

# Bulletin Articles of Henry Mahan For the Year 1984

## This is the Record

“This is the record,” declared the Apostle John; this is the sum and substance of all that is written and preached. God, out of His pure free-grace, is pleased to give unto us *eternal life*. This life is the spiritual life lost in the fall – life free from sin, sorrow, and death forever.

This life is in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ! Not only purposed in Him, promised through Him, and purchased by Him, but *He is that life!* (Col. 3:4)

He that hath the redeeming Christ, the interceding Christ, the indwelling Christ hath life!

## Knowing God

God is *who He is* and God is *who He says He is*; therefore, a knowledge of God must come from Him by divine revelation. Any true knowledges of the Lord God must be revealed to us by the Spirit of God, or we will perish in ignorance, worshipping the idols of our imagination, calling them God.

God is pleased to reveal Himself in two ways; through *His word* and through *his son*. “*God spoke to us by His Son*” (Heb. 1:1-2). If you would know the true and living God, trust not your dreams, your

visions, your thoughts, or your traditions; but look to *His word* and to *His son*.

*“I and my Father are one; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father”* (Jn. 14:9). Any thoughts or ideas of God which are contrary to the Word of God and the person of Jesus Christ are false and full of idolatry!

## **A Word on Stewardship**

There are many warnings in the Scriptures to those who are rich. But perhaps one will say, “I am not rich nor likely to ever be rich.” Even so, we are still responsible on a smaller scale for what God put into our hands. Whether I have little or much, it all belongs to my Father, and I am resolved to use for His glory and the good of others!

## **It’s Easier to Wear A Cross than to Bear A Cross**

This is the day of *instant religion*. It is the day of altar calls, public decisions, and accepting Jesus. There is little conviction, little or no repentance, and certainly no counting the cost. Men seem to want a refuge that requires no genuine commitment on their part and a religion which fits their lifestyle while also rewarding them with eternal happiness.

It is far less trouble to eat a wafer than to feed on the Bread of Life; less trouble to receive water on the brow than to seek the Fountain of Life; less trouble to walk an aisle than to walk the Calvary Road; less trouble to shake a preacher’s hand than to reach out like a beggar to the Redeemer; less trouble to tell the priest that you have sinned than to confess guilt before the throne; less trouble to be

identified with the local denomination than to be identified with the crucified Christ; less trouble to wear a cross than to bear one!

What can we do for a generation that cries, “Peace, peace!” when there is no peace? What can we do? Preach the gospel of God’s grace in Christ! God may be pleased to open an ear, an eye, and a heart here and there.

## **Beware of Hypocrisy**

The very prayer that encourages you to pray for mercy instructs you to forgive. *“Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.”* There is no grace in the heart unwilling to overlook faults; there is no love in the heart which holds a grudge against others while asking God to forgive themselves.

## **The Beautiful Bloom of Humility**

Grace is a rarer things than we realize, and the flower of humility seldom blooms. But they would grow abundantly in our garden if we only realized *“I am what I am by the grace of God.”*

## **The Ministry of the Eternal Christ**

*“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation”*

Hebrews 13:7

In Hebrews 13:7 Paul exhorts believers to respect, acknowledge, and follow the faithful pastor and spiritual guides whom the Lord has been pleased to give them and to consider the subject and object of their ministry – *Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever!* A faithful pastor will preach Christ. The goal of His life and ministry will be to know Christ for himself and then to lead his hearers to know Christ for themselves.

1.) Christ is the same in His glory, His offices, His purpose, and His work *yesterday*. In the beginning of the world He was the everlasting I AM, the Surety of the covenant, and the Lamb slain. He is the substance and sum of all Old Testament promises, sacrifices, and types.

2.) Christ is the same *today!* In His person, He is the God-Man; in His offices, He is Prophet, Priest, and King! He is the ONLY REDEEMER.

3.) Christ is the same *forever*. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His priesthood an unchanging one. His love and care for His people never change.

If you are brought by God's Spirit to love, believe, and rest in the Lord Jesus Christ as your wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, you will be eternally blessed beyond description, and my goal will be realized. But, if not, God will yet be honored and our ministry of warning and exhortation will be owned by the eternal King whose justice also must be glorified!

## In Christ

In Christ, the Father's love  
Was freely to men given;  
In Christ, the Father's righteous grace  
Secured our home in heaven.

In Christ, I've all my soul desires;  
He is my supreme delight;  
In Christ, all the Father requires  
To turn my darkness into light.

In Christ, the source of all my bliss,  
My Saviour, brother, friend;  
In Christ is all my righteousness;  
*On Him alone I depend.*

## Contentment

One who is born of the Spirit of God and has a saving interest in Christ is an *heir of God*, is *rich in faith*, and has *all of his needs met in Christ!* He should be content with his lot on earth and be thankful for all things.

One thing is certain: in Christ we have all things that are worth having. *"Godliness with contentment is great gain"* (1 Tim. 6:6). We brought nothing into this world but our sin, and we shall take nothing out. Earthly possessions, honors, and relationships have no value beyond this world; but, to be forgiven of sin and made a joint-heir with Christ Jesus is of the greatest eternal value!

To learn this in heart is to avoid covetousness (which is idolatry) and to enjoy peace and contentment with much or little. *"In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thess. 5:18).

## By Grace are ye Saved

*"By grace are ye saved,"* declared Paul as he took the crown off the head of man in every respect and gave all 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 to ever get any comfort or assurance or hope, it will not be in your morality, works, or freewill; but, it will come from realizing that it is by the grace of God in Christ Jesus that we are saved.

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

## Today

Some men look more to the past than the to the present. Is not our Lord the same yesterday, today, and forever? This is my day and His day. Let me minister today!

### I Myself will See God

I am a person, a human being, a marvelous work of the Creator. “*How wonderfully I am made.*” I have a body constructed by the Master Craftsman. I am a soul with personality, emotions, a will, and eternal existence. I was born an individual. I live, think, act, and die an individual. I shall face God, give an account of myself, and spend eternity in my body and soul.

Whatever relationship I have with others, before God, I am a single person as if I were the only person on earth. And set before me as an individual is the testimony of God. This Word deals with all things pertaining to God, sin, salvation in Christ, and all that I need to know and believe in order to find peace, pardon, and life everlasting.

I am not left to my own thoughts or to the opinions of men. God, even the Living God, has spoken! He has said, "*Abraham believed God and it was counted to his for righteousness.*"

*"Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."*

### **What are our Distinguishing Points?**

Have you noticed among the sects that their special, distinguishing points are their power and cause for existing? When these points are omitted or compromised, they dwindle out.

For example, *Catholicism* without the human priesthood, the confessional, and the mass would be dead. Likewise, *The Church Of Christ* without baptism, *Pentecostalism* without emotionalism, gifts, and healing, and the *Adventist* without Saturday would all be sterile!

Let us, who preach the gospel, learn that if Christ is left out of our message, *we have no message!* If free grace is left out of the gospel, the gospel is gone. We readily admit that the grace of God in Christ is our forte! If we do not preach Christ, we have no reason to exist as preachers, churches, or missionaries.

## **All of Grace**

The more we are able to look away from our works, the law, and religious duties, the stronger will be our faith. Every person is married to the law as a covenant; and, while there is any fleshly nature left in us, we will find a strong motion in our hearts which

tries to turn us back to the works of the law as a ground of acceptance before God! Oh, how easily and foolishly we fall into the error of the Galatians, imagining that we are more secure or more spiritual because of our good deeds or because of our dedication to religious duties.

Now, I say that the more we are able to suppress this direction of thought, the stronger will be our faith and the greater will be our assurance of a saving interest in Christ. A strong believer will cast out the bond-woman and her son, owning himself only a son of free grace, an heir of God through the Lord Jesus and His perfect, imputed righteousness.

The strong believer overlooks all duties, works, experiences, and even graces as a ground of acceptance with God and finds his confidence *only in Christ*! Like Paul, he counts all as loss and rubbish that he may win Christ and be found in Him. He will not allow so much as one thread of personal righteousness in his covering. It shall be all of grace from top to bottom! He knows that grace reigns through imputed righteousness alone (Eph. 2:8-10).

## Honor and Glory

What becomes of us does not really matter or what honor we attain. The honor and glory is his; and, if we are in Him, we shall share His glory.

## Rest

*Rest* is a sweet word to the weary soul; all seek it but only believers find it. Paul wrote, "*We which have believed do enter into REST*" (Heb. 4:3). He did not say we shall enter but we *do* enter into rest.

There is a sweet repose, a calm peace, and a sweet rest in Christ. We can trust Him to forgive the past, provide for the present, and guarantee the future. If you can believe God, you will find in Christ all you need.

### **Call Him LORD**

I notice that few preachers and writers use the expression “*our Lord Jesus*” or “*the Lord Jesus*”. It is “Jesus said this” and “Jesus did that” or “Jesus died and rose again”. Brethren, *he is the Lord – he is the living God!*

We need to acknowledge His deity, His dominion, and His divine anointing! He is “God over all, blessed forever” and we can never praise Him too much, speak too reverently of Him, or give Him a high title which He does not deserve.

You may feel that I am *straining at a gnat* but I sincerely do not think so. As for this preacher and this congregation, He is our *Lord Jesus Christ* and I shall continue to discourage any over-familiarity or lack of reverence for His person and work.

*“Ye call me LORD and ye say well, for so I am.”* And I urge all who use His glorious name, even in conversation, to use it most reverently and with full honors!

### **Who God Is**

God is not who we *think* He is. God is *who He is!* If God were who we think He is, we would have as many gods as we have people. Our thoughts are not His thought. He said, “*You thought I was altogether such as one as yourself*” (Ps. 50:21).

## Our Only Ground of Hope

I want to be able to say in sincerity and truth, “*I know Whom I have believed and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day*” (2 Tim. 1:12). All other ground is sinking sand; all other hope is folly and will only bring grief and despair

## Nothing but the Blood

Nothing but the blood of Christ can save guilty sinners! I care not how orthodox the *doctrine*, how exact the *ordinance*, how true the *form*, how scriptural the *practice*, it is all vain and empty if you rely upon it for acceptance with God.

God forbid that we should at any time say a word against any of these holy and precious things; but, *keep them in their place!* If you make anything but the person and work of Christ to be the basis of your soul’s salvation, you shall be disappointed and ashamed in that day. There is no saving power anywhere except in *the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

“Could my tears forever flow,  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
All for sin could not atone,  
Christ must save, and *Christ alone!*”<sup>1</sup>

## The Lord’s Church

I love the Lord’s church! I choose to be personally and closely identified with the body of believers in my area who love Christ, worship Him, and boldly preach His sovereign, redeeming grace.

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<sup>1</sup> Toplady, Augustus. *Rock of Ages*. The Gospel Magazine. London, 1776.

Churches can be very disappointing things; and, like those churches of the apostle's days, they all have their faults. Church members are not all they ought to be but they are all our brothers and sisters and I prefer their company above all others.

Someone once wrote of his church:

“Yet, Lord, thy saints on earth may reap  
Some profit by the good we do;  
These are the company I keep,  
These are the choicest friends I know.

Let others choose the sons of mirth  
To give a relish to their wine;  
I love the men of heav'nly birth,  
Whose thoughts and language are divine.”<sup>2</sup>

## Everyone Can't All Be Right

Some think that it does not matter what a man believes so long as he is sincere. The average person thinks that all religions are right. “You go to your church and I'll go to mine, you believe what you think is right and I'll believe what I think is right, and we'll meet in heaven someday and rejoice in our respective saviors.”

No! my friends, we cannot all be right when we contradict one another so. It is imperative that we search the Scriptures and see what God says. A doctrine is not true because I believe it or because you believe it, but it is true only if God says it!

I do not ask whether you believe what I preach – perhaps you do not. But I ask you to search the Scriptures and determine whether these things be so. I am not afraid to submit my belief in God's immutable sovereignty, man's total fall and ruin, God's elective

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<sup>2</sup> Watts, Isaac. *Psalm 16*. Psalms and Hymns of Isaac Watts. London, 1724.

grace, Christ's effectual atonement, the Spirit's invincible call, and the perseverance of the sheep to *the Word of God!*

### **A Believer's Attitude Toward Sin**

1.) He knows and rejoices that all of his sin and sins are pardoned, paid for, and put away by the sacrifice of Christ The Lord.

2.) He condemns sin in himself! While sin does not reign it does remain in the believer, but he does not excuse or justify it. He grieves over it and daily confesses his sins before God. He hates a bad attitude as much as evil actions. He judges his motives as well as his manner by the holiness of Christ; and, when he finds iniquity in himself, he despises it and judges himself. "*O wretched man that I am!*"

3.) He forgives sin in others! He does not forgive himself – only God can do that – but he is quick to pity, have mercy upon, and forgive others. Not to be able to forgive is to forfeit the right to ask forgiveness.

4.) He longs to be free from all sin and to be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ. While he rejoices in Christ, is content with his lot, and finds joy in the fellowship of Christ's Church, he will only be satisfied when he awakes in the likeness of Christ!

### **Blessings to Report**

In the Lord's gracious providence, He continues to open doors and give us the privilege of sharing His gospel of grace and mercy in Christ with others. Almost 1000 tapes per month are mailed to this nation and other nations. Response to our television program numbers anywhere between 50 and 100 letters week. Your gifts to our missionaries last month alone was \$10,000. Invitations for me to preach the gospel to other churches are more than I can possibly fulfill. However, I know that it is your desire that I accept all that I

can. *“Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel”* (1 Cor. 9:16).

Someone said, “You can’t build a church and be gone most of the time.” Perhaps, but I believe that this is the Lord’s Church, and He will build it, sustain it, and keep His people faithful, especially when they and their pastor are seeking to obey His order to *“go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*

It is not your desire nor my intention to refuse a call to minister the gospel in other places simply because a pastor should not be away too much. Besides, I feel that it is a rich blessing to you to be able to hear other preachers of the gospel!

Some of us have been together over 33 years! That is quite long enough to build a relationship of love, understanding, trust, and dedication to our blessed Lord and His kingdom of grace. If, after all these years, there is no permanent commitment to His and to one another, our profession is a *farve!*

Let us be about our Father’s business *“while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work!”*

## Rejoice Evermore

Some people have a religion that seems to impress upon them that it is their sacred duty to be gloomy, sad, disagreeable, and critical of everything. “Draw the blinds on Sunday”; “fold the hands and look heavenward”; “act spiritual”. Be sure that everyone is impressed with your “prayer time”, or the fact that you are “not like other men”. They seem to never rest or rejoice. They go through life with the idea that it is an awful thing to live here, or to be a human being, and it is wicked to be glad and happy.

This is definitely not for me, nor is it in keeping with the Scripture which say, *“Rejoice evermore.”*

## In Everything Give Thanks

Someone said, “Justice is getting what we deserve, mercy is *not* getting what we do deserve, and grace is receiving what we do not deserve.” Oh, how abundant and abounding is the mercy and grace of God to us! How is it that we do not live in a constant attitude of praise and thanksgiving?

I feel as deeply convicted before God of the sin of ingratitude and murmuring and for being discontented as I do of any other sin. To find fault with the good providence of God is *covetousness* (which is idolatry).

There’s no need for me to list our spiritual, material, and physical blessings. Anyone with an understanding of God’s holiness and man’s sin can rejoice that he is not now in eternal darkness. Anyone with eyes to see the dreadful effects of Adam’s fall can rejoice that all of these afflictions are not visited upon him. Anyone who is aware of the poverty and want which much of the world’s population experiences ought to give thanks for every thread of clothing, bite of food, and comfort of home and family.

*“Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.”* Lord, I give thanks; help my ingratitude.

## Meekness

If you think that meekness is weakness, try being meek for a week.

## Yes, You May Believe Christ

If God commands a man to come to Christ and believe on Him, then that man is at full liberty to do so! Christ said to the man with *withered hand*, “*Stretch forth your hand,*” and he did!

Our gospel carries with it the same command to the lame and the dead. “*Oh, ye dry bones, hear the Word of the Lord.*”

## Be Still

Some preachers want to arouse man’s activity. We want to kill it once and for all, to show him that he is lost and ruined, and that his activities are not able to save him. Some seek to make the man stand up. We seek to bring him down and make him feel that he is in the hands of God and that his business is to submit to God, bow to the claims of Christ, and cry, “*Lord, save me or I perish.*”

We hold that a man is never so near grace as when he feels that he can do nothing at all but cry for mercy. But, when he says, “I can pray, I can believe, I can do this or that,” the marks of self-sufficiency are still on his brow.

## The Fact of Salvation, Not the Time, is Important

I am sure that some who lived in the days of our Lord’s visitation to earth, and many who heard the gospel from the apostles and the faithful preachers who followed them, could tell you the exact day they met the risen Redeemer and bowed to His sovereign rule. I have never felt that it was important for a person to be able to tell *when* he was saved, but rather that he be able *now* to state he has experienced repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus

Christ, that *now* he is looking to Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King and is *now* resting in HIS righteousness and effectual sin-offering.

Too often men and women like to establish a time of conversion and an *experience*, in order to have something to look back upon for comfort and assurance. This is dangerous! We are not to look to anything nor to anyone but Christ for our hope, our assurance, and our comfort. Paul said something about “*forgetting those things which are behind and reaching for unto those things which are before,*” and, “*looking unto the Lord Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.*”

Most of us came through the confusion, errors, and false professions of modern fundamentalism and had so much to unlearn, so many false foundations which had to be destroyed, that it is difficult to set an exact hour when our eyes were turned totally from our idols of religion to our living Lord – when our hearts were weaned from the pride of our religious works and professions and brought to *rest in Him alone!*

This is the unaided work of the Spirit of God and the Word of God; and this is a living union which shall never be dissolved. This is accomplished when sinners hear the gospel of God’s grace and glory.

## **You Must Know the Disease to Find the Cure**

We won’t make much headway in finding a solution if we do not understand the problem. A cure is not likely to be found if we have no knowledge of the disease. In the matter of salvation, the problem is man’s sin; the solution is God’s grace. The disease is moral depravity and spiritual inability; the remedy is God’s mercy in Christ. If a man is nearsighted, he only needs corrective glasses; but, if he is blind, he needs the miracle of sight! If a man is sick, he only needs medicinal aid; but, if he is *dead*, he needs the miracle of life! If

man has only strayed from the way, he only needs directions; but, if he is *completely lost*, he needs to be found!

Here is the question to be settled by preachers and people; “What happened in the garden?” When one feels obliged to come to some conclusions on the subjects of election, irresistible grace, and particular redemption, it would be wise for him to first determine the *condition* of the sinner who is to be saved. If man was only wounded by the fall, he needs assistance; if he is dead in sins, he needs to be resurrected and that by the purpose and power of the God of life.

If fallen man still has his moral ability and power of choice, then let us wait for him to choose and seek God; but, if he loves darkness and will not come to Christ, then Christ must love and come to him.

## **If You Would Know God**

God is *who He is* and *who He says He is*; therefore, a knowledge of God must come from Him by divine revelation. Any true knowledge of the Lord God must be revealed to us by the Spirit of God, or we will perish in ignorance, worshipping the idols of our imagination, calling them God.

God is pleased to reveal Himself in two ways: through *His Word* and through *His Son*. “*God spoke to the fathers by the prophets and hath spoken to us by His Son*” (Heb. 1:1-2). If you would know the true and living God, trust not your dreams, your visions, your thoughts, or your traditions; but, look to *His Word* and to *His Son*.

“*I and my Father are one; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*” Any thoughts or ideas of God which are contrary to the Word of God and the person of Jesus Christ are false and full of idolatry!

## Take Care of Your Walk Before Others

At all times and before all people the believer's conversation, conduct, and attitude ought to be glorifying to God and in keeping with the principles of holiness and grace! But we should be *especially* careful and cautious in the presence of young Christians and unbelievers lest we give offense and mislead them. *"Walk in WISDOM toward them that are without (non-Christians), redeeming the time (making the most of every opportunity to point them to the Redeemer). Let your conversation be ALWAYS with grace, seasoned with salt"* (Col. 4:5-6).

Be careful not to flaunt your liberty in the presence of one who will not understand and may be offended without saying as much. I'm sure you wish to let them know that you are human, a regular fellow, and that you are desirous to identify with them as much as possible. But *"let not your good be evil spoken of"* by one who is still bound by traditions, customs, and human righteousness. Curb your light-heartedness, dispense with too much idle talk, and never give the impression that you are not much burdened for their spiritual welfare.

You may reply, "But I must be myself; I must speak what I feel and enjoy my freedom in Christ." You have opportunity enough to be yourself around mature members of the body of Christ (in a way that will edify and encourage them in the walk of faith), but walk in wisdom, restraint, and in a demonstration of piety and seriousness toward men who either do not know Christ or who are just now showing an interest in the gospel.

You brought your children up delicately and carefully; be as sensitive with God's babes and little children.

## Be a Faithful Steward

While I am away preaching the gospel in other places, I depend upon you to be faithful to the services, to encourage and visit one

another, to support the many ministries of the church, to pray one for another, and to pray for me and for those who preach the Word here.

God has given us a strong influence and open door to minister to many all over the world. It is required of a steward that he be *faithful!*

## Treasure in Earthen Vessels

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us”*

II Corinthians 4:7

The gospel of Christ is called a *treasure* in that it contains *rich truth*; it has *rich blessings*, such as redemption, complete forgiveness, sanctification, and justification; it consists of *rich promises* (precious promises) of His care, compassion, and future glory; it shows forth the *riches of God’s grace in Christ*.

This treasure is in *earthen vessels*, meaning the ministers to whom God entrusts this gospel and by whom you hear it. They are weak and frail creatures, subject to like passions and infirmities as other men (James 5:17). God makes the most unlikely to be His instrument of grace that He might have all the glory (I Cor. 1:26-29).

The package must not rival the gift inside. The box containing the perfect diamond must not draw attention away from the gem. Let us receive the treasure – Christ Jesus – in whatever vessel God sends Him to us, grateful for its presence and for its service to us, but laying it aside that our full attention, appreciation, and glorifying might be in Him!

Actually, the weaker the vessel, the stronger His power appears to be; and, the frailer the vessel, the easier it is to admire and cherish the treasure. Wise is the preacher who quickly learns his role as a cardboard box, not only expendable but expected to be used up and sacrificed for the greater glory of Christ. Wise is the receiver of the gift who knows and appreciates the duties of the box.

## **Sovereign Grace and the Great Commission**

Those who are elected to life in Christ shall be saved (*“All that the Father giveth to Me shall come to me”*), but they shall be brought to Christ in genuine repentance and faith by God’s Spirit through the means He has appointed – *the preaching of the gospel!*

A belief in sovereign grace that discourages prayer for sinners, witnessing, and a sincere command for all men to bow to Christ NOW and to receive Him as Lord and Saviour is not of the Lord and is heresy.

I urge, persuade, and beseech you to be reconciled to God, for *“He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”*

## **Mercy is the Sinner’s Sole Request**

The sinner who truly comes to Christ does not come to have his earthly problems solved nor to have his body and bank account healed. He comes to be saved from sin; he comes to Christ for *mercy*. Mercy is the sinner’s sole request.

    Wealth and honor I disdain,  
    Earthly comforts, Lord, are vain;

These will never satisfy:  
Give me Christ or else I die.<sup>3</sup>

If you, as a guilty sinner, have not come to Christ for mercy and redemption from your sins, you have not come to Christ aright. When He has saved us and made us His own, whatever He is pleased to bring to pass in our earthly lives will be for our good and His glory.

Be it success or failure, sorrow or joy, life or death – *His grace is sufficient!*

## Take Your Burdens to Lord and Leave them There

I am trying to learn what I have attempted to teach – that we are to take our burdens, cares, anxieties, and needs to the Lord and *leave them there*. Instead of worrying and fretting myself about all the things that concern this church, television, missionaries, conferences, personalities, and a dozen other things, I need to pray about them, do what God enables me to do, and leave it all at His feet.

If those works are not His work, then let them all go to pieces! If they are His work, then He will attend to them and bless them. It is wonderful how smoothly things go when we trust the Lord. Our worrying and fretting cause the problems. When we come here to worship, pray, preach, and fellowship, everyone is lifted, our burdens are laid down, and we find sweet rest in Christ. But, when we leave the services, we seem to say, “I have left my burden inside; I’d better go and take it up again.”

This is *not* the way to *trust God!* The way to trust Him is to take our burdens to Him and *leave them there!*

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<sup>3</sup> Hammond, William. *Gracious Lord, Incline Thine Ear*. Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. London: W. Strahan, 1745.

## The Logic of Substitution

There is no human logic in the doctrine of heaven. The only real logic is found in the punishment of sin by a holy God and the eternal separation of sinners from His holy presence. That God is able in His mercy, grace, and wisdom to make a way for our sins to be laid on a substitute and the guilty sinner to go free is the greatest glory of His nature that He has seen fit to reveal.

*“O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God: how unsearchable are His judgements and His ways past finding out”* (Rom. 11:33).

## Look to Christ, Not the Blessings

The first experience of faith must be towards God in Christ Jesus and not toward the blessings themselves. The Scripture says, *“Let Israel HOPE IN THE LORD, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption”* (Ps. 130:7).

The sinner is not to set his thoughts on the blessings and the promises that he wants; but, he is to look to, go to, and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ; for He Himself is the source of mercy and the fountain of redemption. If we have Him, we have all that He is.

## Be Consistent

I need constantly to remind myself that *“all things are of God”*. Let me not preach sovereignty and then complain of my lot in life. Let me

not talk of divine purpose and then spend my days murmuring about my trials and troubles.

It is totally inconsistent with faith in the sovereign Christ for me to question His good providence. Paul called covetousness “*idolatry*” and said, “*I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content*” (Phil. 4:11).

I pray for submission, for with it comes peace and rest.

## Perfect Peace

Are you happy? Yes! But I am not without times of sorrow and depression. Like any human, I weep over loved ones, friends, sickness, death, and disappointment. But I sorrow not as those who have no hope. *Christ is my hope!* He loved me, gave Himself for me, and will make *all these things* work together for my eternal good.

Are you at rest in your soul? Yes! But I am not free from concern and conviction over my sins and my infirmities. I love Christ but not as I should or as I desire. I am satisfied with Him, His mercy, His grace, and His love; but, I will never be totally satisfied until I wake with His likeness.

Do you have peace? Yes! But that peace with God, peace of conscience, and peace in any situation or condition is not based on my merit, feelings, nor religious duties. Christ is my peace! He said, “*In ME ye have peace. In the world ye shall have trouble.*”

Any man or woman who claims continual, uninterrupted joy, rest, and peace in this world is either not telling the truth or has no connection with reality! True joy, rest, and peace are things we enjoy in Christ *in the midst* of troubles, afflictions, and infirmities.

Paul’s exhortation was “*rejoice in the Lord*”. When I am conscious of my weakness, failure, and sins, I rejoice in Christ, my righteousness.

When I am concerned about food, clothing, and shelter, I rejoice in Christ, my provider. When I am grieved, Christ is my comfort. When I am faced with death, Christ is my life! So, it is not necessary to put on a false face and deceive others. We are still human; but, our peace, rest, and joy is Christ.

*“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,  
Whose mind is stay on Thee.”*

## Six Signs of Trouble

Every true believer fears the removal of God’s presence and power. David prayed, *“Take not Thy Spirit from me.”* Paul feared that, *“while preaching to others, I might become a castaway.”* My thoughts are that this condition is manifested in the following ways:

- 1.) We begin to experience no blessing nor benefit from the reading or preaching of the Word. When the Word ceases to convict, rebuke, burn in my heart, and cause me to rejoice in Christ, then God is not speaking to me; for God speaks through His Word.
- 2.) We are in trouble when we feel satisfied with our spiritual progress and become puffed up with knowledge. We become authorities instead of learners; having arrived, our humble spirit is in creed alone, not experience.
- 3.) We can be absent from the fellowship of believers and worship of the Lord without feeling a great loss and an empty heart. A man who can be warmed by his own fire is either dead or dying spiritually.
- 4.) We begin to be critics and find fault with others. The Spirit of God leads a man to feel that he is *“less than the least”, “chief of sinners”*. When the Spirit of God is not present, we become judges and fault-finders.

5.) When our souls are not vexed by the sin within us and the conversation of men about us, when we can feel comfortable in the presence of those who “*never knew out God*”, when we can conform to the “*ways of natural men*” and the trend of materialism, the light of God is dim or extinguished.

6.) When our thoughts become self-centered and the general welfare, well-being, and joy of others is of no great concern to us, we are certainly not motivated by the Spirit of God. Selfishness, like self-righteousness, is not of God. The heart filled with God’s love and grace dwells on others; to make them happy is to be happy.

## Keep a Cow Yourself

Have you heard the story of the Irishman who was converted to Christ and whose priest told him that he had better not read the Bible because he was unlearned? The priest said, “I will get the milk of the Word and bring it to you.” To which the Irishman replied, “I will be much obliged to you, sir, if you will bring me the milk of the Word; but, I intend to keep a cow myself. That way I will be sure to get the milk *pure*.”

That is what I want you to do – keep a cow yourself; carry a Bible with you and see whether the milk you are receiving from the pulpit is PURE! You can trust your body to physicians and your finances to brokers and not suffer too great a loss if they are wrong but, to trust your eternal soul to a preacher and find out in the end that his was *another gospel* is to lose eternally.

“*Search the Scriptures daily, whether these things are so*” (Acts 17:11).

## Free Indeed

The preaching of the gospel sets men free. *“Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”* (Jn. 8:32); free from the curse of the law; free from the power of Satan and the practice of sin; free from religious form, ceremony, and ritualism; free from the bondage of false priests and religious lords (for all believers are priests and kings); free from the fear of death and the dread of the tomb.

This is a glorious freedom purchased by our dear Redeemer through His obedient life and vicarious death. This is good and welcome news to the sons of Adam who mourn under the weight and burden of spiritual slavery.

## Know Where the Battle is Fought

There is a battlefield today where the character and glory of our Lord is assailed by the forces of evil. You and I may be stirring up dust and holding forth gallantly on many issues; but, we are not in THE REAL FIGHT, unless we dare to engage the enemy of our Lord where he is challenging the name of Christ in our day! The discerning servant knows where that is and is willing to pay the price.

## Assurance

How can I, with my weak faith and sinful nature, find any assurance of a saving interest in the Lord Jesus?

1.) LOOK TO CHRIST AND NOT TO YOURSELF! He is our Surety from everlasting to everlasting. In the covenant of mercy He assumed full responsibility for our redemption, and He will make it good. His righteousness is perfect and, in Him, it is mine. His

atonement is sufficient to cleanse me from all sin. His intercession, based upon His person and work, must prevail with our reconciled God. *“By His stripes we are healed.”*

2.) LOOK TO HIS WORD AND NOT TO YOUR THOUGHTS! Hear what He says: *“If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”* Free from the law of sin and death, free from condemnation at the bar of justice, and, being free from the penalty, power, and practice of sin, you shall be someday free from the its very presence. Abraham believed God that He was able to do ALL THAT HE HAD PROMISED. The Word incarnate and the Word recorded is our assurance. *“He hath said I will never leave you so I can boldly say the Lord is my helper.”* God said it, and that is sufficient.

3.) LISTEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND NOT TO YOUR DOUBTS! *“His Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”* All of our trouble since the garden of Eden has come from listening to the wrong voice. It is time that every believer tuned out the voices of Satan, doubt, fear, and every enemy of the grace of Christ, and began to listen to Him who speaks peace to the troubled heart. *“My peace I give unto you, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”* Cease from your works, from your efforts to establish a righteousness, from your desire to find some good in this flesh, and enter into His rest!

## Is Our Message Offensive?

Paul called his message *“the offence of the cross.”* Again and again he warned that the true gospel of God’s grace and glory would meet with great opposition from the religious world and the natural world. *“The preaching of the cross is foolishness.” “The natural man receiveth not the things of God.”*

Our Lord said, *“Marvel not if the world hate you.”* He also said in John 16, *“They will cast you out of organized religion, and whosoever killeth you will think that he serves God in doing so.”* If what we preach is *not* offensive

to the religionist and to the worldling, then it is *not the gospel of Christ*. I repeat, it is not the gospel!

1.) *God's absolute sovereignty* in creation, providence, and redemption offends man's claim to a freewill! "*WE WILL NOT have this man REIGN over us.*"

2.) The preaching of *total depravity* and *inability* offends man's dignity and claim to personal righteousness. "*We be not born of fornication*", that is, "we be not (they say) born in sin." "We may not be perfect, but we are not totally corrupt in God's sight."

3.) He gospel of Christ comes by *revelation* and this offends man's natural wisdom. The college professor knows as much about the mysteries of grace as the farmhand, which is nothing apart from the Spirit of God.

4.) *Effectual redemption* through the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, our substitute and sin-offering, offends man's pride. Men would have God do all that He wants to do or can do; but, there must be a work left for the sinner to perform, that we might share somewhat in the glory.

5.) The *lordship of Jesus Christ* offends man's desire for recognition here and the hereafter. "*Grant, Lord, that we may sit at Thy right and left hand.*" "Let us have a system of rewards to distinguish us in some way from the beggar." We have established our social levels here and choose to continue them in heaven.

## Galatians 6:1

We are redeemed, children of God, indwelt by His Spirit of holiness and grace; but, we are still human, still flesh. The motions of sin, the desires of the flesh, and the potential to fall are in every believer. Therefore, if a brother falls into sin of spirit, attitude, or

flesh, we are to make every attempt to recover, restore, and resettle him to his place of fellowship.

The attitude of strong, mature, restrained believers toward the fallen is *not* to be critical, holier-than-thou, and condemning. It is to be a spirit of humility and meekness; for, we know that the potential to commit any sin is in us, and we only stand by the grace of God.

It is easy to compare ourselves with weaker Christians, less gifted believers, or even fallen brothers and to begin to think that we are *something special*, strong, or even better than others. We are not to *prove ourselves* by other men's sins or actions, but in the light of God's glory and holiness.

If we can find some measure of genuine spiritual growth and some evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, we can rejoice in what God has truly been pleased to do for us and in us, rather than being buoyed up in vain hope simply because we are not as other men. Every man is judged according to his own works, not in a comparative view of others!

## **We Press On**

I have not attained perfect holiness, perfect knowledge, nor perfect happiness. Though my sanctification is perfect in Christ, it is not yet perfected in me. I know in part, sin dwells in me, and my faith is imperfect; but, I press on. I long to lay hold on that for which Christ laid hold of for me. I want what the Lord purposed and purchased on Calvary – *to be like him!* (Eph. 1:3-6)

## My Goal

My goal and aim is to finish the race and obtain the supreme and heavenly prize – the incorruptible crown of life, righteousness, and glory! (Psa. 17:15) We look to Christ (Heb. 12:1-2). We follow and depend on Christ (1 Jn. 3:1-3).

## Bless God and Rejoice in the Lord

Let us learn to *bless God!* Let us learn not only to be content but to *rejoice in the Lord!* The word *rejoice* is used ten times in the epistle to the Philippians. Let us learn the meaning of the word, not just in doctrine, but in experience.

There is always cause to rejoice in the Lord – in His *blood* that cleanseth, His *righteousness* that perfects, His *love* which never fails, His *providence* which works all things for our good, His *intercession* which is continual, and in the fact that our names are in the Book of Life – by His grace!

## Think on These Things

Philippians 4:8

Whatsoever things are *true* – agreeable to the truth in Christ Jesus, the gospel, and the Word of God.

Whatsoever things are *honest* – honest in the sight of God and men, honest in business, speech, and conduct.

Whatsoever thing are *just* – Christ is the Just One, enabling God to be just and justifier; but our thoughts should also be concerned with justice for the oppressed.

Whatsoever thing are *pure* – pure in word and deed, in opposition to carnality, vulgarity, and lust.

Whatsoever things are *holy* – agreeable to the character of God and His kingdom, the things which promote unbroken fellowship with God in Christ.

Whatsoever things are *lovely* – these are faith, joy, love, and all the fruits of the Spirit.

Whatsoever things are of *good report* – things that contribute to faith, a good name, a good reputation, and unity of purpose.

If anything is virtuous and worthy of praise, *think* on it, for “*as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he!*”

## Our Hope

Our hope for eternal mercy is built on pure grace. God saved us because He is gracious, not because we are. God chose us because He loved us, not because we loved Him.

## A Sure Hope

Concerning the character of God, what gross mistakes men make! I believe the root and foundation of all error in theology comes from ignorance of the character and attributes of God Himself. Arminian theology makes God to be less than He is. Men receive false doctrine because they do not have a clear understanding of the omnipotence, holiness, immutability, or sovereignty of God. If God is given His rightful place we will, like Isaiah, see His holiness and our sinfulness. We will cry, “*Woe is me; I am cut off.*”

The necessity of a suitable mediator, a sufficient sacrifice, and a God-honoring righteousness will become evident. First Corinthians 1:30 (*Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*”) will take on a new and essential meaning.

The greatness, importance, and power of your religion depend entirely on the greatness, glory, and power of *your god*. The depth of a man’s worship depends on the majesty and greatness of the God he worships. The strength of a man’s faith depends on the power and ability of the God he believes. Abraham believed God that *he was able* to perform all that He promised. The peace and rest a man enjoys depend on his confidence in the God who controls the flight of an angel or a fly, the flash of lightning or the glimmer of a glow-worm. The assurance of redemption and hope of eternal life that a man enjoys depend not upon his works, faithfulness, nor his own righteousness, but on the sufficient, effectual obedience and substitutionary death of the one Redeemer – Jesus Christ – who cannot fail in all that he undertook as surety and representative of His elect, given Him by the Father.

Give me a sovereign, omnipotent Lord of heaven and earth, with authority over all the universe of men and angels, and I will preach to you a *sure hope* of mercy and grace!

## Is This You?

*The Lord Jesus Christ is the saviour.* He alone is the object of our faith; for He, by His obedience and sacrifice, enables the Father to be both just and justifier.

*The Holy Spirit is the one who calls us to Christ.* He quickens, convicts, and enables us to lay hold of Christ by faith.

*The gospel is the invitation.* Yea, more than an invitation; it is a summons, a command for all who are weary to come to rest, all

who are guilty to come for grace, and all who are helpless to come for strength. If you have heard the gospel of God's grace, you have received a personal invitation from the Lord of glory to bow to the claims of Christ and receive His mercy.

*Baptism is your public confession of union with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and glorious acceptance. If these other things are truly you, "Why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized."*

## **Our Public Profession**

We do not apply pressure to people to make religious professions, nor do we seek to build a large membership in this church. Our purpose is to glorify God in the preaching of His Word and to present clearly to men and women the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

However, we do welcome to the membership those whom the Lord has saved and who have been scripturally baptized by immersion. If you wish to be identified with this congregation, we welcome you. If you desire to follow the Lord in baptism, notify the pastor.

## **Boasting is Excluded**

The fact that conversion and salvation are of God is a humbling truth. Grace puts its hand on the boasting mouth and shuts it once and for all. It then takes its hand off the mouth and that mouth praises Christ for His sovereign grace and trembles at the thought of taking any honor and glory from God.

## We Preach Christ Crucified

We should be able to do that quickly enough and then get on with the “practical things” men really need to live holy lives and find happiness in the Christian walk, right? It shouldn’t take a *lifetime* to preach Christ and Him crucified, should it? No! But if a man ever *begins to see* all that is taught, purchased, revealed, exemplified, and included in Christ crucified, ten thousand lifetimes would not be sufficient to exhaust the subject.

The apostle said, “*And now abideth FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE, THESE THREE...*” But where are these three learned? Where are these three exemplified? At the cross! “*Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*”

“*A proud look*” is listed first among seven things God hates. Where is pride to be reckoned with? Where is *humility* taught? At the cross! “*Let this mind be in you which was in Christ, who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*”

“*Obedient unto death.*” This is our example if we would learn *obedience* to God’s will and commandments. “*Though he were a son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered.*” This is where you will learn it too – at the cross!

When the apostle Paul would teach the grace of *giving* in 2 Corinthians 8, he summed it up in these words, “*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor.*” We learn to give at the cross!

I challenge you to find any grace, fruit, or purpose of God relating to the believer which does not take one directly to the cross for its *fulfillment*, its *example*, or its *motivation*!

## Forbear and Forgive

As long as we are in the flesh, we will have misunderstandings, unpleasanties, and even injustices (we will feel that our rights have been violated and others have been wrong in what they have said and done). What is to be our attitude?

It is to be two-fold; *forbearing* and *forgiving*. To forbear is to control our emotions, surrendering our rights for the time being in patient hope that God will reveal His purpose and will. To forgive is to actually put the misunderstanding out of mind and restore a state of love and fellowship. This is the way our Lord treats us. He is longsuffering and patient with us, forgiving our sins, remembering them no more! *“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye”* (Col. 3:13).

*“Above all things”*, the most necessary grace is *love* (Matt. 22:36-40; 1 Cor. 13:1-3,13). This is the bond which binds everything together in complete harmony for the glory of God and the good of one another. Knowledge, activity, zeal, and morality won’t bind us to Christ or to one another, but *love* will!

## Proper Duties

It is the business of the people to fill the pews and the business of the preacher is to fill the pulpit. Any time either gets his duty confused, trouble is the result. It is indeed sad when hearers decide what they should or will hear; but, it is even sadder when the preacher dares to compromise the glorious truth of God’s grace and glory in Christ in order to gain fame, a name, or a hearing!

One man said of Whitefield, “I respect him not because I believe what he preaches, but I know that he does!”

## Here I Stand

Here I stand – I can do no other! Let others waver, compromise, or cover; but I preach what Spurgeon, Luther, Calvin, Augustine, Paul, the apostles, and the prophets preached – “*Salvation is of the Lord.*”

Christ died in the stead of His people; and, as God is just, He will not – cannot – punish one soul of Adam’s race for whom Christ died. There is not one sin the book of God against any believer. Our sins were laid on Him, the law is honored, the justice of God satisfied; and, inasmuch as sin condemned Him, sin cannot condemn us!

This is my hope, comfort, and my security – that all my sins, transgressions, and iniquities were atoned for before they were even committed! This, indeed, is good news for the guilty!

## The Weightiest Woe of Hell

The greatest joy and glory of heaven is to be with Christ and to behold His glory; but we are also to be like Christ and to be glorified with Him! In all that Christ has, the believer also has a share. To be honored with Him, accepted in Him, and glorified with Him is heaven indeed.

Chrysostom said, “The pains of hell are not the greatest part of hell; the loss of heaven is the weightiest woe of hell.”<sup>4</sup> To lose the presence, the company, the glory, and the hope of Christ is the greatest part of damnation.

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<sup>4</sup> Spurgeon. Charles H. *The Redeemer’s Prayer*. New Park Street Pulpit Sermons. Vol. 3. London: Passmore and Alabaster. 1858

## True Prayer

I read something once about prayer that helped me. “God weighs your prayer, not by quantity but by quality, not by the outward dress and eloquent words but by the inner soul and the intense sincerity and earnestness that is in them.”

Have you sometimes lifted up your eyes from a time of prayer, whether public or private, and thought, “I do not think I did much good with that prayer,” or “what a pitiful effort I made”? Most likely, those prayers which we think the least of are the most acceptable to God.

When we feel satisfied or glory in our prayer, in all probability God will have nothing to do with it. If you see any beauty in your prayer, God will not; for you evidently were looking at your grace and not His!<sup>5</sup>

## The Word of God

Let us profit by the books and writings of men as we can; but there is one old book, a book of power, wealth, and infallible truth, that we must not neglect – that book is the Bible! One man, when he came to die, declared, “I wish I had spent as much time reading the Bible as I spent reading worthless literature!”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Spurgeon. Charles H. *Comfort for Those Whose Prayers are Feeble*. A brief sermon from The Sword and Trowel. London: Passmore and Alabaster. 1872. This article is a paraphrase of the fuller quote, which reads, “You know not what scales God weighs your prayers in— not by quantity but by quality, not by the onward dress of verbiage, but by the inner soul and the intense earnestness that was in it does he compute its value. Do you not sometimes rise from your knees in your little room and say, “I do not think I have prayed, I could not feel at home in prayer?” Nine times out of every ten those prayers are most prevalent with God which we think are the least acceptable, but when we glory in our prayer God will have nothing to do with it. If you see any beauty in your own supplication God will not; for you have evidently been looking at your prayer and not at him.”

<sup>6</sup> Spurgeon, Charles H. *Search the Scriptures*. New Park Street Pulpit Sermons, Vol. 3. London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1857. Reprinted by Pilgrim Publications under New Park Street Pulpit Sermons Vol. 3 & 4. The original quotation reads, ““Ah!” said one, when he came to die, who had been a great classic, “I would to God I had spent as much

Spurgeon once said, “Depend on it; it is God’s Word, not man’s comments upon God’s Word, that saves sinners. I have marked in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the conversion of a sinner is traceable to some Scripture preached or quoted, rather than to any trite or original saying by the preacher. It is God’s Word that breaks the fetters and sets the prisoner free; it is God’s Word instrumentally that saves soul; therefore, let us bring all men to the touchstone”<sup>7</sup> – to the Word of God. *“If they speak not according to His Word, it is because there is no light in them!”*

Should all the forms that men devise  
Assault your faith with treacherous art,  
You call them vanity and lies,  
And bind the gospel to your heart.<sup>8</sup>

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time in reading my Bible as I have spent in reading Livy! Would to God I had been exact in my criticisms of Holy Scripture as I was upon criticisms upon Horace!”

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. The first line, “Depend upon it...that saves sinners,” is attributed to Robert Murray M’Cheyne.

<sup>8</sup> Watts, Isaac. *Let Everlasting Glories Crown*. Hymns and Spiritual Songs. London: 1707-1709.