoring to do.

We are not covetous of your possessions nor for the recognition and praise of men. We are only concerned with the glory of God and want the people of our town to worship Him and to hear His Word preached in truth.

## **The Plague of Today**

We are plagued today with a gospel of works, a religion of form and ceremony, and a zeal for God that is not according to knowledge. I want a return to the message God used in other days to awaken men to their need, to humble the proud Pharisee, and to give hope to real sinners.

## **Righteousness Only in Christ**

Philippians 3:7-9

When we review the fall of man in the garden we discover just how great that fall was and how infinite was our loss. We became corrupt, dying creatures. Once strong, now weak; once healthy; now sick; once always living, now always dying. Pain, sorrow, sickness and death is our lot.

We lost happiness and peace and became creatures of fear, shame, hate, and greed. We can't live alone and we can't live together. We lost

fellowship with God, our sins having separated us from His presence and His favor. We are not dying men spiritually; we are dead men!

Underlying the whole matter is the sobering truth that, in the fall, man lost his righteous nature. "*God made man upright*" but man became a sinner, a transgressor, a rebel, and an ungodly creature.

We have changed, oh! how we've changed! But God has not changed. The Lord is the same in holiness, justice, and truth. What He has required, He still requires. He demands of the creature what He must demand. He commands what man cannot produce - A PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS. "*Who shall stand in His presence? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.*"

What doth the Lord require of us? What He has always required; to fear God, to walk in ALL His ways, to love God, and to serve Him in perfection with all our heart and soul!

But this is impossible! Of course it is, with you and me...but not with Christ. The Lord Jesus, in the flesh, fulfilled all that the Father required and satisfied His holy justice perfectly for all who believe. Jeremiah called Him, "*The Lord our Righteousness.*"

Righteousness cannot be found in us, our works, nor in the law. But righteousness is found in Christ. "*I find no fault in Him,*" declares heaven, earth, and hell. Oh! that I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is but filthy rags, but with His spotless garment on. If I am in Christ, covered with His righteousness, I am as holy as He.

## Enter into the Ministry

After 35 years of preaching, both as a pastor and as a traveling evangelist, Bro. Barnard would often say, "Someday I'm going to enter the ministry." Don't laugh or even smile, but weep, for many men have entered the pulpit and the pastorate who have never really entered the ministry.

Our Lord summed it up in Matt. 20:27-28, "*and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: EVEN as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.*"

Those who enter the ministry must cut all ties, bury all relatives, suppress all worldly ambitions, burn their bridges, give away fleshly security and live by the gospel, on the gospel, and for the gospel.

Now let someone say, "Someday I'm going to enter the ministry." Then and only then can he expect God to anoint and bless that ministry! And He most surely will!

## Spiritual Growth

Spiritual growth and the opportunity to exhort and encourage others in this warfare can be hindered by both EXCESSIVE JESTING and FOOLISH TALKING (*Eph. 5:4*). Humor and joy is to be commended to a point, but if it occupies our time and communion overmuch it is detrimental and should be curbed.

There is a time and place for all things. Let us be WISE and SOBER without trying to impress through false piety. Those who are given to too much foolishness should suppress it while those given to melancholy should learn to smile.

## Trials

*"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"*

1 Cor. 10:13

Though God's people be not exempt nor free from troubles, God has in His hand the remedies by which those troubles may be met and conquered. He will with each trial "*make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*"

# Laborers Together

*"We are laborers TOGETHER with God"*

I Cor. 3:9

The emphasis could be put on any of the words in this sentence and produce a needed message. For it is God's church, God's building, God's kingdom, and the sheep are His sheep. We are laborers – servants – who do His will; who plow, sow, and water at His command, under His instructions, and for His glory.

But the word which carries a most needed bit of rebuke and advice for all who labor in His vineyard is the word TOGETHER! "*We are laborers together with God.*" There is more than one oarsman on this boat; we must learn to row together. There is more than one farmer in the field; we must be happy to plant where another has plowed, water where another has planted, and rejoice in the privilege of glorifying God together.

There is really no place on the program for the man or woman who cannot rejoice in another's gifts, ministry, or contribution. There is no room for the self-seeker or the person who cannot, with sincerity, promote and encourage the efforts and endeavors (however small or large) of fellow believers. Laborers together is the word and laborers together is the plan of our Lord.

Lord, let me find YOUR place for me; the contribution YOU would have me make to bless YOUR church and glorify YOUR name! Give me a broken and humble spirit which recognizes my infirmities and dependence on Thee. Enable me to blend in with other laborers in the field, to complement their efforts, and strengthen their arms. I will leave the field soon and the work will continue. Let me hear Thee say, "Well done!"

"Sweet the day exceeding sweet,  
When the saints together meet;  
When the Savior is the theme,  
When together they honor Him."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Burder, George. *Sweet the Time, Exceeding Sweet*. Gospel Magazine, April, 1779; Collection of Hymns, 1784.

## Daily Loadeth Us

*"Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. He that is our God is the God of salvation. Selah"*

Ps. 68:19

What a privilege our Lord affords His people when He uses them to preach the gospel of His glorious grace! To be used of God once in a lifetime in the blessed purpose of His grace would be more than we could ask, but to be so gifted as to be DAILY loaded with this benefit is beyond human reason.

What mercy He spends upon us in His gospel commission! To bear the name of the Lord Jesus in our hearts, to sing His name in worship, to breathe His name in prayer – oh! what benefits! But to speak His glories in the preaching of His gospel – and to do so daily! - who can imagine that we, sinners saved by grace, should be so endowed?

Few congregations have been so richly benefited as this one with gospel ministries. May we treat each one as a golden heritage from "*the God of our salvation*", handling them all as precious entrustments from the One "*Who loved us and gave Himself for us.*"

## Come and I Will Give You Rest

*"Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"*

Mt. 11:28

Here is a message from our pastor in our bulletin from nearly twenty years ago (November, 1962). It is as fresh today as then:

"Pray for me as I preach today. Let us all pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to be the Spirit of revival, conviction, and praise; I believe that God is moving in our congregation in a very special and unusual way. Find a place to pray, and take your pastor, your children, and your friends to the throne of grace. Brethren, let us pray for one another. I have never felt the need for intercessory prayers as much as I feel it today.

"This word to sinners: God has been good to let you hear the gospel of redemption again. He has again commanded you to repent and hear His Son. How long will He permit you to rebel? Can you not say, *'Lord, I believe! Help thou my unbelief!'* The Master says *'Come I will give you rest.'* Christ receives sinners. The Pharisees declared, *'This man receiveth sinners.'* Praise God that He still does."

## The Pastor is Out of Town

"The pastor is out of town." This is a comment heard quite often and it appears will be heard more in future months. The Lord has opened so many doors for me to preach the gospel that I hardly get back home before it is time to travel again. But I'm grateful, as I know you are, that He is pleased to use me and this church to minister the gospel to others. I try to be home for Sunday services but I do feel that if there is a congregation or a group of people asking me to come and preach to them the gospel of God's grace, I should go! I'm thankful for our able and gifted assistant Pastor. And I'm thankful that you have a concern for other pastors, churches, and the lost wherever they are.

When Joseph and Mary found Christ in the temple, they said, *"We missed you and have sought you sorrowing?"* The Master replied, *"I must be about My Father's business."* I miss all of you when I'm away. I miss the midweek service, the daily contacts, visiting, and being "at home." But we must be about the Father's business, which is to preach Christ and Him crucified to every creature.

I believe I can say, "Christ is my life." Where I preach - you preach! Where I minister - you minister! God has given us a strong and generous church and He has been pleased to give us a worldwide ministry. Let us then be faithful stewards of the grace of God. We must not pray, *"Here am I, Lord, send me,"* and then find reasons and excuses not to go!

I will crowd as much preaching, ministering, fellowship, and work as I can into the days I am here and, when I am away, I will look to you to minister to one another and pray for me. *"Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house (this church), that Thou hast brought us hitherto?"* (2 Samuel 7:18).

# In The Beloved

2 Corinthians 9:15

Let us never imagine that an absolute God, holy and righteous, can speak peace to a guilty sinner outside of, or apart from, Christ. God is a consuming fire unto guilty sinners and He can never speak peace or rest to any of Adam's rebellious race until His holiness, justice, and righteousness have been perfectly honored and satisfied.

Unless the Son of God, as our Surety, had paid the infinite ransom that justice demands, none of us would have ever heard anything from heaven but terrible thunderings of wrath and justice. When you hear a word of peace from God it will be in, by, and through His Beloved. "*Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift*".

## A Heart of Thanksgiving

Psalm 40:5

I recently read that somewhere, years ago in New England, there was a day of fasting each month to mourn over the sins of the land. At last, some public official suggested that, instead of the day of mourning each month, they should appoint a feast and thank God for the mercies and blessings which He had given.

I was deeply convicted and strongly impressed by this article. Do we dwell on our troubles and trials so much that we forget to give thanks for our blessings? Instead of counting our blessings, we exaggerate our misfortunes. Instead of praising God for many friends, our minds dwell on two or three contentious persons who wish us evil. Instead of talking about our years of good health, we discuss our hours of pain. Instead of rejoicing in our obedient and loving children, we complain about our prodigals. It is good to fast, mourn over sin, and to take our burdens to the Lord; but it is right to LEAVE THEM THERE!

*"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones."* I plan to take this exhortation seriously and lift both my heart and voice to Him who is the fountain of all mercies. His mercies far outweigh His chastisements. David said, "*Many, O Lord my God, are Thy wonderful works*

*which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to us-ward. They cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee. If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered"* (Ps. 40:5).

John Newton once wrote, "Lord, if I have not loved Thee before, let me begin today."<sup>3</sup> Today is a good day to love Him, thank Him, and praise Him. Let this be "The day of beginning again."

## Try The Spirits

*"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try THE SPIRITS whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world"*

1 Jn. 4:1

Every man that preaches or teaches has some spirit or other upon him and in him. It may be a spirit of covetousness, a spirit of bitterness against others, a spirit of pride and conceit, a spirit from Satan to deceive and confuse, or THE SPIRIT of grace and truth. Therefore, we must take heed what we hear and try the spirits whether they are of God.

How are spirits of preachers to be tried? By the blessed Word of God! We must seriously weigh all things by the scriptures.

## Dwell Together in Unity

*"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"*

Ps. 133:1

I preached last week for such a delightful and enthusiastic crowd in Canada, Kentucky. After having dinner with about twenty people at the pastor's home, we adjourned to the porch for coffee and talk.

Pastor Justice lamented the apparent divisions and schisms among the people who believe and preach the gospel of God's free grace. "It ought

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<sup>3</sup>Newton, John. *Lovest Thou Me?* Olney Hymns. London: 1779.

not to be so!" he said. "For those who are loved by Christ and who claim to love Christ, to not love one another is beyond understanding. If the person and work of Christ, or the character of God, or the authority of Scripture divides us, then so be it; but let us not defend our personalities, programs, traditions, and personal peculiarities to the point of separation from true believers."

It is always good, while building new fences, to check out and mend those which have served our cause for years! Brethren, let us love one another, for love is of God!

## **Lord, What Will You Have Me to Do?**

Acts 9:6

*"Lord, what will you have me to do?"* This is Paul's question on the road where he met the sovereign Christ. It was not, what do I think is best for me? or what will afford me the most pleasure and comfort? or even what do other people do? but *"Lord, what will YOU have me to do?"*

In every case enable me, by Thy grace, to do what is pleasing in Thy sight and that which will bring glory to Thy name. Where we get in trouble is putting our wills and ways before His! It is not I but Christ, His gospel, His church, His kingdom, His glory, which must be considered.

When this is settled "I" will fall in the right place and though the way may not be easy, in the end, it will be pleasant. *"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths"* (Prov. 3:6).

## **I Must Preach the Gospel**

*"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"*

1 Cor. 9:16

The most humbling and challenging thing I face – the great concern of my heart – is that my generation experience a return to the preaching of

the gospel of God's glory. We are plagued today with a gospel of works, a religion of form and ceremony, and a zeal for God but not according to knowledge (Rom. 10:2).

I pray for a return to the message God was pleased to use in other days to awaken sinners to their need for mercy; that message that reveals the redemptive glory of God in Christ; that message which humbles the proud Pharisee and gives hope to the chief of sinners.

If God is pleased to restore that message, then men will once again sense the awesome Holy presence of the Living God. Gone will be the voice of the proud sinner who inwardly debates whether he will accept Jesus or reject Him. Gone will be the haughty spirit that refuses to bow to the Lordship of Christ. Gone will be the bragging of the religionist who boasts of his righteousness and what he has done for God.

Once again we may hear men cry:

"Depth of mercy! Can there be,  
Mercy still reserved for me?  
Can my God His wrath forbear  
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?"<sup>4</sup>

It may be that we will hear someone ask:  
"And can it be that I should gain  
An int'rest in the Savior's blood?"<sup>5</sup>

I know not what course others may take, but I am determined to put forth every effort to preach that gospel every time I step into the pulpit. "*For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!*" (1Cor. 9:16).

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<sup>4</sup>Wesley, Charles. *Depth of Mercy*. Hymns and Sacred Poems. London: 1740.

<sup>5</sup>Wesley, Charles. *And Can It Be*. Psalms and Hymns. London: 1738.

## Today is the Day of Salvation

*“For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”*

2. Cor. 6:2

It is one thing to *"wait on the Lord"* (Ps. 27:14) in matters of providence, trial, and decisions regarding our plans and purposes. But the command to repent and believe on Christ is in the imperative! It is *"NOW is the accepted time; TODAY is the day of salvation."*

Someone may say, "But I want to be sure." You can be sure that you are a guilty sinner; that you have no ability to justify yourself before God; that God sent His Son to save; that He is a sufficient Savior; and that not to believe this gospel is to make God a liar and presume on His patience!

Walk in THE LIGHT YOU HAVE; look to Christ now and confess what faith you have, depending on Him to give you more faith.

## Praise The Lord

*“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness”*

Ps. 48:1

Men ought to praise God for He is worthy of praise; *"the Lord is good and greatly to be praised."* Praise is characteristic of the true child of God. The man who pretends to love God can read the Bible, attend church, and even fast and pray; but to praise God with all the heart is a mark of true sonship.

Praise is beneficial to ourselves. Nothing will oil the wheels of the wagon of life like praising God. Praise will end murmuring and complaining. Praise will drive out discontent. Praise will dispel doubt and fear. Praise will bring us in tune with God's universe, for creation is but a temple in which everything that hath breath ought to praise the Lord.

## Salvation is for Sinners

*“The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.”*

(Mt. 11:19)

The Pharisees called our Lord, "*The friend of sinners.*" They thought to brand Him with shame and hold His name up to ridicule; but what they thought to be shame is His chief glory.

He is indeed "*the friend of sinners.*" Thank God He is! This is what makes the gospel good news. This is no sham gospel that we preach, but it is real salvation for real sinners. It is real grace for real guilt. We preach no gospel of merit for moralists. We preach good news of pardon and forgiveness for men who are nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing!

“Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love and power.”<sup>6</sup>

## Cast All Your Care Upon the Lord

*“Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you”*

I Peter 5:7

Charles Tindley wrote, "Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there."<sup>7</sup> I believe I have learned the first half of this. I do take my cares and concerns, my needs and burdens, to the Lord; but too often, after I have taken them to the Lord, I feel them on my mind as heavily as before!

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<sup>6</sup>Hart, Joseph. *Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy*. Hymns Composed on Various Subjects. 1759.

<sup>7</sup>Tindley, Charles. *Leave it There*. ca. 1906.

Beloved, this is not the way to trust God. The way to trust God is to cast my care on Him altogether and go away resting in the fact that He cares for me, will work it all out for my good and His glory, and, if what I am doing is His work and will, then He will preserve it; and if it is not His work, then let it go to pieces and the sooner the better!

I know that the believer is to be burdened for the lost, concerned that his conduct, conversation, and character glorify God, and that he is to approach his duties and responsibilities with a serious and dedicated mind. But, when we put forth our best effort, then let's leave it all in His hands. Let's leave all of our fears and anxieties at His feet. We are but instruments in His hand; it is His world, His work, and His church. His ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. His purpose is accomplished in success and failure, in prosperity and adversity, and in life and death!

## Trust

*"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him."*

Job 13:15

How blessed it would be for us, and for all who cross our paths, if we could put our theology into deeds and not mere words. We profess to believe in God's immutable sovereignty but then constantly mourn over our lot in life. We claim to believe in God's purpose and providence but fill every ear that will listen with our discontent and our sad state of affairs. Usually those who do the most complaining have, in reality, the least to complain about, while those who have serious handicaps, heavy burdens, and deep sorrows find a reason to praise the Lord and rejoice in His blessings. I need not remind you of God's anger with Israel because of their murmuring, or to remind you of the words of our Lord, "*Take not anxious thought for what ye shall eat, drink, or wear;*" or to remind you of the words of Paul, "*Let your conversation be without-covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have.*"

No! I need not remind you of these words; for you have read them, taught them, and perhaps preached them. Our problem, then, is not

ignorance of the Word and will of God (perhaps it would be better if this were our problem!). Our problem is identified in Heb.4:2, "*The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*"

It is a heart problem, for out of the heart the mouth speaks. And, truthfully, our complaints are not with men, who are but second causes, but with God, WHOM WE SAY is the first cause and Lord of our lives.

I can understand the free-willer (whose god is but a puppet of man's permission) complaining, murmuring, and finding fault with all about him! But the most inconsistent person living has to be the professed Christian who says he believes, "*The Most High rules in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will,*" or, "*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you*" and then fills the air about him with a constant stream of complaints and reasons why he should be somewhere else, why he should be doing something else, or why he should be blessed in a more abundant measure.

A certain cure for anxious care is TRUST. "*Thou be slay me, yet will I trust Him.*"

## **Christ in You, the Hope of Glory**

*"To whom God would make know what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which Christ in you, the hope of glory"*

Col. 1:27

To have a good hope of resurrection, of deliverance from judgment, of eternal life, and glory with Christ; in all honesty, is not this the goal of our faith? Is not this our reason for searching the Scriptures? Is not this my reason for preaching and yours for hearing? Paul gives us the only real hope of glory in this brief sentence: "*Christ in you!*"

Two words catch our attention immediately; CHRIST and YOU. All that the law requires OF YOU is fulfilled IN CHRIST. All that justice demands OF YOU is met IN CHRIST. All the righteousness YOU need is in CHRIST.

But there is a little two-letter word in this sentence that is all important; the word "*in*". Christ IN you, the hope of glory. It is not just Christ in the covenant, or Christ in the manger, or Christ in the world, or Christ on

the cross, or Christ in the tomb, or Christ on the throne but Christ IN YOU.

Our hope of glory is Christ in us! Christ believed in the mind, Christ received in the heart, Christ loved in the soul, and Christ followed in the life.

"Jesus Christ is made to me  
All I need, all I need.  
He alone is all my plea,  
He is all I need.

Wisdom righteousness and pow'r,  
Holiness forevermore,  
My redemption full and sure,  
He is all I need."<sup>8</sup>

## **Bless the LORD, O my Soul**

Psalm 103

How does one *bless the Lord*?

I would say that when we sincerely, in our hearts, gladly ascribe unto the Lord all glory, power, and dominion, we are blessing Him.

When we wish others to love and believe on Him, faithfully preaching and witnessing of His saving grace, we are blessing Him.

When we grieve over our dullness of spirit and desire to love Him with a perfect heart, we are blessing Him.

When we sing, praise, and worship Him with a true heart, we are blessing Him.

When we endure trials and burdens with a submissive and grateful attitude, not murmuring against His good providence, we are blessing Him.

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<sup>8</sup>Jones, Charles P. *All I Need*. 1906.

When we wait upon the Lord, ready to do His will, we are blessing Him.  
When we can truthfully think and say, "*By the grace of God, I am what I am,*"  
we are blessing Him!

## Concerning Churches

Last Sunday I told you some straight facts of life concerning churches. Some are born in the SPRING of revival; fresh with new life, zeal, and gospel preaching. Then comes the full SUMMER when all is in bloom and fruits are borne on every limb. But alas, signs of FALL begin to show; leaves fall, fruit diminishes, and there is a coldness in the air. Then comes the total deadness of WINTER when the candlestick is removed and it is no more.

I believe the warm SUN OF LOVE can at least delay this experience, which has been the lot of every great church!

## Law and Grace

Romans 11:5-6

No two things in the world could be any different than law and grace. They are as opposite as light and dark. They can no more agree than fire and water. What is so amazing then is that, while law and grace are so diametrically opposed, the human mind is so void of spiritual understanding and turned away from God, that the most difficult thing for a human to do is to discriminate between the two. Men insist on mixing what God has positively put asunder.

The man who knows the place of the law and the glory of God's free grace, who can rest in Christ alone for all that the law requires and justice demands, is a man who knows the gospel.

*The first difficulty* in conversion is to get a man LOST – truly lost! A lost sinner is hard to find. There are plenty of weak people, even sinful people, but only the Holy Spirit can produce a LOST sinner. A sinner so lost that no law, system of works, or moral code can do him any good.

*The second difficulty* in conversion is to teach a man THE GOSPEL. Few there be that really find it. This gospel of God's FREE GRACE in Christ comes to the lost sinner without any return on his part. It is the gift of God from beginning to end. Even repentance, faith, and good works are His fruit.

*The third difficulty* in conversion is to bring a believing sinner to REST all of his days in the same grace and love that took him in. We are chosen, called, and kept by His free grace. Faith rests in Christ alone! Faith even excludes itself as a work in salvation, for faith is not a thing upon which the sinner rests or pleads but, rather, he rests entirely and only in Christ and pleads the Saviour's merits.

It is not the FACT that we believe but the PERSON on whom we believe!

“Here I raise mine Ebenezer;  
Hither by Thy help come;  
And I hope by Thy good pleasure  
Safely to arrive at home.”<sup>9</sup>

## Grace or Judgment

Romans 3:19-20

Brother Scott Richardson once said, "There is a point where God and men must meet, whether in GRACE or JUDGMENT; and that point is where both are revealed AS THEY ARE."

If a man meets God NOW IN GRACE, God will be revealed to that man in His true nature and character; holy, just, and righteous! That man will also have his own nature and character revealed; crooked, unclean, and corrupt, by birth, practice, and choice. The grace which prevails on behalf of the sinner is God's grace in Christ, His mercy in the person of a Mediator and Advocate, the Lord Jesus Christ.

If a man meets God IN JUDGMENT AT THAT GREAT DAY, God will be revealed as He has been, is, and always will be; holy, just, and righteous! That man will also stand before God as he has been, is, and always will

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<sup>9</sup> Robinson. Robert. *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*. A Collection of Hymns Used by the Church of Christ in Angel Alley, Bishopgate. 1759.

be; unclean, unrighteous, and corrupt. The difference in that day will be there is no Mediator, no Advocate, no Saviour! The man will be left to answer alone for all his ungodliness and indifference.

This is the essence of our message to you; "*all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him WITH WHOM WE HAVE TO DO*" (Heb. 4:13). We have no choice in the matter. We must meet God as we are and WE MUST MEET GOD AS HE IS. If we find grace in His sight and, by faith, meet Him in Christ, there will be no meeting in judgment; for there is no judgment to them who are in Christ Jesus. But if we have no saving interest in Christ, what a fearful and dreadful day that final meeting will be!

“And, oh, what a weeping and wailing,  
As the lost were told of their fate;  
They cried for the rocks and the mountains,  
They prayed, but their prayer was too late.”<sup>10</sup>

## Redemption Through Christ

*“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief”*

1 Tim. 1:15

Paul wrote, "*Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*" REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST is God's grand design from all eternity and will be completed when all of His elect are perfectly conformed to the image of Christ.

*First*, Christ was our surety and sacrifice from all eternity, "*The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*"

*Second*, Christ was the promised "*seed of the woman*" in Eden after the fall.

*Third*, Christ was pictured and typified in the sacrifices and ceremonies of the law.

*Fourth*, Christ was the subject of all the prophet's messages. "*Moses wrote of Him*"; "*To Him give all the prophets witness.*"

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<sup>10</sup>Shaddock, Bertram H. *The Great Judgement Morning*. 1894.

*Fifth*, all of the faithful spirit-led men looked for and awaited His coming. "*Abraham saw my day.*" Isaiah wrote that He would "*make His soul an offering for sin*" and "*by His stripes we would be healed*"!

*Sixth*, in the fullness of time He came into the world clothed in the likeness of our flesh. His mission was not to condemn but to save. His earthly life was marked by perfect obedience to the Father and compassionate love for sinners. "*This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.*"

*Seventh*, on the cross of Calvary He died under the wrath and judgment of God for all our sins. "*By one offering He perfected forever them that are sanctified.*" By His obedience the law is honored and by His death justice is satisfied.

*Eighth*, He has ascended to heaven. As our forerunner He has entered the holiest and is sat down on the right hand of God, where He ever lives to make intercession for us. "*Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.*"

*Ninth*, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and His redeeming grace has been committed to faithful men to be proclaimed to all the world. "*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.*"

## Saved by Grace

Ephesians 2:8-9

"*By grace are ye saved,*" declared Paul as he took the crown off the head of man in every respect and gave all the glory to God. He exalted the Lord God, our gracious Sovereign, who will have mercy upon Whom He will have mercy.

I wish every preacher would proclaim this glorious doctrine, "*by grace are ye saved.*" This is the doctrine that will shake the gates of hell if it is preached. If you are ever to get any comfort or assurance or hope, it will not be in your morality, works, or free will, but it will come from realizing that it is only by the grace of God in Christ Jesus that we are saved.

What the sun is to the heavens, that is what God's grace in Christ is to theology. Take away the mercy of Christ in substitution and there is nothing left worth preaching or believing.