

# HARDEMAN'S TABERNACLE SERMONS

VOLUME III

A Series of Twenty-One Sermons Delivered  
in the  
Ryman Auditorium, Nashville, Tenn.,  
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BY  
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HENDERSON, TENN.

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To my beloved wife, who has stood by me so faithfully and loyally through these twenty and seven years, and who has been so willing to make any sacrifice that I might tell the story, and to our children—Dorsey, Mary Nell, and Carrie Neal—who have ever rejoiced over whatever success I may have attained, this volume is lovingly and affectionately dedicated.

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## FOREWORD

It is with genuine pleasure that I introduce to the public this volume of gospel sermons preached by N. B. Hardeman in the Ryman Auditorium, at Nashville, Tenn., in which place Brother Hardeman had conducted two similar meetings, the sermons of which were put in book form.

### A DESCRIPTIVE WORD.

It will be observed that these discourses have been entitled "Gospel Sermons," by which is meant that the gospel of Jesus Christ was proclaimed from start to finish, and not the doctrines, traditions, and experiences of uninspired men.

To be sure, the latter were exposed to the view of the most unlearned by being contrasted with the simplicity of the gospel of the Son of God, and thus made to stand out in all of their opposition to the truth and hindrance to the unity of God's people for which the Savior so earnestly prayed (John 17:20) and regarding which all inspired apostle exhorted (1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 4:3-6).

### A PUBLIC DEMAND.

Because of a public and insistent demand by the thousands who heard and read these sermons in the daily papers, the *Nashville Tennessean* and the *Nashville Banner*, no apology is offered for bringing out this volume.

History is valuable only to the extent that it contributes to the betterment of mankind; hence, only such facts should be permanently preserved as will enrich the mind and heart with the inspiration of the highest and noblest ideals of life.

So deeply was the public impressed with not only the subject matter of these discourses, but with the *clear* and *forceful* presentation of the subjects discussed, that all overwhelming sentiment expressed itself for their preservation in book form—this, too, notwithstanding the fact that it was N. B. Hardeman's third meeting in the same city and with practically the same audiences.

### ALL UNUSUAL PRESENTATION OF VITAL TRUTH.

Of course, all truth is vital, but there are some truths of exceeding

emphasis laid upon the sinful divisions among the professed children of God, the evils of denominationalism, and the only remedy for such evils. This necessarily led the preachers of that age to show the difference between the church revealed in the New Testament and the existing denominations, with their doctrines and traditions of men, making void the word of God. (Mark 7: 8-13.)

Not since the days of those who launched and most vigorously prosecuted the return to the ancient order as revealed in the New Testament has any man with more *boldness*, *clearness*, and *convicting power* stripped the truth of denominationalism with its human garments or shown the evils of sectarianism than N. B. Hardeman has done in this series of sermons.

This he did with the *ease* and *grace* of a consummate master of assemblies that so challenged the thousands of hearers as to bring them back with a spirit of eagerness to hear more of the long-neglected truths that stirred the religious world in Alexander Campbell's days from center to circumference.

### **PRESENTATION OF CHURCH HISTORY.**

From both sacred and profane history, with which N. B. Hardeman showed himself to be perfectly familiar, it was shown how the church established by the Lord Jesus Christ had departed from the truth. He showed the origin, creed, doctrine, and practice of all the denominations as purely the work of uninspired men, and how far they were from the word of God.

### **OPPOSITION AROUSED.**

This unusual presentation of historical facts stirred the defenders of sectarianism as they have not been for generations, and many criticisms were hurled at the preacher. However, these only served to emphasize the far-reaching and revolutionary effects of the truth so ably, earnestly, courteously, and kindly presented by N. B. Hardeman, who, modest, unassuming, and void of egotistical mannerisms, is one of the greatest preachers of this age.

### **THE SONG SERVICE.**

The inspiration arising from thousands of voices

been without a competent leader or director, such as B. H. Murphy, who inspired his helpers with his splendid leader

The great building was made to ring with the melody of human voices trained to sing as God requires, and this contributed much indeed to the success of this wonderful meeting.

F. W. SMITH.

# HARDEMAN'S TABERNACLE SERMONS

## "REMEMBERING"

Ladies and gentlemen, my brethren and friends, it is, indeed, a great inspiration and a genuine pleasure to be greeted by such a magnificent audience, prompted, as I believe you are, by the holiest desires to spread abroad the principles of the kingdom of Christ, to render proper thanksgiving unto Him from whom all blessings flow, and to show forth the praise of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Through the guidance of a kindly providence, we are here again to mix and mingle in Christian association and to declare once more the counsel of God to dying men.

It is not at all rare for great assemblies to come together. Sometimes political conventions call forth thousands. Matters of entertainment, things that pertain to the affairs of men here, are such as to bring together the multiplied throngs, but when people come together for the purpose of reverencing Jehovah, and showing respect to his truth, it is a great encouragement, and especially in this age in which we now live.

I want all of you to enjoy every service of this series. I want you to feel that it is your meeting, and that the responsibility of its success rests very largely upon you as individuals. I count myself exceedingly fortunate to stand in your midst and have a part in your efforts. I shall never forget six years ago when first I came to you as a stranger, and received such a gracious welcome at your hands. It is a pleasure today to meet you again and especially to be surrounded by kindred hearts and congenial Spirit?. It is both all inspiration and a pleasure to be surrounded by these hoary heads who have borne the heat and burden of the day. Their sacrifices and continued labors have made possible gatherings like this in the name of the Lord.

I congratulate the congregations who have been responsible for working out this program, and now I feel as if

you are amply rewarded in the results thus far attained. While I look with pleasure and appreciation upon those of you here assembled, I am not forgetful of faces once familiar, conspicuous now by their absence. They have slipped away and have passed to the realm of the boundless beyond. I do not doubt but that from that spirit land their eyes are turned toward this auditorium, and they joy and rejoice with us in this service. Their having gone comes as a forcible reminder of the fact that all of us are beating solemn marches to the tomb.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power  
And all that beauty, all that wealth ere gave  
Await alike the inevitable hour,  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave!"

"All flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of the grass, the grass withereth, and the flower thereof faileth, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the Word which, by the gospel, is preached unto you." Death, decay and passing away are written upon the wings of time and timely things, and out of all that you and I behold in our journey from this to the other shore, God's Word alone stands Gibraltar-like against the elements of time.

I am especially grateful again for the courtesy shown by the daily papers of your city which have so kindly contributed to the success that was attained in former meetings, and that have been a very potent factor in bringing to pass the gathering of these thousands here today. I want to express further a genuine thanksgiving for the courtesies of their promises already announced.

And to the merchants and business men who have kindly come to our noon-day services, I am not unmindful of a spirit of gratitude. I believe that every employer will be glad for those under him to come to our services. I think the Mayor, the Chief of Police and other officials of this city would rejoice and be glad to know that those over whom they exercise authority have respect enough for things sacred to want to attend our services, both day and night.

To all, therefore, who have in any way had a part in our success, and who maintain that disposition to further the same, we owe a debt of gratitude which, perhaps, neither I nor my brethren will ever be able to pay.

The Bible, friends, is the most universally read and studied book of all the earth. For it there is a high regard, and by its wonderful teaching men have been moved and made to think as from the perusal of no other book ever penned upon this earth. Its opening sentence is, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The falsity of that statement can never be proved. To the real or pseudo-scientist there is ample time for his multiplied millions and billions and trillions of years, for God says, "In the beginning Jehovah created the heavens and the earth." That Book before us now gives the only sensible account of our existence upon the earth, and I, for one, do not address the ape or the chimpanzee as my grandfather, neither do I count the monkey as all elder brother, but I believe the story of Holy Writ, and have no apology to make to any man for my faith in God's Word.

Upon the pages of that Book is revealed our duty, not only to ourselves and to our fellow-man, but to Jehovah as well, and when the curtain is drawn aside the destiny of the human family is boldly proclaimed to all mankind.

From the first pair in Paradise there are ten generations down to the flood, at which time sin and wickedness had become so great upon this earth that God decreed that everything in whose nostrils was the breath of life should be banished from the face of the earth. Therefore this mighty flood, this wonderful ocean o'ertopping the highest hills and the loftiest mountains, this boundless expanse, without a single shore, was heaven's means of purifying the earth and making it a better dwelling place for humanity. By means of the flood, eight souls, having entered into the ark, were transferred from the old corrupted, sin cursed world into the new.

Ten generations more go by, and we are introduced to him who became the friend of God and the father of all them that believe. Wonderful promises are announced, both of a physical, and likewise of a spiritual nature. From

our introduction to Abraham on to the close of Revelation, the story is but the story of one family through whom the promises had come, and from whom the Christ can trace his ancestry with unbroken line.

The descendants of Abraham, with the passing of years, drifted down into Egyptian bondage, about seventy and five souls in number. There they were subjected to the hardest tasks and to the most rigorous labor of which there is a record. The years go by, and God at last heard their cries. Under the leadership of Moses they marched across the Red Sea, and on the other shore sang the song of glad redemption and of sweet deliverance.

Two and a half months thereafter they came to the foot of shaking Sinai, towering six and a half thousand feet above the level of the sea. Here they stayed for all entire year, and during that time four prominent events took place: first, the giving of the law; second, the infidelity on the part of Aaron, the worship of the golden calf, and the punishment; third, the building of that house of gold upon a foundation of silver; and fourth, the numbering and the organization of the people. At the end of another year they were found at Kadesh-Barnea, from which place the spies were sent to view the promised land, and because of the evil report on the part of ten, a decree went forth that for thirty and eight years longer they should wander up and down the beds of those streams, across the parched sands of that great and terrible wilderness, until, in the providence of God, they were permitted finally to enter the land of promise.

The experiences of those forty years were just about such as come to humanity even today. There were murmurings, rebellions, fault findings, criticism, back-bitings, organizations against their leaders, and longings to go back to the flesh-pots of Egypt. The patience of Moses, and the bearing of their burdens to the Lord in prayer are fine examples to every leader who is devoted loyally and unflinchingly to the service of God.

When forty years had passed they were in the plains of Moab, just beyond the Jordan, opposite the historic city of

Jericho. Before the death of their matchless leader, two great battles had been fought. Old Sihon had been slain down at Jahaz, and Og in the battle of Edrei. The Amorites were dispersed, and the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh were settled on the Eastern tablelands. It was just at this time, or if you want it specifically, it was in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, and on the first day of the month, when Moses spoke to the people the words that you find in the book of Deuteronomy, some of which I read to you at the beginning.

That which I have in mind to try to impress upon you is this, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in shine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no."

My friends, proper equipment in life demands a good memory, likewise the ability to forget. All of the blunders, the murmurings and the fault findings unjustly made ought to be forgotten, but the fear of this great leader and captain was that they might forget the God who had led them all the way, who had fed them with manna which neither they nor their fathers knew, who had caused their garments not to wax old, nor their feet to swell.

At that time Israel was facing a great future. Moses wanted to mortise their feet in the past. He knew that they were its product, and that they were standing on sacred soil, ready to cross the River Jordan, drive out the various nations, and come into the full possession of their own. He knew man's disposition, and the nature of his people. Moses said, in substance, "Brethren, beware lest when you come into goodly cities and dwell therein, and drink of wells which you did not dig, and eat fruit of vineyards which you never planted, when you become greatly multiplied in your flocks and herds, when your silver and your gold and all that you have has been multiplied, that ye forget the God that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and from the house of bondage. Remember it is God that

giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers."

Their further story is to me interesting. About forty years more went by and the nine and a half tribes were planted in the promised land. They soon forgot the past, and thus they grew haughty, puffed up and were filled with pride. In order to bring them to penitence, and make them to recognize that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, he sold them again into subjection, and a series of oppressions, seven in number, came one by one upon them. When they came to themselves, time and again, and called unto the Lord, a suitable leader was raised to meet the exigencies of the hour. Hence we have a series of judges, all the way from Othniel to Samuel, fifteen in number, during a period of about 450 years. Thus God's government was inaugurated to meet their demands. But as has always been true, they grew impatient with Jehovah's way, and became ungrateful. They failed to remember how that one time the Lord took them up, led them about, kept them as the very apple of his eye, and gave them such abundance of the good things of the earth.

They looked about and saw the nations marshaling their forces on the fields of battle with their glittering swords and their rich-colored uniforms, and said, one to another, "Let us make unto ourselves a king, that we may be like the nations around us." Samuel warned them against such a departure from the way of God, but in their evil disposition, stubborn and rebellious nature) they answered back, "Nay, but we expect to have a king." God gave them a king in his wrath, and for 120 years all the tribes were united under the kingship of Saul, of David, and of Solomon. But that seems to be as long as people can easily march together, and hence division springs up in their midst. Ten tribes went after Jeroboam down to Bethel, and there began a system of worship unheard of by the God of Heaven. Two small tribes remained under Rehoboam in the city of Jerusalem, and tried to carry on according to heaven's commands.

I want you, in this historic review, to think of principles and of lessons that might be enlarged upon, possibly, to our profit. Only 254 years passed from the division of the kingdom until the ten tribes had so far forgotten the Lord and had departed so much from the path of God's government, that they were literally swallowed up and absorbed by the great Assyrian nation. That marked the death knell and sounded the doom of the ten tribes of Israel.

The two tribes continued on for 134 years, when they were sold into Babylonian captivity. The seventy years pass, and their unfortunate experiences are traceable to the fact that they did not observe that which Moses urged upon them just before his departure, namely, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee."

Friends, there may be a parallel in various ways to this wonderful bit of history. Our beloved land, America, has by some been called a child of Providence. I am not here to deny that possibly a guiding hand has had a part in the history of this, the greatest country on earth. I think it unfortunate for any nation, or for any man not to remember the kindly hand of a superior power. Unfortunate is that nation or man across whose path no guardian angel has ever been known to fly and in whose affairs there are no readings and no discernments of providential care and favors bestowed.

I think the year 1620 marks the real beginning of that splendid land wherein we chance to dwell. I know that previous to that year the Spanish had their settlement at old At. Augustine in the land of flowers, but if the Spaniards had been successful, all effete monarchial government would have crushed the possible liberties of the new world. Already the English had settled at Jamestown, but had they been successful it would have meant the transferring of the old principles of government upon the new world. And the industrious Dutch had, previous to that good year, established their trading posts on Manhattan Island, but if they had been left undisturbed this country would have been great only as a wonderful commercial nation.

I think it was the coming of the Pilgrim Fathers in the historic Mayflower that brought and introduced into this country the supreme idea of God Almighty. It is said in history that every resolution and every undertaking on their part was with the idea that God should walk together with them. Their posterity settled the thirteen sturdy, self-reliant colonies which, in the course of years, drafted that, immortal document, the Declaration of Independence. Six years of bloody warfare followed to make good that decree. Finally, with the loss of thousands of their kind, and their little country almost literally baptized in the blood of their sires, they were recognized as a nation among the sister nations of the world. That religious and civil liberty for which they had fought and died was then confined between the Atlantic on the east and the Alleghenies on the west. But its star was not to be held in such narrow bounds.

The frontiers were pushed across the crest of the Alleghenies and the light of that star swept on to the mighty waters of the great Mississippi. And it wasn't content then. Beyond the bosom of the river the same light of religious privileges and of respect for God was carried, across the great staked plains, and its western boundary became the snow-capped regions of the wonderful Rockies.

The wisest statesmen and the greatest philosophers said, "*Ne plus ultra*"—beyond this thou shalt not go—but in that pronouncement and prophecy they were doomed to disappointment, for by and by the light of that guiding star overtopped the summit of the snow-clad Rockies and mingled its silvery beams with the golden glories of the Sunset coast. Thus our great country, springing up from a foundation like that mentioned, extended from ocean to ocean, and from the Lakes to the Gulf. It has grown, multiplied, made progress, and advancement, until, as you know, it stands the greatest nation on the face of the earth.

Our leaders have had but to touch our wonderful national resources and abundant streams of revenue have come forth—possibly to bless, maybe to curse, a splendid land.

I think you and I today ought to remember how that possibly Jehovah has kept all eye upon us as a people in our

civil and likewise our religious privileges. We have come to be exceedingly great. We are feasting upon the very fat of the land. Our wealth is unlimited. Our powers likewise cannot be measured. The eyes of the entire world have for some time looked toward America, not only as the money center and the trade center, but for that religious life which some day, I trust, may encircle the globe, and make all darkness to vanish, and the marvelous light of heaven itself to shine upon the denizens of earth.

We do big things. We cross the ocean in five or six days. Lindbergh needs but thirty hours. The Mayflower was five or six months. We build greater cities, do bigger things in every way. I wonder, friends, if we alight from our barks to greater tasks than did those of the past. Are we rearing greater men, are we developing a better citizenship to adorn the doctrine of God Almighty, and likewise to be a blessing to humanity?

I regret to have to say today that, as a nation, we have largely lost confidence in our fellow man; the old-time elements of honesty, uprightness, downright truthfulness are below par on the market of the world. The blackest crimes, the most gruesome deeds, and the most atrocious acts that ever stained the pages of history He at our very door. The slimiest creatures that ever cursed the face of the earth have sat in high seats in our government, with a conscience seared as with a hot iron, until public sentiment had to drive them away. The alarming thing is that we have tolerated such conditions so long. We have allowed these venomous beasts to hang on until our self-reproach is largely gone.

We have got to rise up in self-defense and recognize that our success in life is not material, but that it is moral and spiritual in its nature. Our lofty skyscrapers cannot rest upon a foundation purely materialistic in nature. And there has got to come a time ere long when we must reverse our gear and hark back to the principles that actuated our fathers in days gone by.

We have drifted away from God. We have turned aside from His Book, and unless there is a halt, this country will

be turned into hell at last with all the nations that forget God.

We are standing upon the past. We are its products. The land on which we stand this afternoon is made land. The soil in which we are to sow our seeds is a prepared soil. Let us not forget that unto Him, who is the Father of our Spirit?, there is all obligation and a duty that must be paid.

But, friends, that is not all. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ was established twenty centuries ago. Through the passing of the years there was a general state of apostasy, and beneath the rubbish of humanism and of superstition, the cause for which Jesus died lay buried during the long spell of the dark ages. Finally there was the hand of Providence to show forth the rays of light that opened up the great reformation, the culmination of which was the coming of another Mayflower bringing those who had vision, regard, and appreciation of Jehovah to clear the clouds and banish the darkness, and to cause the light of another star to cast a glimmer o'er this earth.

We stand today, from the point of religious consideration, upon the ground prepared by others. I am in no sense responsible for the possibility of such a great throng of people, Christian in name, assembled. More than forty different congregations, together with friends and kindred who have come, are responsible for it. I cannot but gladly share the result of the labors of those who have gone before. I recognize that I am standing upon the foundation prepared by others. I am, during this meeting, to try to sow the seeds of the kingdom into soil very largely prepared. I would be untrue to myself and all ingrate, unless I harked back now to give honor to whom honor is due. I remember that God Almighty and good men have labored and served and sacrificed to make possible the glories and the pleasures and the joys that you and I today share.

I call to mind such old brethren as Phillip S. Fall, Tolbert Fanning, David Lipscomb, a number of the Sewells, F. D. Srygley, J. C. McQuiddy, Jas. E. Scobey, and, not least among the number, the lamented J. A. Harding, together

with a host of others, who are responsible for the pleasure that is mine now.

And as we hymn His praises, and the melody from six or eight thousand hearts present wings its way to the great throne of heaven itself, let us remember all the way how that God's hand had been in it all.

I have come, my friends, to try to beget within those who have it not as yet, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to kindle within your hearts a lively hope, by announcement of the resurrection of our leader from the confines of the tomb. I trust that I may be able to appeal to your finer senses, and better elements, and cause you to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ. I want you, friends, to become members of the body of Christ, of the household of faith, and to pledge the remnant of your days unto the most pleasant service possible to mankind, and then at last, when Life's dream is over, I want you to share the pleasures that pass understanding.

If there are any of you in His presence even at this initial service who understand the will of the Lord and have a heart and mind to accept it, I am glad, even now, to extend the gospel invitation, while together we stand and join in the singing.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH**

I purpose tonight to begin a series of studies regarding, first, the Establishment of the Church of the Bible, to be followed by its subsequent history, its gradual apostasy, the rise of ecclesiasticism, the development of the great hierarchy, and finally the dawn of the great Reformation, culminating with the Restoration movement of more than a hundred years ago.

I believe that this audience will appreciate such a study, for a knowledge of these things is vital to our eternal destiny.

I have no apology to make for preaching tonight upon the establishment of the church for which Jesus Christ died. I call your attention, therefore, to the reading of a part of Matthew 16.

Most of the mighty works of the Son of God were done around the Sea of Galilee, but since he was human as well as Divine, the time came when He longed for seclusion, and a period of rest. Hence, He left the beautiful sea, and went with His disciples near to the little city of Caesarea Philippi. There He asked of them what public opinion was regarding his identity. They replied by telling Him that some said that He was John the Baptist, others that He was Elias, others Jeremias, and still others announced that He was, at least, one of the prophets. To make the matter direct and personal, Christ turned to the disciples and sought to elicit from them the answer that was forthcoming—"What do you think about it' what do you have to say?"

With that courage and boldness characteristic of the man, Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." By their very silence that statement was indorsed by all the others.

He turned and pronounced a blessing on Peter for having made that confession, and said that flesh and blood had not revealed it, but His Father who was in heaven.

Then He said, "Thou also art Peter, and upon this rock— upon this great truth—I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In this expression, wherein the word "church" is first used in all the Bible, there are some significant statements regarding it. Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Christ was to be the builder. Any church, therefore, on earth tonight founded by any other than the Lord Jesus Christ is not the church mentioned in this Bible. He said, "I will build my church." Any organization erected or built at any other time than the time contemplated here is unknown to the Book of God. Any organization built at some other place than the one emphasized in the Bible is a stranger to God's Book.

Notice,—“Upon this rock I will build *my* church.” God forbid that in my phraseology and reference I should fail to give Jesus Christ the honor and the glory as the proud possessor of that which was bought by His blood, and filled with His spirit. That is why it is that I speak of it as the Church of Christ. I mean the church belonging to Christ, the church owned by Christ, and justly so by every consideration that brings about a purchased possession. That is why the peerless apostle speaks of it as the church of the First Born, the pillar and the ground of the truth.

And Christ said again: "Upon this rock I will build my *church*," He said—not churches, as of many, but church, as of one. That is the only institution about which the Bible has anything to say.

It ought to be a challenging question, paramount to every one tonight; Are you a member of that institution, are you a member of *the* church, or, are you a member of a church? Remember that such a thought as a church is unknown to the Book of God.

But again He said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." He did not say: "I purpose to build," or "I may build," or even "I shall build it," as though to indicate a

mere state of futurity, but using the strongest wording possible, that which carries with it not only futurity but all emphasis and a determination, He said, "I will *build*," thus giving to those of His audience the strongest possible statement and the greatest assurance that nothing shall thwart His purpose or turn aside that declaration or intention. "Though I may pass down through the gates into the realm of hades, the home of departed Spirit?, I will build my church. I may be confined in that realm, my body may be buried in a borrowed tomb, a stone may be rolled over the mouth of the sepulcher, but I will *build* my church. By the power of God I will burst the bars that may be round about and come forth triumphant o'er the powers of the hadean world. I will pass through other gates, "I will *build my church*." Then He said the very gates already mentioned shall not prevail against it—equivalent, I think, to saying that the gates shall not hinder.

I know there is a prevalent idea that Christ here promises that the gates of hades shall not prevail against the church. The Bible does not say that. I think this passage does not mean that. But the gates of hades shall not prevail against my intention, my purpose, my objective- in spite of all such, I will build my church.

And I rejoice tonight to believe in a Christ who was able to make good a solemn promise to the apostles, and through them to all of us yet living.

But, further, He said, "Peter, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." From this statement I learn this, that the kingdom of heaven in this passage is a synonym for the church of the Lord, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." If that expression meant not the same as the church about which He had just spoken, then Peter used the keys of the kingdom to unlock the door of all entirely different institution, and stands out guilty of burglarizing the church of God, the pillar and the support of the truth.

I am aware of the fact that in many passages of the Bible these expressions may have different significance, but in this connection, the law of language and of good sense de-

mands their equivalent. So the word "church," likewise the "kingdom of God," the "kingdom of heaven," "the kingdom of His dear Son" and the "body of Christ" are used as synonymous expressions, but while synonymous each carries its peculiar characteristic feature.

Let me say this: with reference to its laws and its government, the church is properly called a kingdom. It is not a republican form of government, nor yet is it a democracy. It is a monarchy with all the powers vested in one sovereign head, Christ Jesus, the king, who has within Himself the power of legislation, of the judiciary and likewise the executive. In such a realm He has but to speak and loyal citizens hear, entranced. He has but to command, and faithful followers move in harmony with His authority.

As regards its organization and the relationship of the different members to a great federal head, it is properly called a body—Christ the head, Christians the members, and the Holy Spirit the vitalizing, life-giving power.

When you think about it as it pertains to the world, and in order to emphasize its relation to other governments, it is properly called the church, a word that means the separated, the called-out, and the isolated in their relationships.

That such all organization is in existence tonight I think will not be denied or questioned by any of you who chance to hear, or possibly those who will read of what is now being said. That there was a time and a place of its erection I think also admits of no argument.

So far as I know, have right or reason to believe, this will not be denied or questioned by any of you. All scholars who have written upon the subject agree that the church of the New Testament was founded, established and inaugurated on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Summing up the evidence, and gathering the very cream of the scholarship of the world, Smith's Bible Dictionary very accurately says that Pentecost marks the birthday of that institution.

There are many lines of study, many ways of approach to a matter of this kind. I purpose tonight to go back into

the historic past some 600 years B.C., and trace matters as they are closely revealed regarding this institution.

When Nabopolassar, the great monarch of Babylon, died, his son, Nebuchadnezzar, inherited the throne. Unwilling to share the rulership of the world with his rival down in Egypt, there was a great contest, and one of the greatest battles recorded in Biblical history was fought at old Carchemish in the year 608 B.C., with the result that the Eastern monarch was supreme, and his universal rule was acknowledged by all the people of all civilized lands.

He rushed from this section back across the Arabian desert and assumed the throne left vacant by his father. He had carried, however, with him, from the land of Palestine, the treasures of the House of God, and the vast number of those who had been worshipping at the throne of Jehovah. In that number were the three children, Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego, together with Ezekiel, Daniel and others.

Not many months went by until old King Nebuchadnezzar had a wonderful dream that troubled him. He remembered the next morning that he had had a dream, but was unable to recall exactly what it was. So he ordered all the soothsayers, the astrologers and the magicians to come into his presence, and to make known to him that which he had dreamed, and likewise the interpretation.

They said, "There lives not a man in all the earth able to reveal what the dream was. You tell us what it was and we will make due explanation and give proper interpretation." But he said, "The thing has gone from me and unless you can reproduce it, I will issue a decree that all shall be slain, but the man who will reproduce it shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor."

When the decree went forth that all of those wise characters should be slain, the news reached those in captivity, and Daniel remonstrated, saying, "Let not the king be hasty, let me be brought into his presence and I will reveal to him the interpretation."

So Daniel was taken into the presence of the king, and announced to him that there was and is a God in heaven

who can reveal secrets, and make known what shall be in the latter day. When the setting was completed, Daniel said: "Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This image which was mighty, and whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the aspect thereof was terrible. As for this image, its head was of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, its legs of iron, its feet part of iron, and part of clay. Thou sawest that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, so that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Now that is the dream. Watch the interpretation: "Thou, O king, art king of kings, unto whom the God of heaven hath given the kingdom; the power, and the strength, and the glory; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee to rule over them all: thou art the head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee; and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron, forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that crusheth all these, shall it break in pieces and crush. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but there shall not be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron cloth not mingle with clay. And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never

be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Thus the dream and interpretation is before us.

As a student I have but to turn to profane history and read definitely just the application of the things here prefigured, or outlined. I know that the Babylonian empire, according to history, was then in existence, with Nebuchadnezzar as the monarch of the same. It continued on some years after Daniel's prophecy and interpretation, until finally in the year 536 B.C. Babylon {elf, never to rise again.

You remember the record of that wonderful night, when Belshazzar was having a great feast, praising the gods of gold and of silver and of brass, when there came forth the fingers of a man's hand writing on the plaster of the wall, announcing the death-knell of that government, and sounding the doom of Babylon forevermore.

History tells us that Cyrus and Darius, of Persia and of Media, combined, and established a government upon the ruins of Babylon. This Medo-Persian empire, represented by the breast and arms, continued until about the year 330, at which time it also faded away, as Daniel says. Then there came the young man, Alexander the Great, who bore rule over the earth. That is the belly of brass, as signified in the interpretation of the dream. But Alexander lived for only about seven years, and died a shameful, drunken death, after which his government was for a time divided into four parts, and these soon blended into two, the South and the North, known in history as the Logidae and the Salucidae. These things continued on down the line until finally a rebellion on the part of the Jews broke out, and, for a hundred years, warfare raged throughout the sacred land of Palestine.

This is the period when old Mattathias and his five sons rose to prominence and fought most valiantly for the independence utterly denied unto them at last.

Coming down to about 63 B.C., we find that the Roman government made its rise over that part of the country, and under the dominion of old Pompey began to exercise rule over that land forever sacred.

In about the year 34 B.C., while the Caesars were occupying their seven-hilled city and swaying universal dominion over the sons and daughters of men, old Herod the Great was king over the land of Palestine, and, during his life, the New Testament began its story. The first chapter of Matthew records the birth of Christ. The second chapter records that decree that went forth from this Herod the king, that all children under two years old in the city of Bethlehem were to be slaughtered. The third chapter opens up by saying, "In those days came John the Baptist." Friends, in what days? Surely, in the days of which we have just been reading, in the days of the Herods, in the days of the Caesars, John the Baptist broke the silence of the wilderness and, with a clarion voice, called upon his fellow-citizens to repent, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This expression implies that it was approaching and had come nigh.

After John was put in prison Jesus Christ began to preach and to say likewise unto the people, "Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Soon after this the Twelve were sent out under that restricted commission, and made similar declarations. Following them the Seventy went forth two by two, and they also announced that the kingdom of God was come nigh unto them. These declarations, with no uncertainty, announced the approach of that kingdom, or of that church promised by the Christ when he said in Caesarea Philippi, "Upon this rock I will build my church."

But that is not all. In that memorable Sermon on the Mount, Christ taught the disciples how to pray, and he said, "After this manner pray you, Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come." My

friends, if already that thing had been in existence, and if the disciples were already members, such a prayer would have been misleading and delusive in its very announcement. It shows upon its face that at that time the kingdom had not come, and Christ taught them to pray for its coming, for its glad realization.

When the question came up in Matt. 18: 1, regarding who should be great in the kingdom of heaven, Christ taught a wonderful lesson, and He said to the apostles, "Except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Were they at that time members of it? Had it already come, and into it had they been translated? If so, then this language has no meaning or significance whatsoever. "Except you be converted and become as a little child, you shall not enter into it when by and by it is established upon the earth." No other interpretation, no other significance can soberly and sensibly characterize the passage.

And again in Mark 9: 1, there are these familiar statements, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Friends, its approach is so nigh that while some of them may die, it is absolutely certain that all will not, but "out of this company right now, to whom I am talking, there be some who will not taste of death until that to which all the prophets and others had been looking shall come."

And as all evidence of its coming, these are the characteristics. it shall come "with power," and thereby "shall you be not deceived."

Now will you get the simplicity of that statement: "The kingdom of God will come with power."

If I can learn from the Bible tonight just when that power came, I will know assuredly ~when the kingdom came, for it was to come with power. In Luke 24: 49, Christ said: "Tarry you in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high." At that time they were not clothed with power. They had received heaven's charge,

Christ's commission, but they were to wait in the city of Jerusalem until endued with power from on high.

But, you ask, "When did the power come, and how may I thus know?" In Acts 1: 6, there are these words: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? He said unto them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power, but you shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

What have we learned? First, that the kingdom of God is to come with power. Second, that the power is to come with the Spirit. There is just one more step, When did the Holy Spirit come? If that may be determined, there is God's word that the power shall accompany the Spirit. My friends, I have but to begin the reading of Acts, second chapter: "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of the rushing of a mighty wind. There appeared unto them cloven or forked tongues, like as of fire and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

The Bible says that the Spirit came on Pentecost. The Bible says that the power came with the Spirit, and the Bible says that the kingdom came with the power. Therefore, it follows inevitably that the kingdom or the church of Christ was ushered into existence in its established, setup state, on that memorable occasion.

Following that, the first gospel sermon ever preached in the name of a crucified and risen Lord was announced by the peerless apostle Peter. On that day, for the first time, he injected the keys that had been given, unlocked the door of the church bought by the blood of Christ, and announced the terms of admission into the realms of that institution thus promised, and now consummated upon this earth.

Hence that chapter closes by saying that the "Lord added unto the church daily such as were being saved."

Friends, I have briefly traced this institution in prophecy until it becomes all established fact.

I want now to go to the other end of the line. Let us turn to the closing chapters of the New Testament, and also read some statements regarding this same thin'. I want you to notice which way the index finger points, and the phraseology of the Bible in referring to this institution.

Standing on the Isle of Patmos, in the year 96 A.D., John says, "I was in the kingdom and patience of the Lord." The kingdom or church was, therefore, in existence in the days of John.

Paul wrote to Timothy in the year 64 (1 Tim. 3: 15) and indulged the hope that he might possibly be released from prison, and make him a visit, but in case he could not, he wrote: "That thou mayst know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and the support of the truth." At that time this institution was in existence.

It is now a matter of history. It is no longer what "I will do." It is no longer what "I shall do," but it is now a consummated fact, and a historic certainty.

In this same year, the Colossians were told that they had been translated into the kingdom of His dear Son.

And again, Paul wrote the first Corinthian letter in the year 69, and he addressed it after this fashion: "Paul called to be all apostle of God, by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the Church of God, which is at Corinth." Friends, that institution was then in existence. It had had its realization and identity clearly marked upon the face of the earth.

But drop back still further, into the year 34, Acts 8: 3, and the Bible has this to say: "Paul made havoc of the Church of God." He persecuted it, and wasted it. These expressions would be wholly meaningless if such all institution were not then in existence.

fear came upon the church." This brings us back to the year 33 where prophecy ended.

From these considerations, I announce that the church was established in the city of Jerusalem, on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection from the dead. This sentiment is voiced by the scholarship of the world.

I state to you that on that day Peter preached the first sermon. I bid you hear the announcement by him made. After clearing away the misunderstanding, and explaining the miracle of the day, he said: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David saith concerning him, I beheld the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul unto hades, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou madest known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance. Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with all oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set *one* upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we are all witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make shine enemies the footstool of thy feet. Let all the house of Israel

therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

Friends, this is the announcement, for the first time, of the resurrection of Christ. Peter brought home to those who had stood at the cross fifty-three days before the fact that they were guilty of the execution of the Son of God. Now to them he said, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly—believe confidently and without doubt—that God Almighty, who raised him from the dead for the purpose of sitting upon David's throne, has now made him Lord of Lords and King of Kings." No wonder that the historian says, "When they heard this they were cut to their hearts." Conviction was brought; they were reminded of the tragedy in which they had a part, and they were conscious of the fact that their hands were dripping with the blood of the immaculate Son of God. Hence, with a faith, engendered by the things thus spoken, they cried out and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Do for what? Certainly, "to rid ourselves of the crime and of the sin that has been brought so directly and emphatically home to us. What may be done, that we may be free from the guilt that is ours?"

Then Peter, as they thus knocked at the door for entrance, inserted the keys that had to him been given, and unlocked the door into this blood-bought, heaven-born, and Spirit filled institution. To those who had already heard, who had already believed, and to whom conviction had been brought, Peter answered, as guided and directed by the Holy Spirit, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation, for the promise is not only to you and to your children, but all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

You ask what was the result?

"They that received his word were baptized. And the same day they were added, builded together, about three thousand souls."

Then the record closes by saying that the Lord added day by day unto the church promised by Him in the days gone by.

My friends, from that hour till this no new fact of the gospel has been added. Since that time and until now no new commandment has been given. From that occasion until this moment, no new promise has at any time been announced. It is the same story tonight as it was twenty centuries ago.

In this audience there may be those who believe in the Christ with all their hearts, who are ready to march out in the face of any sort of infidelity, and with a courage befitting a follower of our Lord, boldly announce faith in the Crucified One. Let me ask, why not do that tonight? If you are conscious of having done a wrong, or even by negligence failed to do the right, heaven calls upon you to repent of every sin, and resolve, by the grace of God, to turn from such. Won't you this night sanctify your lips by making public confession of Him who is the Son of God? Then I bid you duplicate the very experience of those three thousand by walking down into the waters of baptism and, in the name of the Sacred Three, be buried with Him, and arise to walk in newness of life. Thereafter, live faithful and true, and by and by he will transport you into the blissful peace for which humanity sighs.

## **CHRIST ON DAVID'S THRONE**

Perhaps 2,500 people are now in the auditorium and I assure you that it is all encouragement to see you present at this noon service.

I spoke to you last night regarding the establishment of that institution promised by the Christ. I want us now to study the proposition as to whether or not Jesus Christ is reigning on David's throne. Much depends upon this matter.

I think that the salvation of the world is at stake, for unless Christ Jesus the Lord is crowned at God's right hand King and Lord the Gentile world is yet without any assurance of sins forgiven. The word "throne" literally means a seat; figuratively, it means royal dominion, kingly authority.

David's throne was established in the city of Jerusalem, 1047 B.C. On it he sat and swayed the scepter of authority over Israel for thirty-three years, at the end of which time the Bible says (1 Kings 2: 12) that "Solomon, his son, sat upon the throne of his father, David." He was followed by his son, Rehoboam, and throughout the reign of twenty-one kings, down to the days of Zedekiah, 587 B.C., they all occupied the literal throne of David in the city of Jerusalem on Mt. Moriah. At the rebellion of Zedekiah, David's throne was vacated, the children of Israel were carried captive across the Arabian desert, from which they returned 51 years later. David's throne, then destroyed, lay in ruins for a period of more than 600 years. By and by Christ's birth was announced on the earth.

The angel appeared to his mother, and said, Luke 1: 30-33, "Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father

David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Thirty-three years passed, during which time that matchless, marvelous life spent its force upon the earth. At last he died a felon's death on the cruel tree, his body was taken and buried in a borrowed tomb, and there he slumbered during the passing of the three days and the three nights, at the end of which he was raised from the dead. Peter standing on Pentecost, announced the first gospel sermon in the name of a risen Lord. In explaining the resurrection he said: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with all oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ *to sit on his throne*; He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hades, neither did his flesh see corruption." The climax of that was that God had made that very Jesus both Lord and Christ.

I want to say to you, my friends, that if language has any significance, Peter declared in terms unmistakable and incontrovertible that God Almighty raised up Christ for a definite and specific purpose.

Now there are many things that follow the resurrection of the dead. I understand that the disciples were begotten again unto a lively hope by virtue of this resurrection. I know the Bible says that Christ was declared to be the Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead, etc., but the one specific purpose, the leading thought, the paramount idea, as expressed by the great apostle, was that God raised Christ from the dead *to sit on David's throne*. May I say to you that, grammatically, "to sit" is all infinitive with the construction of all adverb, carrying the idea of purpose equivalent to the following expanded form, viz.; He raised up Christ that He should sit, that He might sit, for the purpose of sitting upon David's throne. If Christ is not on David's throne, the resurrection might have been deferred until this good hour, or for ages yet to come. If so it be

that Christ is not now on David's throne, the Gentiles are yet without God and without hope. In the great council at Jerusalem, James said, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets: as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called." The word "tabernacle" means here lineage, descendants, family. David's family had ceased to occupy the throne since the days of Zedekiah, and David's throne literally had remained in ruins from the days of the captivity. From David's family or lineage not one had swayed the scepter of authority, but when Christ comes, as understood by Peter, as announced and declared by James, and in perfect accord with the prophetic declaration of the generations gone by, Christ was raised up of the family, tabernacle, lineage, descent of David to sit upon his throne.

Now for the words of Amos there are evidences and witnesses abundant. On that same occasion Peter said, "Men and brethren, you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe." The audience kept their silence and Paul and Barnabas, fresh from their missionary journey, made known to that multitude what God had wrought by their hands among the Gentile world.

James bears witness to the same thing, and hence the tabernacle or lineage of David has been restored. Now I want you to watch the purpose of it all, viz., "that the residue of men might seek after the Lord and all the Gentiles." That the Gentiles as well as the rest of men might seek after the Lord.

It follows, then, my friends and brethren, that if the lineage of David has not been restored upon his throne, the Gentiles are not privileged to seek after the Lord. Until Christ dies, comes forth triumphant from the dead and makes his glorious ascent to the throne of God, where he is

crowned King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the middle wall of partition still stands, and the Gentiles are not privileged to seek after the Lord.

Now I grant you David's throne is no longer on the hill of Mt. Moriah, it is no longer a literal, material affair of earth. Such all idea seems to me to dishonor God, and to rob Christ of the very glory that I believe was to Him granted by his triumph over the powers of the hadean world. In Ps. 89: 35~9, it is said: "I will not He unto my servant David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." Hence the throne of David was transferred from the literal Mt. Moriah in the city of Jerusalem unto the right hand of God. When the powers of the hadean world were overcome and the bars of death were burst asunder, Christ came forth, bade good bye to his disciples and, "a cloud received him out of their sight." Heavenward was he borne, and as he neared the portals of eternal glory the angelic hosts said, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." Inquiry came from the further shore, "Who is the King of Glory?" and the immediate response was, "The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in."

Daniel had a vision 600 years before Christ. He said, "I saw in the night visions, and one like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him." Now note—that does not declare that one like unto the Son of man came *from* the Ancient of Days, but Daniel saw him as he came to the Ancient of Days. The Ancient of Days was none other than God almighty to whom Christ was borne by the clouds. Daniel then said after he had come to the Ancient of Days, "there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is all everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which

shall not be destroyed." It seems to me that such passages ought to settle this matter to all who take God at his word and believe what he says.

I verily believe that Christ rose from the dead, that he ascended to the Father, that he was crowned King of Kings and was seated on David's throne which had been transferred to the right hand of God. Hence when Peter came to climax that matchless sermon on Pentecost, he said, "Therefore let all the House of Israel know assuredly, [let them believe confidently] that God hath made that same Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

In Hebrews 8: 1 we have these words, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such all high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord Pitched and not man." In Psalms, 110: 4, there is this: "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Hence Christ began his reign as priest, and likewise as king, at the right hand of God Almighty.

And with these words agrees the sentiment of Paul in that matchless sermon on the resurrection from the dead when he said in 1 Corinthians, 15, 20, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

You who read the Bible understand that back under the law of Moses, when the harvest time had come, the obligation was to go out and gather in the first sheaves, the first ripe grain, bring it, wave it in the presence of God, and offer it upon the altar as a pledge, as a guaranty that the entire crop would be gathered in. And just as certainly as these first fruits were brought, it put the Jews under obligation to see to it that there was a gathering of the full harvest.

Based upon that Paul said, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and has become the first fruits of them that slept." It was he who first came forth triumphant from the confines of the tomb. As the first fruits He has placed himself

upon the altar of God. His resurrection is a solemn, sacred pledge, and a genuine guarantee that all of the rest of the human family will be taken from the graves, the sepulchers will be robbed of their victims, and all be brought at last unto the presence of God. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." As through Adam all of us pass unconditionally and universally down to the realm of the tomb, so in Christ unconditionally and universally shall all come forth, "But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, until he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

You ask, friends, how is death to be destroyed. There is but one possible way, and that is by the triumph of the resurrection. Jesus Christ at God's right hand, reigning on David's throne, swaying the scepter of authority over the destinies of men, will continue that dominion and reign until the last enemy shall have been put under his feet. Christ's reign will not be completed until the graves are empty, the sepulchers are robbed, and the tombs give forth their victims. Then the saints will shout, "O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" Then will Jesus deliver up the kingdom to the Father who shall be all and in all, while Christ will take his place as our elder brother.

Friends, if I did not believe that, I would be this morning among those that are most miserable. I really and truly believe that the possibility of the existence of the church of Christ demands His reigning today over the house of spiritual Israel. The breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile demanded the death of Christ and the opening of the door of faith. It demanded his reign on David's throne.

To Him as my king at God's right hand, I gladly acknowledge allegiance. I can share that devotion with no other of whom I have ever read. I propose to march under but one flag, and no other banner is to me known save that of

Prince Immanuel, our only potentate, our King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Hence when He speaks I trust that I may ever have a disposition to say, "thy servant heareth," and when He bids me move, I hope ever to maintain that disposition, to walk in the light of His suggestions, and to rely upon His promise.

Friends, it is a great privilege today, a wonderful opportunity that you and I can be called out of darkness and be translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, wherein there is fullness and joy, joy supreme, and bliss Divine, unspeakable, and unthinkable by mortal man. The privileges of that very promise are based upon the word and the authority of our governing, ruling, reigning King today.

I wonder if there are those in this audience who have never yet bowed in subjection to His kingly authority? Are there any of you who have never yet given yourselves to Him? If there are, I beg of you to obey Him now. We have no abiding city here. We are but transient actors upon the stage of life, and our stay here is ephemeral in its nature. Has there ever come one single, solemn thought ringing through your soul that you must soon pass away from this earthly realm? Will you not therefore think seriously, soberly, candidly, and decide to give yourself to Him while you may? We bid you come.

**CHURCH HISTORY OF FIRST CENTURY**

I read from the first chapter of the Book of Acts, the first eight verses: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus? of all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen; to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they, therefore, were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

I have spoken to you regarding the institution established by the Christ on the memorable Pentecost. I want to further the study of that organization, as it is revealed in the New Testament during the first century.

The Church is that spiritual realm over which Christ reigns as head, and in which the Holy Spirit dwells. It had its origin in the city of Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, in the year 33. There the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, and thus the body became a living organization known as the Church of God or pillar and support of the truth.

On the very day of its inauguration there were Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven assembled. On

that day about 3,000 souls became obedient unto the truth, and those were by Jesus Christ added to the one body of which He is the supreme head.

The second sermon of which we have a record was preached also by Peter on the porch of the temple, at the end of which the record states that the number of men came to be about 5,000, to say nothing of the women, and all those who were able to understand.

Upon the persecution of Stephen, all of the disciples, except the apostles, were scattered abroad, and they went everywhere preaching the Word. That is a general statement suggestive of the idea that they had caught the significance and the spirit of the church they loved. They understood full well that it was a great missionary institution. They remembered that Christ had said back in Matthew 13: 33, that the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened.

They understood, as stated in Acts 1: 8, that they were to be witnesses both in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

I stop to call attention to this thought—that the church planted at a certain place as a center, was to radiate its influence from there in every direction. You will note that it first began in Jerusalem. The next field was Judea; the next Samaria; the next was Galilee; and then to the uttermost parts of the earth. And observe the fact that these Christians at the beginning were filled with such fervor, ambition and love for the truth that they prepared themselves as best they could, and were willing to go everywhere, not preaching their opinion, nor their vain philosophies, nor speculative conceptions, but the record says they preached the word. This was the very thing that was ordered to be preached throughout the passing of the years. In the presence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul bade Timothy do the same thing. A more solemn charge or a more sacred thought was never delivered to mortal man, nor clothed in human tongue.

These disciples, therefore, left their homes, were scattered abroad, and went everywhere preaching the Word.

The history of their further labors is not given, and the wonderful results that were achieved are not specifically stated. The writer of the Book of Acts begins in the very next verse, Acts 8: 5, and gives a detailed account of one of that number, who went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

Friends, that wasn't another gospel, nor a different idea. They were all out preaching the Word, and when it is declared that Philip preached Christ, it is but a synonymous term, indicative of the very same idea. The result of that preaching is mentioned in this connection. In Acts 8: 12, it is said: "And when the Samaritans believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

But to further the story, not long thereafter all angel of the Lord appeared to Philip while at Samaria, and said to Philip: "Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert."

He arose and went. The result was that he preached Jesus to the secretary of the treasury of Queen Candace's government. The effect of the sermon was that this man, having heard the gospel, believed it, acknowledged the Christ as the Son of God, went down into the water, and was baptized, after which he arose and went on his way rejoicing.

Next the record tells us that Peter went to the city of Lydda, and there healed Aeneas, who had kept his bed eight years. From there he went to Joppa, and raised Tabitha or Dorcas, whose friends had washed her body and laid her in all upper chamber.

Peter then went up the coast from Joppa northward for thirty miles to old Caesarea, and there opened the door of faith to the Gentile world.

The record declares that some of the disciples who were scattered abroad had gone as far as Phenice. Others had carried the Word to the Island of Cyprus, sixty miles from

the mainland, and yet others had gone as far as Antioch, 300 miles north of the city of Jerusalem. This Antioch became likewise a center from which there radiated the greatest missionary activities the world has ever known.

Paul and Barnabas, together with John Mark, set out from the city of Antioch by way of Seleucia, the seaport, to the Isle of Cyprus, preaching at Salamis and Paphos. Here they turned northward a distance of 170 miles to Asia Minor. There they established churches, and caused men and women to be inducted into the family of God.

A second journey, and likewise a third, was undertaken, and thus the gospel sped beyond the Aegean Sea, and the banner of the Lord was planted on European soil.

These journeys and efforts resulted in the conversion of thousands. Churches were organized and the commission formerly given was being executed in every land.

Summing up the whole matter, Paul said, in Romans 10: 18, "Verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

He wrote to the church at Colosse, and in verse 23 of chapter 1 he has this to say: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature under heaven; whereof I, Paul, am made a minister."

From such declarations you are not surprised when history says that in the Roman Empire, before the end of the first century, there were more than six million loyal Christians, marching 'neath His royal banner, members of the institution bought with His blood, filled with His spirit, and thus far guided by His counsel.

All optimistic spirit prevails thus far, and it would look as if by and by all humanity would be gathered into this number.

But, my friends, in this expectation there is a disappointment. Long before the first century closed, the great apostasy was seen and predicted. Paul, in writing to the brethren at Thessalonica, 2 Thess., chapter 2, verse 3, said this: "Let no man deceive you by any means;

not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." In verse 7, he said: "The mystery of iniquity cloth already work."

Friends, when Paul gave that solemn charge to Timothy, which was possibly the last thing he ever penned, he said, "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine."

We may wonder why all this? Hear the reason.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

It has not remained for the twentieth century to discover people who would not bear or endure sound doctrine. Long before the first century was brought to a close, and in a short while, comparatively, after Jesus Christ was crowned at God's right hand, there was a tendency on the part of some who were members of the body of Christ, who had named the name of the Lord, to justify the prophecy of the apostle when he said, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

To be perfectly frank with you, I used to think that Paul had in mind other people than those of whom we read in the Bible. But when I took a second thought, and realized that no such bodies as those which I had in mind then existed, I was forced to the conclusion that he had reference to members of the Church of God who would become tired, grow weary with the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus, and allow their minds to be corrupted by fabulous stories of men.

He said again (1 Timothy 4: 1): "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirit?, and doctrines of devils."

So, friends, while the gospel started with colors flying, multiplied souls responding to the call, and missionaries going hither and thither all over the land preaching the Word of life eternal, and of joys supreme, it wasn't long until this spirit of apostasy began to evidence itself in the sacred

realms of the body of Christ. Thus I read, in 1 Timothy 1: 19, where, concerning faith, some had made shipwreck of the same. It seems to me that no greater calamity can be fancied than the idea of shipwreck made of a faith that once served as a cable to bind a human vessel unto that anchor, the hope of the soul, cast into the heavenly harbor. With faith shipwrecked and destroyed, this vessel sailing out on the bosom of life severed from the anchor, drifts amid the rocks, upon the reefs, and into ruin, and eternal destruction.

To Timothy, Paul said again (2 Tim. 2: 16): "But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as cloth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who, concerning the truth, have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Brethren, friends, you see that the mystery of iniquity had begun its deadly, hellish work even before apostolic days had ceased to be. The prophets declared that there would be members of the Body of Christ who would not long endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts they would heap unto themselves teachers having itching ears, and from the truth they would turn away unto fabulous stories; that there was certain to be a departure from the faith; that faith would be shipwrecked; and that faith would be overthrown.

But that is not all, yet. When Paul bade good-bye to the elders on the coast of Miletus (Acts 20: 28), he had this to say, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Friends, the story of the church has been a demonstration of these prophetic declarations.

Of course, there are those on the outside, seeking every opportunity, throwing out every kind of attraction, to draw away disciples, but even within the sacred realms of our own number there are men who love not the truth as they should, who rise up as self-appointed leaders, and undertake to draw away disciples after them. Thus is the picture presented in the Book of God.

But that is not all. There was a special warning given Timothy when it is said (1 Tim. 4: 16), "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Let me tell you, friends, it is no child's play to live the Christian life. It is not a little fly-up-the-branch matter or flippant affair, to launch your campaign for eternity. It is not a careless, slipshod, happy-go-lucky sort of way that enables us to keep in the straight and narrow path. I must take heed to myself, and to the doctrine, and to see to it that I continue in them, with the hope of saving both myself and those that hear me. Hence I am admonished, as was Timothy, to hold fast the form of sound words. I must let no uncertain sound emanate. I am to speak as the oracles of God direct. Let me remember that "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." No longer are we to speak the language of Ashdod, and by our very speech betray a lack of familiarity, and a lack of appreciation of the oracles of God.

Paul told Titus that elders should hold fast the faithful word, as they have been taught, that they may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

These passages indicate and imply the possibility of a doctrine described by some other word than "sound." I am persuaded to think that there are far too many who seek to satisfy the world and to tickle the ears of audiences. Too many are they who are exceedingly careless and indifferent toward the importance of holding fast the form of sound words—speaking sound doctrine.

Again Paul bade Titus to speak the things that become

sound doctrine, to be grave, sober, honest and perfectly sincere.

In Gal. 1:7-9, Paul said, "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or all angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Then to give double emphasis, and add force "hereunto, repetition is made in the next verse, when he said, "As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed."

Friends, I might have been able to prepare some LECTURES worthy of the name, to come to your city, and to entertain you by the presentation of fancied stories. But I am conscious of the fact that woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel of the Son of God. "Whosoever goes beyond, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come unto you any bringing not this doctrine, receive him not unto your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that bideth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Just before John pronounced the final benediction and dropped from weary fingers the pen of inspiration, he gave this final warning: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

My friends, there should be in this country a greater reverence for Jehovah, a greater and more profound respect for His word, and a higher regard for that church bought by the blood of His Son.

The gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be improved upon by

modern evangelism. All the multiplied powers and fancies of men combined with all the philosophy and ingenuity of the most subtle of earth will never be able to offer a substitute for the simplicity of God's power unto salvation. And when the sands of life beneath our feet begin to slip away, there is but one thing that will serve as a foundation on which our holiest desires and our fondest hopes can rest. Let us build upon the Rock, Jesus Christ our Lord, believe what He says, obey His commands, and trust Him for the fulfillment of his promises.

I have related to you the story of the New Testament Church as revealed in the Bible. The first century closed with the Book of God completed. Paul said, "All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

Christians believe that. Infidels repudiate it. Christians accept that without any addition; from it they dare not subtract.

Because I believe this statement, I accept no creed but the Bible, no confession of faith but the Word of God, no church ritual or rule of faith or practice other than that which is given by inspiration.

I believe that every scripture spoken of God through man is inspired, that it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and there lives not a man in this city who can fancy one thing humanity needs that is not provided for in one of these four statements. Hence the man of God is thoroughly equipped unto every good work. Whatsoever, therefore, is not incorporated in the Bible, whatsoever is not found upon its pages, is not the good work referred to in that connection.

But again, 2 Peter 1: 3, "According as his Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

With such statements Christians bow at the feet of Jesus, and accept the Bible as complete. They seek neither to revise it, nor to amend it in any way. They place one hand

upon Genesis and the other upon Revelation, and gladly say, "Lord, I accept it all."

In this historic study you have doubtless observed that only one body is mentioned, viz., the church built by Christ.

I come now, at the close of this talk, to insist upon your membership in this institution. I want you to become a member of the body of the Lord. I want you to forsake the world, to renounce your allegiance to his satanic majesty, and to flee to the outstretched arms of Him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest to your souls."

My friends, this is the only hope. Infidels may ridicule the church of the Bible. They may speak lightly of the blood of Christ. They may sneer, ridicule, blaspheme, and pronounce every sort of scorn against it, but with scarcely all exception, in the time of trouble, and the hour of death, they seek some crumb of comfort and some ray of hope from the words of life eternal. But the man who dies in the Lord must live in Him, and to live in Him you have to be initiated into that realm. Hence the purpose of this meeting is, if possible, to beget within you a faith in the gospel, to induce you to accept His terms, obey His commandments, and stand upon His promises until Life's dream shall have passed. If this you do, you can lean upon His arm and be transported across the stream we call death, and at last be initiated into the grandeurs and glories that shall burst upon your enraptured vision in fairer fields and brighter climes. If that be your desire, if you have given it the proper consideration, I want you to come down the aisle and give me your hand, while you give God your heart.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECCLESIASTICISM

In the study of the New Testament church every one certainly knows that it had officers, known as elders and deacons. I purpose tonight the study of the Development of Ecclesiasticism on the earth. It is purely all historic affair. But little in the Bible is said regarding it. The prophetic finger pointed to the departure from the truth and to a disposition to follow the ways of man. According to the New Testament, each congregation was to have elders and deacons.

Hence, in Titus 1: 5, Paul said: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city."

I call your attention to the fact that there was a plurality of elders in every city therein mentioned. But to make the matter a little more specific and definite, we are told, in Acts 14: 23, that when Paul and Barnabas had passed throughout Asia they ordained elders in every church.

Looking out upon the world and observing the hand of uninspired man in directing the affairs of the churches of this country, one must be impressed with the wonderful contrast between human organizations and the church about which he reads in the Bible. In all that sacred volume there is no such thing as one elder having authority over several churches. Not simply once or twice, but every time the matter is mentioned in the Bible, it is always a plurality of elders to each individual congregation. That, of itself, evidences to us just how things have drifted from the original pattern, and from the ancient order of things.

These elders were to have authority, exercise dominion, and to feed the Church of God. Hence Paul said (Acts 20: 28-30) to the elders of the church of Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all of the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall

grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

There is a wonderful responsibility resting upon the elders, bishops, pastors, overseers of the Church of God. One of the qualifications of all elder is that he must be *apt* to teach. Unfortunately, some of them are apt to do most anything, because at the very beginning of ecclesiastical history, elders were not content to abide by the Word of God. They felt the responsibility resting upon them, and sought to make the church a prominent institution. They looked about and saw the pagan worship of the day. Many things about it appealed to their human nature, and step by step, they imitated, followed after these things and endeavored to adorn the Church of Christ, and the doctrine of God, by introducing some of the pagan features. There were things in the pagan religion that appealed to the young of the church—things which were harmless *per se*. The Lord had never positively said: "Thou shalt not so do," therefore, acting upon the broad principles of liberty and of sanctified common sense, they introduced a number of things borrowed into their own worship.

Another thought came to them as they looked around about. They said, "Here are a number of worldly influences, things that appeal, that attract, that sway and move men. Why not as a congregation capitalize these affairs, and thus utilize worldly influences for the advancement of the cause?" Basing the whole upon mere human reason, they saw no fault in such a procedure, and thus another departure was made.

But there was another step. They fancied that if the time could ever come when they could get a Christian emperor on the throne, and thus line up the influence of the civil governments and matters political with the church, all things would move along with greater strides, and more rapid progress. Toward the beginning of the second century all idea entered the minds of some that the membership of the church should be divided. Hence, two classes were suggested, and ere long the clergy and the

laity became two separate and distinct bodies. Of course, the Bible knows nothing about such a procedure, neither does it recognize any such distinction among the people of God.

May be you might be able to read about *lying* members in the church, but I think you will never find anything about the *lay* members. The idea that preachers were created out of a different kind of soil, and to them special recognition ought to be given, comes not from the Book of God. And yet that appeals to many preachers. They want some distinction by which they can be separated from their fellows, and unless they can get some title, the world never would find out that they are a whit better than anybody else.

And now it has come about that you are discourteous unto any preacher if you just address him as, for instance, "Brother Srygley." The world wants to say "Dr. Srygley," "Reverend Srygley," and even "Parson Srygley." Now, their objective is to do the man a favor and all honor, but in so doing they go beyond anything in the Bible. I have had people call me "Dr. Hardeman." I am not a doctor. I am not "Reverend Hardeman." That word is found only once in all the Bible, Psalms 111, verse 9. "Holy and reverend is thy name." God's name is reverend. N. B. Hardeman's name is not. Some folks call me "Elder Hardeman." I am not all elder, neither in years nor in any official way. I am not a pastor. "Well," someone says, "what are you?" I am just N. B. Hardeman, and if I can manage to live so that my brethren can conscientiously extend their hand and call me "Brother Hardeman," I want no greater title.

I believe that the time is not in the future, but now, when we ought to take cognizance of matters of this kind, for such surely evidences a lack of regard for the Word of God, and a plain violation of that statement which says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

But the clergy, in the course of time, felt as if the whole responsibility were resting upon them. They took charge of the churches and thought that the only approach to God was through them. In the course of time, they assumed the

relation of the old Jewish priests, and not many moons passed thereafter until every church had its priest to direct its affairs. This, of course, is unknown to the Book of God.

But that is not all. In the Bible the word bishop is used as a synonym for elder. It came to represent the chairman of the board of elders, and thus assumed a meaning nowhere allowed by inspiration. But a system is developing and this is one of the steps leading away from the ancient order.

Man has always believed in organization. He feels that nothing can be accomplished unless men organize, legislate, draft a platform, adopt rules, by-laws and regulations. Hence, in the different localities, a number of churches blended together in what we would call a kind of district association, and over such there was placed one of these bishops.

Watch another step—when the several districts in one vicinity had been organized, over which there was a bishop, then, of course, other districts were organized in other sections with other bishops presiding. When all the districts in the province were thus organized, the next step was the blending of all the districts throughout the state or province under one head.

Now the next question was, "Who will be the head of this enlarged program?" The demand created another term which you have for the first time. The word "archbishop," or higher bishop, was thus applied. This ecclesiastical official had dominion over the province or state as a whole.

The province was thus first divided into districts, over which a bishop reigned, then all the districts in the provinces were blended together, over which there reigned the archbishop. Finally all the provinces were thus organized and the next question was, Who shall be head of all the provinces or states in our country? These must, of course, be put under one authority and blended into a unit. This step was a short one. You are introduced to another term as strange to the Bible as any matter you can fancy. You ask, "What is it?" The word "cardinal" is applied to him who becomes head of each nation. The cardinals are ap-

pointed by the pope and are his ambassadors. The pope selects the cardinals and they in turn select the pope. There are now about seventy cardinals and half of these must remain in the country of Italy.

Watch the steps thus far taken. For the individual congregation the clergyman becomes a priest; for the district congregations the bishop becomes the head; the archbishop sways the scepter over the various districts of each state; and the cardinal exercises dominion of the states of each nation. Anybody can see the next step. The last question was, Why not go ahead and consummate the whole affair, and bring under one jurisdiction, and one authority, all the nations of the earth? That step was taken, and, therefore, a man was placed at the head of the whole religious world. From the birth of Christ upon the earth, we have drifted in history over six hundred years, until in the year 606 A.D., Boniface III was designated pope by the Emperor Phocus, who himself was a murderer and all adulterer. Back of the year 606, neither in the Bible nor out of it, can any man find where any soul on this earth was ever styled pope, and yet our intelligence is insulted by some peoples' suggesting that Peter was the first of that type. The Bible knows nothing about it. History fails to record it. And six hundred years pass, during which time all literature, either sacred or profane, was, and is still, as silent as the glittering stars, or the sacred city of the dead.

But what have you seen?

The development of all ecclesiasticism with reference to the administration or executive functions thereof.

Who are the officials now, and over whom do they reign? The individual congregation has its priest, developed out of a pastor or the clergy. The district, with its narrowed territory, has a bishop over it in a different sense from the word "bishop" as used in the Bible. The districts blended together in the province or in the states have a higher authority unto whom the smaller caliber are amenable, viz., the archbishop. These in turn are under the cardinals, appointed directly by the pope. The cardinals, of course, are under the pope, who sits today in the Vatican as the Holy

See, as the viceregent of God, and the representative of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth.

But, friends, all of this is as foreign to the simplicity of the ancient order of things as daylight is from midnight darkness. Not one syllable, not one iota, not anything that looks like a distant relative to all imitation of a thing of that kind is found in all God's Book, from beginning to end. Had the elders, God-appointed and heaven-approved, been faithful, loyal and true to the teachings of Jesus Christ, this world would have been free from that great curse which has fastened itself upon it in the form of a hierarchy, or all ecclesiasticism, remote and strange to Holy Writ.

Right along with this administrative department you may expect other things equally as strange, and hence a system of doctrine likewise begins to develop. In the recitation of these things, I am not reading to you from the Bible. I am not giving you chapter and verse in God's Book. I have the best reason on earth for not doing it, and that reason is that the Bible knows nothing about the various things thus mentioned. But I can give you uninspired history and cite you to that which is authentic and undeniable.

I now call attention to the development of those strange, unique doctrines, which have become common, and which many good people accept as if they were of Divine origin.

Holy water—a water said to be especially blessed and sanctified by the priest—was first introduced in the year 120. Whence its origin? The apostles never heard of it. The Bible knows nothing of it. Heaven's will had been revealed and the pen of inspiration had been dropped from weary fingers before such all idea was born on the earth.

What else? The next thing peculiar was the introduction of the idea and the doctrine of penance, the infliction of punishment, the subjection to physical agony, and to physical pain, in order that one might expiate his own sins, and thus claim redemption from wrong done. When did the world first learn anything of penance? In the year 157. Back of that time such a thing was unknown, either in the Bible or out of the Bible.

Again, there is such a thing upon the earth now as Latin

mass. What does it mean? Whence its origin? Did the apostles know anything about it? Did Christ ever say one word regarding it? Did the Holy Spirit make mention of anything that even smacked of its nature? Of course not. Latin mass had its genesis upon this earth in the year 394.

Well, what then?

I have heard quite a bit about the doctrine of extreme unction. I am sure that I have read every word of the Bible, and I hesitate not to say that this is also a stranger to the Book of God. The man who speaks as the oracles of God, who holds fast the form of sound words, and is careful regarding sound speech knows nothing about these peculiar doctrines of purely human origin.

Extreme unction was first announced to mortal man in the year 588. From that time till now, it has been, by some, administered to those thought to be in immediate danger of death.

Next comes the doctrine of purgatory in 593. But it came not from the Bible or inspiration. I learned about it out of the Bible, and a long way out. The year 593 A.D. marks the date when first purgatory was mentioned as a religious idea.

But what does it mean? It suggests that those who died unprepared and without hope, may be freed from the agonies of torment in which they are writhing by the payment to the priest of a sufficient sum of money.

My friends, money extracted by such a means has been used to build magnificent cathedrals and edifices in the heart of various cities, and these attract the attention of passersby. We are made to wonder at the great liberality of those who endorse it. Oh, it is not so much liberality, but it is the sale of that concerning which the people are deluded and blinded.

But, further, if you go to the city of Rome and desire all interview with the pope, you first approach his secretary, tell who you are, where you came from, and the kind of interview you want. If, after you stand and wait a long, long time, all audience is at last granted, you must get down on bended knees, and approach his August

presence as he sits in front of a window, with the light coming from his rear, glittering upon your face. There he will extend his hand, and let you kiss the ring. On other occasions he will extend the toe of the right foot, and bid you to pay proper homage and make due acknowledgment.

I always thought quite a bit of President Roosevelt. I admired him because of his courage and of his ability to make up his mind without having to stop and ask what public sentiment was. It is said of him that, while on a visit to the city of Rome, he was asked if he would like to see the pope, and, knowing the ungodly formality through which one would have to pass in order to do that, he rose to the height of all American citizen, and said, "To hell with the pope!" Of course, I would not say that, but "them's my sentiments."

When was such a thought as kissing the toe of the pope introduced? Not until the year 709.

As a tourist enters St. Peter's cathedral, the most magnificent church structure on the face of the earth, the great porphyry stone whereon emperors once stood while the pope placed the crown upon their brow and formally introduced them into office, is first pointed out. Then a guide takes him a step further to the right, and upon a pedestal he sees a great bronze statue representing the apostle Peter. There he sits with a crown upon his head, a large ring of keys in his hand, and his bare right foot extended. The toes of it have been literally kissed away.

I chanced to stand there once and watch the passersby who believed in such lean over the golden rail, and imprint a kiss upon the bronze toe of this gigantic figure.

Poor deluded souls, ignorant of the Word of God, blinded and deceived by the commandments of men.

Those who believe in things I have mentioned have always had quite a bit of trouble about the Lord's Supper. Throughout a long period of departure from the ancient order they were disturbed, and in the year 1000, the doctrine of transubstantiation was first announced. What do they mean by this? It is their idea now that, by the prayer and the

power of the pope, the bread and the fruit of the vine are mystically changed into the literal body and the literal blood of the Son of God. They believe that there is a literal, actual change of substance, and hence the word Transubstantiation. But remember that no one ever dreamed of such until about the year 1000.

Well, then what?

The priests decided that it was the proper thing for them to practice celibacy, another term unknown to the Bible that is, they will not marry. They want us to call them "fathers," but they do not aim to marry. Now you, my good friends, can do just as you please about that, but I, for one, do not intend to do anything of the kind. Let me say to you tonight, that I propose to be courteous and polite, but I would knowingly violate God's positive straightforward command if I were guilty of addressing any man on earth, religiously and officially by the term "father."

In the last address our Lord ever made (Matt. 23, verse 9), he said to the disciples: "Call no man your father which is upon this earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." And allow me to say that the original of the word Father is that from which we get the word pope. Therefore God says to Hardeman, and all others, do not call any man "pope." I do not care, my friends, if a man does have his collar turned hind part before, I do not aim to call him "father." Were he to come to my home, I would treat him kindly and courteously. I would speak to him and of him as Mr. So-and-So, but I do not propose to slap Jesus Christ squarely in the face and directly speak the opposite of that which he has prohibited and positively forbidden.

When did this idea of celibacy ever come into the minds of men? In the year 1015. Back of that, no such a thought was ever dreamed of.

But I am not surprised at it because Paul said to Timothy, "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirit?, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in

hypocrisy; and having their conscience seared as with a hot iron; *forbidding to marry,*" etc.

But this is not all. There was introduced in the year 1190 the doctrine of indulgences. If I wanted to go into business in Nashville, or anywhere else in Tennessee, and could get people to believe the doctrine of indulgence, I could make more money than any corporation or firm in your city. What does that mean? You just pay the priest so much and he will give you a night off to paint things red and to have a high old time. Pay the sum demanded and you can gratify every passion, satisfy every lust, and revel in all of your physical appetites to your heart's content.

Mosheim says: "The general prevalence of ignorance and superstition was dexterously, yet basely improved, by the rulers of the church, to fill their coffers, and to drain the purses of the deluded multitude; indeed, each rank and order of the clergy had a peculiar method of fleecing the people. The bishops, when they wanted money for their private pleasures, or for the exigencies of the church, granted to their flock the power of purchasing the remission of the penalties imposed upon transgressors, by a sum of money, which was to be applied to certain religious purposes; or, in other words, they published indulgences which became all inexhaustible source of opulence to the episcopal orders, and enabled them, as is well known, to form and execute the most difficult schemes for the enlargement of their authority, and to erect a multitude of sacred edifices, which augmented considerably the external pomp and splendor of the church. The abbots and monks, who were not qualified to grant indulgences, had recourse to other methods of enriching their convents. They carried about the country the carcasses and relics of the saints in solemn procession, and permitted the multitude to behold, touch and embrace at fixed prices, these sacred and lucrative remains. The monastic orders often gained as much by this rare show as the bishops did by their indulgences."

Again, you have heard about auricular confessions. If you have ever been to any cathedrals, you have observed that there are little booths all along in them. On the inside

there sits a priest. On the outside there comes a poor deluded soul and approaches this little booth, kneels down by the side, draws aside a little curtain over all opening, and pours into the ear of the priest within all his secret thoughts and every sin of which he may have been guilty. He arises and passes out believing that all sins have been forgiven when, as a matter of fact, you and I know that no such thing has been done. The man on the inside can no more forgive sins than you or I. There is not a syllable of truth in such a claim. The blood of Jesus Christ alone can cleanse from sin, and that wonderful blood has never been delegated unto any man that today walks the face of God's green earth. But when did such all idea first appear? Not until the year 1215. And so, the wonderful system, step by step, grew as the exigencies of the hour demanded.

What next? In the year 1311, at the Council of Ravenna, the Western branch of this ecclesiasticism adopted the practice of sprinkling for baptism. Up to that time I grant you that sprinkling had been practiced from the year 251 in cases of sickness, and on special occasions. But as a practice, as a doctrine, as the polity of the Western branch of that ecclesiasticism, sprinkling was not adopted until the year 1311. Of course, you know the Greek Catholics have never practiced sprinkling, but from the very beginning of their existence until now, they have practiced immersion.

You ask, ladies and gentlemen, any of the Roman branch what does the word *baptizo*, the original form, mean. There is not a scholar among them but will tell you it means to immerse, to bury, to submerge, to overwhelm, to cover up. Then you naturally follow with the question, "Why don't they do it?"

Here is the reason. Catholics claim that they are all infallible body. When the pope and his cardinals assemble and deliberate upon a matter, and render their verdict, such becomes to them infallible. Hence, if you grant the infallibility of the pope, then you must accept the idea that sprinkling is a satisfactory way of administering the sacred rite.

But the strange thing to me is that people, in this country, who repudiate and ridicule the idea of infallibility, have borrowed from no higher source than the Catholic edict the practice of sprinkling for baptism and do it in the name of Christ. Bear in mind that God never commanded it; Christ never authorized it; the Holy Spirit never sanctioned it. Such a practice and such a doctrine is purely of human origin. Water and nothing but water was never sprinkled on anything, for any purpose, in all the ages, by the authority of God. It took six hundred years for the development of the administrative part— the executive part' of this great ecclesiasticism.

It required 1,300 long years for the development of doctrine perfected and complete. But with the passing of these years and a few minor changes in doctrine and practice that have been made since, the system has fastened itself upon the earth. There is about it scarcely a vestige of that simplicity that characterized the Jerusalem church.

There is one thing peculiar to Catholicism, and that is this: it is unlike any other church or body known. I would be absolutely unable to name a definite person that began it. I could not tell you the specific date of its origin. Neither could I put my finger upon any page in history wherein is recorded the definite, and specific place.

Catholicism did not spring into existence overnight. It IS the development of a departure from the Word of God, until it stood forth exercising dominion and claiming authority not only in matters religious, but likewise in civil affairs as well.

In the year 728, there was granted the jurisdiction over civil authorities to the pope of Rome. And he was the supreme head, not only of the church, but of civil affairs, until the good year of 1870. At that time he was shorn of the temporal government, but now has the monumental gall and the colossal cheek to demand of the Duce of Italy a recognition of temporal powers.

Friends, if Catholicism had its way tonight, it would hold in the very grasp of its hand, not only religious, but like

wise civil government as well. To that end every fiber of its being and every pulsation of its heart is consecrated.

This ecclesiasticism is purely of human origin. It is human in origin; it is human in doctrine; it is human in practice. The best definition that I could render of such a hierarchy would be to say that it is a mixture of Judaism, paganism and Christianity. Take a small part of the latter, more of the former two, blend them together in proper proportions, and the result is that institution, that organization, that ecclesiasticism, that threatens, tonight, possibly more than we know the religious and likewise the civil liberties of our land.

Any devout member thereof who pays his allegiance to the power that sits in the Vatican, and who has taken upon himself the Catholic oath, has, perhaps, a higher regard for it than he would for all oath to support the constitution of the United States of America.

A great danger threatens this country unless religious forces come out from things that smack of such characteristics, cut loose from human organizations, and that which pertains to ecclesiasticism, and earnestly endeavor to restore upon this earth the ancient order of things.

My friends, I have come to your good city to call upon you to flee from such matters that are purely human in every phase, and feature. I am glad to tell you that there is a church founded by Jesus Christ, bought by His blood, filled with His spirit, and guided by His counsel. The terms of initiation into it are such that you and I can easily understand them. I pray God that you may be willing to obey them, and then to stand upon his everlasting promise. If you understand these terms, and have a disposition to accept them, I am glad once more to extend the gospel call. Put your trust in Jesus Christ; earnestly and truly repent of every sin; publicly confess your faith in the crucified one and obey him in the sacred ordinance of baptism. If such you will do and ever thereafter live faithful to him, heaven will be your home.

## CATHOLIC CHURCH OF 16TH CENTURY

"I think no one recognizes more fully -than I do the wonderful responsibility that now rests upon me. In a great concourse of people like this impressions are certain to be made. Should I make the wrong one, or be guilty, knowingly, of misstating any fact which would be detrimental or injurious to any living soul, I am certain that God would hold me accountable.

These talks for a few nights are purely historical in their nature. I am exceedingly careful to make only such declarations as are found in our public libraries, taught in the history department of our colleges, and founded upon authentic records. I want to assure you that regarding any individual I have nothing whatsoever unkind to say. I deal, therefore, with doctrines and practices rather than with any individual.

I propose a further study of the Catholic church with special reference to the status of affairs at the beginning of the 16th century. I did not write the history of this organization. I think it I' not unkind to them for me to study what they have written, what they have said, and what history in general reveals as a matter of fact.

This audience knows that about the year 1600 there was a culmination of the period known as the Dark Ages. By the close of this period Catholicism had developed from the second and third centuries into such departures as are mentioned in the preceding sermon.

I called your attention to its administrative development, and likewise to the doctrinal points peculiarly characteristic of that body.

At the beginning of the 16th century the general status of affairs was as follows: first, every child born on the earth was born physically into the Catholic church. All those grown up were expected, outwardly, at least, to pay their allegiance to this ecclesiasticism, so that Catholicism boasted of a universal, world-wide membership.

Second, the church was operating at this time not by voluntary contributions, or freewill offerings, but by a compulsory tax imposed upon every individual and his property, both real and personal.

Third, the state undertook to enforce obedience on the part of its subjects to the church. It was as great an offense against the civil authorities to violate some order of the church, as it is to make liquor in the city of Nashville.

Can you grasp a situation of that kind; with every citizen a member of the church; with taxes imposed upon the people for the support of it; and then the civil authorities back of that religious institution to see that all of its demands are carried into effect? When you think of just such, you marvel not at why all men were held in subjection to this great ecclesiasticism which had been built up, and which had taken possession of the rights and liberties of humanity everywhere, both civil and religious.

I call attention next to the power that had been gained by the head of the church. In the pope were vested all the powers of government. He was the supreme law giver. No law of any sort or kind, passed by any organization or court was worth a continental unless it met the approval of the pope.

He was not only the supreme law-giver, but likewise he was the supreme judge. All matters affecting the happiness, success or progress of humanity, from the smaller details of civil relationship up to the worship of God were subject to him. He was the supreme and the chief administrator of all the laws. One might defy the emperor or other officials, but when the pope pronounced a verdict against any, there was but one of two choices, either bow in subjection to his authority, or suffer whatever penalty might be imposed.

He insisted upon certain temporal rights aside from his religious prerogatives.

It was his to crown every emperor. He could depose all emperor or a king or release a ruler's subjects from their oath of allegiance. He could declare null and void, and forbid the people to obey, a law of any state, if he thought it injurious to the interest of the church. He also claimed

financial powers. He charged fees for certain services at Rome, assessed the dioceses throughout the world, and levied a tax—Peter's pence,—upon all Christians.

He exercised dominion not only over all the crowned heads of that land, but it was his to fix the tax and to demand the payment of the same. Temporal power as well as religious had been gained. The first temporal power granted to the pope was in the year 728. He maintained that power down to the year 1870, when at last the people began to rise up in rebellion. But I want to say to you, my friends, it is a part of Catholicism, inseparable from it, for the pope to exercise dominion over the temporal and civil affairs of humanity, just the same as in the religious realm.

As evidence of the correctness of that statement I only have to call your attention to the conflict which has been raging in Italy between the pope and the duke as to whether or not temporal power should be granted. If the Catholics could have their way, the pope would be head over all the affairs and relations of man, both civil and religious.

With the passing of time and the dawn of a brighter day, there began to arise conflicts between the church and the state. Men will stand for some things a long time, but as Mr. Bryan once said, you can trust the people, ultimately, to work out, from a temporal point of view, their own salvation. The sources of these conflicts were four in number. First: the appointment of high officials. Question: what has the right to appoint them? They are usually men of power, of wealth and of prominence. Shall the pope appoint them, or shall the emperor? Second: the clergy had grown immensely rich by virtue of the fact that the people were taxed to support the church, and the pope fixed the salary of the clergy. They had grown wealthy, and the question came up: ought the property of the clergy to be exempt from taxation? It had been for a thousand years, but the common people, upon whom the burden of taxation has always been, said this was not right, just or fair, and there was a growing demand for this class to bear its part of the taxation. The emperor said that it should. The pope took the opposite and tried to defend the custom that had prevailed.

Third: shall there continue ecclesiastical courts to take cognizance and to pass judgment upon matters of a civil nature? In all of their trials of a civil and of a domestic sort it had been the custom for the ecclesiastical court to sit in judgment. Emperors and men of the world rose up and said, "Sir, you attend to the religious part; we will attend to the civil affairs." Fourth: how far shall the pope meddle or interfere in the affairs of the state? Now the result of these conflicts, commencing as far back as the 12th century, was that the pope, step by step, was robbed of civil power and temporal authority, and finally, as already stated, when the year 1870 rolled around, there was a complete separation, as much, at least, as was possible, of the state and the church.

But popery makes wonderful claims, sounds out great statements which are impossible to be understood. I will read to you some extracts from history that cannot be doubted—matters that can not be questioned. Old Boniface VIII said this: "We declare, say, define, and pronounce to every human creature that it is altogether necessary to salvation to be subject unto the Roman pontiff." I did not say this. That is what a Catholic pope said. In trying to put the people in subjection to his power, he went so far as to declare that eternal salvation is dependent wholly upon obedience to the Roman pontiff, or to the ecclesiastical head.

That is why it is .., friends, that I rebel at such all ungodly rotten doctrine. I think that I have to bow down to no pope, in order to read my titles clear over yonder, and, as all American citizen, I resent such insults to our independence and to our relationship to the God of Heaven.

Well, again, "The pope cannot possibly err in decrees of faith." Think of it. Who said that? Catholics themselves so declared, and if there is any man in Nashville who wants to question the correctness of these statements I can give him the evidence. I respect your intelligence, and I know the scholarship of Nashville. It would be far from me to come into your midst and make a statement that I could not justify from the pages of history.

Well if the pope cannot err, everything that I read in the Bible or anywhere else is absolutely false unless it perfectly corroborates the decree of the pope. Isn't that the limit?

But friends I have this observation to present next. The present pope is No. 195 from the first one, Boniface III, 606 A.D. Of that particular type, 196 have occupied the papal chair. But you note some things about that. There have been 29 controversies from the first pope down to the last among Catholics themselves, as to which one was the real pope, and may be that the one who, by sheer power, was ruling, was not really the one, and therefore his fallibility would be demonstrated.

But this is not all. There has been a time since the year 606 when for seventy long years no man sat in the papal chair at Rome. What became of affairs during the three score and ten years when the head of humanity upon the earth was absolutely wanting in that city?

That is not all yet. At one time since the first, there have been three men, each of them claiming to be pope, and all of them squeezing down in the papal chair, until she burst asunder.

That is Catholicism and that is infallibility! Believe it, who can ?

I do not believe that Catholic popes are any more wicked or any more immoral than other men, proportionate to number. I would not say that. But because of their claim of infallibility, the very thought that there is wickedness and immorality about them makes it stand out the more prominent~

About 100 years ago in the city of Cincinnati, there was a great debate between Bishop Purcell of the Catholic church, and Alexander Campbell. I think I am saying that which every Catholic would accept when I say that no greater bishop has lived among them than was Bishop Purcell.

In that debate Bishop Purcell, himself a Catholic, said this: "Some of the bad popes of Rome are now expiating their sins in the penal fires of hell." That is what he

thought about them. I never said as hard a thing about them in my life as that, but if a lot of them were in hell then, what about the last one hundred years? If the proportion holds out, and old Bishop Purcell could speak tonight, he would doubtless add to the number that are thus writhing in agony in the penal fires of hell.

My friends, I might continue at length along matters of history like this, but there are some other things that I want to mention in your presence tonight.

Hear it. The very center of Catholic theology is the sacramental system. It is surely the outstanding sacramental church of all the world. There is the antithesis of that. The Church of Christ represents exactly the opposite idea.

I want to say to you that the Church of the Bible is not a church composed of sacraments at all. The Church of Christ believes in none of them, practices none as such. The Catholic church has the very system as its center, and betwixt the two, there reigns denominationalism with more or less of the brand of Catholicism stamped upon it. Denominations, instead of having the seven, as the mother of all ecclesiasticisms formerly announced, have narrowed them down, and claim, some two, some three, and possibly more. Those commonly mentioned in the human creeds and human disciplines, are baptism and the Lord's supper.

"I want you to know that in the Book of God no such terms are used regarding either of these matters. But what do you mean by sacrament? Here is the Catholic definition. 'A sacrament is all outward and visible sign of all inward grace.' "

When you begin to read other books, the principles of which are based upon the rankest Catholicism known to the world, you will find similar expressions in the creeds, disciplines, confessions on faith, and church rituals of denominationalism.

Whence came such? I answer, not from the Bible, but from Catholicism itself, the mother of the sacramental system.

Catholics teach that there are seven sacraments. First: baptism. What does it mean to them? They say that bap-

tism cleanses from original sin. Hence every child born into the earth is born in a state of depravity, damned and doomed, unless something is done. Therefore, by baptism alone the baby is freed from a state of depravity and original sin. Baptism, to the Catholic, stripped of all antecedents, cleanses a soul from sin.

You might ask, "Brother Hardeman, do you believe that?" No, I never believed it in my life. Baptism, unless it be preceded by a faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a genuine sure-enough repentance of sin, is as a sounding brass or as a clanging cymbal.

My brethren have been misrepresented. I will not say intentionally, but nevertheless it has been done. A prejudice has been created by the pronouncement on the part of those who ought to know better that we teach baptism for the remission of sins. My brethren teach no such thing. Gospel preachers teach that baptism, to a *penitent bel~ever*, is for, in order to, the remission of sins. Stripped of these antecedents, there can be no such thing as scriptural baptism.

"The second sacrament of Catholicism is that which they call confirmation. What do they mean by that? It is the laying on of the hands of the priest, and the conferring of the Holy Spirit by such all act, thereby blending, stabilizing and fixing the member in the ranks of the Catholic faith.

The third sacrament by them mentioned is the holy Eucharist. By that they mean the Lord's supper. Why man wants to invent new terms for Bible things is one of the strange ideas of the age, but with paganistic philosophies and phraseologies, he seeks to adorn that simplicity that is in Christ Jesus. Plenty of people today who repudiate Catholicism, speak almost invariably of the institution established by the Christ other than in the simple terms of Hob Writ. My friend, why do you want to do that? Can't you be content to call Bible things by Bible names? Do you think that God made a mistake, and that you can give it a better name than the Holy Spirit, or are you seeking to be wise, above that which is written? Are you not violating that positive decree which says, "If any

man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God"? Why not do that, and thus say to our infidel friends, that you really and truly believe God's word?

Catholics think that when they come to the Eucharist, the priest, by his words, can change the substance of the bread and the fruit of the vine into the real body and the real blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence they talk about transubstantiation. I do not believe that the priest can any more change things material, outside of the laboratory, than can any other man in all the earth.

The fourth sacrament, they style penance. By this they mean that a man guilty of sin must go to a priest in full contrition of spirit, humble himself in his presence, there make to him full confession, and pledge to God never to be guilty of a repetition of that act, and then put himself under the authority of the priest to make any sort of amends that may be demanded. Therefore, he says: "Mr. Pope, speak, impose on me any penalty whatsoever, and if I can satisfy you, it makes no difference what God may think about it."

But again, No. 5, is the sacrament of extreme unction —another thing you would never learn of if you had no book but the Bible from which to get the information. What is meant by that? When a soul is subject to all impending crisis, or to immediate danger, either spiritual or physical, the priest comes again, takes the oil and pours upon his head, and thus prepares him for the ordeal through which he is to pass. Why wait till a man gets square up against it, with one foot in the grave and the other, so to speak, upon the proverbial banana peeling? If there be any virtue, and if any praise in it, why not anoint a well man and prevent the danger to which he may be exposed ?

Sacrament No. 6, the giving of holy orders. What does that mean ? It is a preparation on the part of a young convert, so that he may receive such power as will enable him to perform the sacred rites. He is a candidate, for instance, for a priest. Now then, the older priests, by virtue of their superiority and unusual power, may impose upon

the young the ability and the right to administer the things belonging to their system.

"Then Sacrament No. 7 is that which they call matrimony. By it they mean all indissoluble union. The Catholics grant no divorces. I am not disposed to offer words of criticism, but rather words of commendation on that particular tenet and emphatic declaration of the Catholic Church. It matters not with them whether it be but a common couple, or a crowned head; they boldly say, "No!"

Friends, I have in brief outlined to you the salient features of Catholicism as it stood universally triumphant over the affairs of men about 400 years ago. Let me say to you that for a thousand years preceding that time the world was in subjection to this ecclesiastical organization, and during that time the Bible was chained to the pulpit. No man was allowed to see it, to read it, or have contact with its precious truths except the dignitaries of that wonderful organization.

The world, therefore, was shrouded in darkness, and the crack of the whip from the powers that be meant for the subjects to march according to the edicts handed down by him who claimed to be infallible, the representative of God, the viceregent of our Lord Jesus Christ. But I am glad to tell you, in advance of succeeding talks, that just about this time, the clouds began to vanish, the glimmering light was seen to burst upon the earth, and the world, religiously and ecclesiastically, was to be privileged to throw aside the shackles, come from underneath the cover, and thus to exercise itself in the thoughts and deliberations that would be accountable and amenable to God alone.

You and I ought to rejoice that we live this side of that period when such a state of religion was covering the face of the earth. The great movement of which this was, possibly, a preparation was soon to burst upon the world—not in all of its fullness, but in great splendor and glory.

In this period of infidelity, in this age of worldly wisdom, when good men and good women have announced allegiance to human authority and human organizations, it is all exceeding timely matter for us to think on whither

we are drifting; whether or not, we are exalting the Book of God triumphant o'er human creeds and confessions of faith.

It is time, and a challenge comes to every man to rally to that institution of which there is a record on the pages of God's Book. So far as I am concerned, I want membership in no institution concerning which there is not one word or one syllable in all of the Book of God. I want to be nothing, do nothing, practice nothing, that is not as old as the New Testament. When the world shall come to the adoption of that principle, and make it good in concrete application, the very angels of heaven will rejoice, and once more there will reverberate through the eternal regions the glad angelic song, "Peace on earth, and good will to men."

We stand, my friends, in our own light when we are not banded together as a solid phalanx against all human ecclesiasticism. Look into that which I have thus briefly pictured. I am glad to call upon my friends, those who honor me from time to time with their presence, and ask them, openly and above board, to cut loose from everything except Jesus Christ as their leader, prophet, priest and king. Renounce your allegiance to every flag except the blood-stained banner of Christ Jesus our Lord. Repudiate all booklets, declarations, articles of faith, which you cannot read directly on the pages of God's Book become associated with no institution that does not bear the impress of divinity upon its brow, and the stamp of God's image upon its very heart.

There is a ground big enough, wide enough, and broad enough for every son and daughter of Adam's ruined and recreant race to occupy. In the church which He bought and built we can find our refuge and security.

God demands of us faith in the Christ, real penitence for every sin, the acknowledgment of the Christ with the lips, and all obedience to that commandment which, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit brings us into the promises of life eternal.

I am glad to announce to you the invitation. Come

friends, in self-defense. Come not to gratify me. Come not to please any soul on earth, primarily, but come to please God in heaven, and to cause the approving smiles of Him who died for you to rest upon you.

## **THE PRIMACY OF PETER**

I want to assure you, my friends and brethren, that I fully appreciate the effort you make to come to these noonday services. I realize that it is somewhat of a burden upon you, and especially those of you who have other responsibilities. I think it is a compliment to you, as well as to those who have the meeting directly upon their hearts, that you are so disposed, and have such regard for things sacred as to be willing even to make a sacrifice in order to come. It shows where your hearts are, where your sympathies are, and the things you want to encourage.

I have been studying with you and others, matters historic in nature, for the last two or three addresses. I do this because I want you to know the background of that great movement from humanism back to the ancient order of things. Without this as a setting, I am certain that it will be more difficult to find out what all of our efforts are about.

I want, by this series, the world to see what the Church of Christ has in mind, what it is trying to do, and what its outstanding objective is as a religious institution upon this earth. I further the talks along the line today by announcing that the subject is: The Primacy of the Apostle Peter. I have a little book written by Cardinal Gibbons. The name of it is "The Faith of Our Fathers." It is written by a Catholic of unquestioned authority and sets forth their doctrine in such a simple way that even I can understand it. The very heart and core of Catholicism is, that Peter was the first pope, and upon him the Church of God was built, and to him and his successors all authority has been given. That is the very keystone of the arch of faith in Catholic doctrine. Rob them of that one statement and you have undermined the entire foundation upon which all else, according to their statements, must depend.

No Catholic can be found but that will tell you that the foundation of all of his ecclesiastical order and unique position rests upon whether or not Peter was designated by Christ as the foundation of the church. Hence I shall not today discuss any other point at all.

The Catholics claim that the church must have a head. I am not disposed to question that statement. But when they say that Peter is the head of it, I am ready to draw swords and to fight it out on that line.

The head of the church is Jesus Christ our Lord. Paul said of Him (Ephesians 1: 22) that God "has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

Again, in Col. 1: 18 it is said, "And Christ is the head of the body which is the church."

There never has been granted to any man on earth the privilege of exercising authority over the Church of Christ. Every congregation known to the Bible is a unit within itself. The autonomy of each individual congregation is as clearly taught in the Book of God as any other one thing therein found. And there is no such thing as a blending, or forming of any kind of all alliance or relationship between one congregation and another. A cooperation is taught in the Bible. Organization other than the individual congregation is unknown to God's Book. But our Catholic friends rely, as aforesaid, upon Peter's being the foundation of the church. And they turn to Matthew 16: 18, and read with a degree of confidence, that upon which their main hope must forever rest.

That they are wrong with reference to this passage, I think there is not the shadow of a doubt, and the task is mine to examine just what is said. The occasion is that Jesus had taken the disciples from around about the shores of the sea of Galilee northward to the little quiet village of Caesarea Philippi. While there, in a period of retirement and rest, Christ elicited a confession of their faith in His identity, and Peter, with the courage and the boldness

that seems to attach to his makeup, said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

In response, Christ pronounced a blessing upon him, and then said: "I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it."

The Catholics say that Christ addressed Peter and said: "Peter, thou art a rock, and upon this rock, upon thee, I will build my church." They think that the second rock refers to Peter. Now, if that be true I am ready to admit the correctness of all their claims and to accept whatever conclusions that would logically follow.

But, friends, somehow or other I can't help but believe that the educated among the Catholics know that they misrepresent the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ in the very announcement thus made.

I do not often refer to the Greek language. I know little enough about English, much less trying to expound some other language concerning which I know even less. But there are a few words in the original tongue that I have learned. It is necessary that I speak not in English but in the very language and use the precise word as did the Lord Jesus Christ. He said:

"Thou art *Petros*" (*Petros* is a Greek word). That is the word spoken by Christ and referred to as Peter. Thou art *Petros*. It is a noun of masculine gender. It means a rock or a stone. Now watch. "And upon this *petra*," a different word, a noun of the feminine gender, "I will build my church."

Friends, did Christ say, "I am going to build my Church upon *Petros*" or upon "*Petra*" ~ Now I grant you that is a little bit technical, but it did not occur accidentally. Jesus Christ, intentionally, forbade just such a conclusion as our Catholic friends have drawn, and instead of saying "Thou art *Petros*, and upon this *Petros* I will build my Church," he said exactly the reverse. Christ never once said, I will build upon *Petros* (Peter), but upon this different word "*petra*" I will build my church. That settles matters of that kind beyond the shadow of a doubt. Christ was par-

ticular to use a different word lest somebody might be so thoughtless as to imagine that he meant to say Peter was the foundation of the church. No such all idea was ever his. Now you ask, what is the difference in the significance of these two words, the root of which is the same? Here it is. *Petros* means a rock or stone, I grant you, but it has reference to a bit, a fragment, a piece, a part from the mass. Whereas the feminine form of the word means a ledge, a cliff, a mass, a foundation like unto adamant.

I stood in front of Stone Mountain down here in Georgia and saw the workman chiseling out the outline of the Confederacy. At the foot of the mountain was a large collection of the fragments, bits of stone. That would represent *Petros*, all individual.

Then back of these fragments, broken off, towering 1,600 feet high, and seven miles around, there is that granite cliff, ledge, or mass, which would be recognized as a feminine gender. There she stands upon a foundation immovable, with her head lifted toward the heavens, and observed by passers-by for many miles away.

Now, Christ said, "Peter, thou art a fragment, or a bit, or a piece; and upon this great ledge—upon this solid mass—I will build my church."

So then it follows, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Christ said anything else than that he expected to build his church upon Peter.

But there is another complete prohibition to the Catholic idea. The picture and the imagery forbid their contention. Here they are at Caesarea Philippi, a city builded upon a rock and surrounded by a rock wall in which there are gates with a keeper holding the keys. The very stability of this rock founded, rock bounded, and rock surrounded city suggested the idea of the church of our Lord. Hence he said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." Now get it. In that imagery Christ is the builder. The rock, which is the great foundation truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is the foundation, and Peter is out yonder at the gate holding the keys and admitting those who would pass in and out.

Now, here is a general proposition. It is a violation of the principles of every language, for one character to occupy two different positions in the same illustration at the same time. I repudiate therefore the idea that Peter can play a two-fold part in this scenery. He cannot be represented as the keeper of the gate with the keys in his hand, and at the same time be the foundation upon which the thing rests.

But that is not all. Paul said, 1 Cor. 3: 10, 11, "As a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Therefore, instead of the possibility of Peter's being the foundation of the church to be built by Christ, the exact reverse is true and Peter's position, I want to insist, in this tropical language, is not underneath the structure. He is the gatekeeper and holds the keys in his hands. The beautiful imagery is destroyed if the Catholic idea were correct.

But, friends, there are some other things that I want to mention. It cannot be proved, beyond a question of doubt, that Peter ever saw Rome. I know that there is a tradition which is referred to by some historians of the possibility of such. But it is not a definitely established fact in history that Peter ever saw Rome, much less acted as pope in the seven-hilled city.

Again, at the very time, according to Catholic contention, that Peter should have been in Rome, as the head of the church, he was in prison in Jerusalem, shut up by old Herod. It therefore follows that their contention is weighed in the balance and found wanting.

The church had been in existence from the year 33 to 49 at the time of Peter's imprisonment, but there is no record, no hint in all the Bible, or anywhere else, of Peter's having been in Rome during the early history of the church.

Again, Peter is mentioned prominently in the Bible. We are told of his having gone to Lydda, and from Lydda the historian tells of his going to Joppa, and from Joppa the Bible says that he went to Caesarea, and you will find him

at various places. Is it not peculiarly significant, because of its absence, that in all of the sacred writings and history of the church, that not one hint, not one intimation, by inspiration, is ever given that Peter ever visited the city of Rome at all. Don't you think that such is rather peculiar ?

He is mentioned in minor affairs, where there is not so great a prominence attached, and yet the very one thing that our Catholic friends need, and are called upon to furnish, is evidence, either in the Bible, or out of the Bible, conclusively, that Peter ever saw Rome, much less reigned as pope, lived and died therein. The very best thing that Cardinal Gibbons had to offer along this line is this: he said that Peter's general epistle was written from Babylon, and that it was generally conceded that Babylon meant Rome, or confusion.

I thought while reading that, if the very foundation, if the very little end of the tap root of the doctrine depends on the Figurative meaning of the word Babylon, the Catholics are indeed as a drowning man grabbing at a straw. If that is the best that I could say for my contention, I would certainly have all embarrassing attitude in the propagation of it.

Well, there is another thing. Paul spent 16 days with Peter in Jerusalem. That is mentioned in the Bible. Paul later went to Rome and spent two years, but there is no record of his having met Peter, or having seen him. As Paul neared the city of Rome, as a prisoner, a number of Christians went down the Appian Way to meet him and to greet him and to extend to him words of comfort. They visited him while a prisoner in the city. Don't you think that a man as prominent as was Paul, who had done so much for the cause of Christ, who had appealed his case to Caesar and had gone to the Roman city, should have been noticed by the pope? Don't you think that the pope ought at least to have recognized him, and to have honored him, or allowed himself to be honored by the presence of the peerless Apostle of the Gentile World? Why would the pope ignore such a-great apostle?

Friends, the absence of one scintilla of history, the lack of one single bit of evidence, or of any reference, proves conclusively that the claim of our Catholic friends is untrue to the facts in the case.

What else? In the city of Rome, the prominent Jews flocked round about Paul and said: "We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

What had the pope been doing in Rome? Why hadn't he told them about the sect called Christians? Ladies and gentlemen, if the Catholic claim of Peter's primacy and reigning as pope in Rome were true, there would be no occasion for such a demand as was made by the Jews. Surely Peter would have already told them regarding this sect.

But yet again. In all of the Roman letter, which is rather lengthy, in which the greatest and the profoundest reasonings are found, and references are made, not only to the church as a whole, but to different individuals, is it not strange to you that when Paul wrote that splendid letter he did not find occasion somewhere to refer to Peter, and to recognize him as the head of the church? That letter is conspicuous by the total absence of anything that even looks like a reference made to the honor and to the dignity that Peter might have claimed as God's representative upon the earth.

In the first church conference that was ever held, a record of which is found in Acts 16, did you ever stop to note the position, relatively speaking, that Peter had to the other apostles? They met for the purpose of discussing whether or not the Gentiles ought to be circumcised. Is there anything in the Book that looks as if Peter were the pope and all of the others came in and bowed before him, and he directed and manipulated the movements of the body? It is exactly the reverse. James is the chairman; Peter is down on the floor of the conference on a parallel with Paul, Barnabas, and the others; and after there had been much disputing Peter rose up, just like any other preacher or apostle, and said, "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that

the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." Peter then took his seat. Paul and Barnabas next gained the attention of the chair and made a report of what God had wrought by them among the Gentiles. These are significant facts. James, as chairman, finally passed sentence that the Gentiles should not be troubled. There is not the slightest evidence that Peter ever dreamed he was a distant relative of a pope.

But again, friends, when the gospel was first opened up to the Gentile world, a record of which is found in Acts tenth chapter, Cornelius, having sent for a preacher, made ready for the great meeting, and when Peter came, Cornelius ran out to meet him and fell down at his feet to worship him.

Now this is a fine time for Peter to demonstrate, "I am the pope." I wonder if he stuck out his toe and said, "Smack it." I wonder, friends, if he held out the signet ring and bade Cornelius kiss it. I wonder if he said, "Cornelius, humble yourself on bended knees as you approach my presence." Why, friends, such a thought is repulsive to those who know God's Book. Peter said, "Cornelius, don't bow down to me. I am no great somebody come. I am not worthy of such homage, or worship. Stand up. I myself also am a man. That is all. I am no great Holy See. I am not possessed with the power to bless and to curse. I also am a man. 'Also' means just like you, and like common folks. I am not out of a different sort of clay made or created. Don't worship me."

How does that look compared with the modern pope into whose August presence you have to come on bended knees, and then kiss the signet that he wears and crown him in your devotion and homage lord of all?

Friends, the demeanor of the Apostle Peter at the house of Cornelius is not even a distant relative of all intimation of that which even looks like Catholicism in nature, but it bespeaks that simplicity and that humility that should characterize gospel preachers.

Finally, let me announce to you that Christ our Lord forbade and condemned all titles and honor of all official na-

ture. He said, Matt. 23: 9, "Call no man your father upon the earth." Those who so do openly violate this plain command.

But Christ not only condemned all titles, but he condemned all kinds of religious garbs, peculiar dress, or outward demonstration.

He said in that same chapter, verse 5, of the Pharisees, "They make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments." A phylactery was a piece of parchment suspended over the face on which the law was written. They wore it to testify to passers-by that they were a Godly set. Christ said they were hypocrites.

Christianity does not demand a peculiar dress. It is all right for men to wear long-tailed coats, and to that I have no objection. Besides, it is none of my business. But when any man has to wear a peculiar cut of coat or garb to designate his ecclesiastical relationships, I know that is outside the teachings of the Book of God, and for that reason I prefer the common dress of the ordinary citizen.

These are some of the reasons that render impossible my acceptance of Catholic claims, that Peter stands at the head of the church, and was the first pope unto whom there has been delegated authority both in civil and religious matters by the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have to look unto Him who is the head of the body, the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence. Let us know no man save Jesus Christ, and in our hearts and lives, let us seek to crown Him Lord of all. There is none other in whom there is salvation.

Once more I come to ask your acceptance of Him. Can you not this noon put your hand in his wounded palm, turn away from sin, honor Him by acknowledging Him as Lord and King, walk in the light of His commandments, trust Him for the promise, and share the bliss that passeth understanding when Life's dream has ended ? If such there be, once again the opportunity is yours.

**THE REFORMATION, NO. 1**

I am certainly glad that the effort thus far put forth, very largely historic in nature, has met with a favorable response, and has created within you all anxiety to hear what is to follow.

I come now to study the Great Reformation. This period embraces what we call in history the Renaissance, or the transition from mediaeval to modern civilization.

Evidences of this period are seen in the invention of a number of things that proved advantageous to man in driving away the clouds, permitting light to shine upon his path, and granting to him the privilege of independent thought and study. Perhaps chief among such inventions was the printing press invented toward the close of the fifteenth century. By means of it vast volumes of written matter were scattered over the face of the earth, which brought to the homes of the people such things as they could study for themselves and from which they could draw their own conclusions. It created independent thought which served as the very foundation of that independence that enabled the people to break away from that ecclesiasticism to which they had been in bondage for almost a thousand years.

At this time the nations of the old world were sending forth ships on missions of exploration. England, France, Spain, Holland and Portugal had their ships plying the bosom of the different seas in search of things that lay beyond.

A broader horizon was appearing, and a greater conception of independence and responsibility was dawning upon the world. That period was also characterized by the birth and development of the greatest artists the world has ever known. To it belong Michael Angelo, Leonardo de Vinci, Raphael, and others, unsurpassed even by those of the twentieth century.

In literature it was the age of Shakespeare and of Dante.

These were followed by John Milton and a host of others. Coexistent and contemporaneous with this enlarged program there was of necessity a great religious awakening. Men were no longer satisfied to accept what the powers that had swayed the scepter over them expressed. A new day had dawned and a new era had begun.

Previous to this time the political powers alone had rebelled against Catholic authority, but now there is a religious element joining in with the political to defy the domination of the hierarchy. The laity were beginning to get together and to determine whether or not they should longer bow to their sovereign, the pope.

There was between the years 1520 and 1670 the greatest revolt against Catholicism that has ever characterized any other fifty years in all the world. During these years this revolt had evidenced itself so much that by the year 1570 Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, England, Scotland and Holland had been lost to the papacy.

In France, in Spain and even in Italy, there was open rebellion and bold defiance of the wonderful power claimed by the pope.

You ask what the cause of all this rebellion, and of this great stir that shook the religious world as few things had ever done. Let me try to gather from the pages of history a summary of these causes. I submit to you, first, the abuse within the Catholic church itself. Almost any school history abounds in the recitation of the ungodliness and the wicked practices that characterized Catholicism during those years. What is known as simony, a word which means the sale of church offices, was practiced openly and above-board. Those who had the power of appointment sold the office, and therefore gathered unto themselves all immense amount of money out of what was considered a sacred transition and conferring of power. Men won't always stand for those things, either in religion or in politics.

A second criticism or abuse was what is called nepotism. This means that all favors, splendid positions, and places

of prominence were given to kinsmen and relatives. From such we are not wholly freed even now.

A general cause for all of this disturbance might be summed up in these words. There was all attack made against the popes and the bishops on the ground of immorality. These charges were preferred by men of high rank and of influential bearing, and their charges and criticisms began to prove effective. Restlessness characterized the powers who were guilty of these charges.

Then there is a third thing responsible for this wonderful transition of thought. These lay members, rising to the height of their rights, and asserting their independence, began to entertain and to practice things different from the pope's doctrine, and without his authority.

As a result, a number of leaders arose to direct the minds of the people, to march out in front, and feel assured that numbers, under such conditions, would follow in their path.

Chief among these was none other than Martin Luther, who lived from 1483 to 1546. His parents were peasants, who worked in the mines. They were devout Catholics.

Martin, like many a worthy boy, resolved to secure all education in spite of the poverty round about him. It is said that he went along the streets, sang in front of the homes of numbers, then extended his hand for some kind of a donation. By this, and the practicing of the strictest economy, he was enabled to go to school. He began the study of law, which was his father's ambition for him, but, at one time, when he thought he was nearing death's door, he stopped and promised God that if his life were spared, he would dedicate the remnant of his days to the preaching of what he conceived to be the gospel of His Son.

That incident changed his entire career. HE made progress in school to such all extent that he attracted the attention of the very elite of the land. He graduated from the University of Erfurt, and later became a teacher in the theological department of the University of Wittenberg.

In the year 1513 the Catholics wanted to raise all immense sum of money to repair old St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, and when they "got up against it," true to their his-

tory, they put on a big sale of indulgences. Martin Luther could no longer be quiet. He rose up and declared such a practice to be rotten, corrupt and unworthy of the endorsement of decent men.

He wrote out ninety-five objections to the Catholic church, and with a courage that you can but admire, walked out in front of all old church building, and nailed up those propositions, and asked any Catholic on earth to meet him in a discussion of the same.

That brought forth the bitter denunciation in what is called a papal bull. Martin Luther defied the pope by burning his decree before the gate of Wittenberg, and expressed in sentiment what I quoted as having been said by Col. Roosevelt.

As a result of this act on his part, Luther was ex-communicated from the Catholic church in 1521, and that date marks the beginning of the first denomination born on the earth. Back of 1521, there was not one of the modern denominations with which you are familiar. We cannot find one particle of history either in the Bible or out of the Bible, or anywhere else, concerning any of them.

My friends, according to the Rt. Rev. Mons. Patrick F. O'Hara, LL.D., Martin Luther was almost anything other than a saint. I have read Luther's life story, and if the record of it be true, there were wanting in him many of the elements that adorn the Christian character. But, since Christ stood before Pilate, since Peter stood before the Jewish Sanhedrin, since Paul stood before Agrippa, the grandest moral spectacle which this old earth has ever witnessed was Martin Luther before the Diet of Worms.

And because of that very fact, plus all ability to expose the corruption of the old church, Luther was a leader among men.

The Augsburg Confession of Faith, the Ritual of the Lutheran church, was drafted and adopted in the year 1530.

Back in those days, Catholics, Lutherans and others had quite a bit of trouble in deciding matters pertaining to the Lord's supper. Just why that bothered them as it did I may never know.

The Catholics, as I have stated, taught the doctrines of transubstantiation, that is to say, that, by the word of the pope, the bread and fruit of the vine became the literal body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Martin Luther accepted that until the day of excommunication. He, doubtless, believed it until the day of his death. But because of the fact that he hated the Catholics worse than he did the devil, he coined him a new word. Instead of transubstantiation, he used the term consubstantiation. His philosophy and that of the Catholics are both just about as clear, even to them, as ordinary mud.

I call attention to another fact. Martin Luther is the first man on this earth who taught the doctrine of justification by faith only. Why did he do it? Because of his bitterness and opposition to Catholicism. The Catholics, then and now, lay quite a bit of stress upon works. Luther, in trying to get away from works, swung to the other extreme, and declared that justification was by faith only.

Friends, the Bible uses the expression "faith only" just one time. In James 2: 24, we have this expression, but you will observe it is preceded by the word "not." James says, "Justification is not by faith only." Luther earnestly sought to get some crumb of comfort from the Word of God, and when he ransacked the pages of Holy Writ from first to last, and found no such consolation, let me tell you what he did. He turned to Romans 3, verse 28, and in his translation, added the word "alone" to the Book of God. That verse says this: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Luther's Bible, which he translated, reads this way: "We hold that a man is justified without works of the law by faith *alone*." Those who have made the creeds have followed in Luther's tracks and have incorporated as one of their articles: "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith *only*, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." My friends, maybe it is of comfort to a man who neither knows nor cares what God says. But to people who respect the Bible, who know that such is not in God's Book, no comfort from Luther's addition can come. Christians do not add to the Word

of God, nor seek to be wise above what is written. A solemn warning against such runs throughout the Bible.

It is a dangerous thing to tamper with the Word of God.

I would not say that I am free from prejudice. I think that would be saying too much. Of course, in my own judgment, I try to keep that element away, and to study matters fairly and squarely. I do not believe the Catholic doctrine think it rotten almost from beginning to end. And yet I would not be moved by it to such all extreme view as to go beyond that which is found in the Book of God. Men ought to be prompted by the highest motives, the loftiest incentives, and the noblest purposes. We ought to be mindful of the fact that we have no abiding city here. We ought to be conscious of the idea that death and decay and passing away are written upon the wings of Time, and all timely things. We ought to be reminded that with the passing of the years our form becomes frailer, our hair becomes frosted, our cheeks become furrowed. We ought to desire to reach heaven when we die, to be transported home to glory at last. I must be careful, honest and sincere. My preconceived ideas, my prejudices, must not stand in the way of the truth of God.

Let us examine, therefore, our hearts, and know whether or not the very foundation upon which we stand, every plank of it, is in the Book of God. If it is, and from God's Book we are enabled to read our titles clear, let us press on to joys eternal, and to bliss Divine. But if not, we had better stop and make investigation. We had better pause long enough to examine that on which our hopes for eternity rest. Let not bias, prejudice or partisan spirit, or a matter of tradition, rob us of the prospects of that blissful home across which the shadows never come.

You ask, friends, what is the summary of the entire life and contribution of Martin Luther. I would put it in these words, namely: Martin Luther gave to the world all open Bible. It was through his influence and matchless courage that this Book was cut loose from the pulpit, and given to the pew. He but re-echoed that which had been pro-

pounced by old John Wickliffe, John Huss, and others who had died at the hands of the powers that then prevailed. I owe much to Martin Luther. I am grateful to him. He had a part in clearing away the rubbish, in denouncing the false, and in preparing for the dawning of a golden light, the rays of which, I think, have come in my path.

But with all the things that I might say complimentary, Martin Luther did not die for me. I was not baptized in his name, and no spiritual blessing direct can he bestow. Therefore, I do not propose to wear his name, or to attach myself unto all institution founded by him.

There are, according to our federal report, twenty-one different kinds of Lutherans on the earth tonight, and I do not have to apologize to the Lutherans by saying that the Bible is a stranger to every one of that number. Not one shoot, phase, wing or branch was ever thought of, dreamed of, or hinted at, by holy men that penned this Book. I can find out something of Lutheranism in history, magazines and religious papers, but not one thing can I learn about such in all the Word of God. When you want to study Lutheranism you have no more use for the Bible than you have for all almanac.

Maybe you think this is a hard saying. Question: is it the truth? If so, it ought to be said. If not, you ought to expose me.

Contemporaneous with Martin Luther was the great Swiss reformer, Ulrich Zwingli, a man equally learned, and perhaps equally courageous. He, likewise, opposed the sale of indulgences as offered by the church, of which he was a member, and expressed that opposition by writing out sixty and seven declarations against it. Zwingli became the leader of the Swiss reformation, and outlined some ideas much more in harmony with the Book of God than those of his contemporaries. Unfortunately for the cause of independence in religious thought, Zwingli was killed in the year 1530, when the Protestants and the Catholics were engaged in carnal warfare. Each one was striving for supremacy, and was ready to die rather than yield.

Zwingli's head was as clear as a bell regarding the Lord's supper. He said that the elements are simply symbolic of the real body and of the real blood of Christ.

I pass next to a third outstanding character who towered above his fellows. John Calvin, of France, born in the year 1509, educated far above the great masses of his people, early in life began to have convictions regarding things religious, and his sentiments drove him to side with the Protestant movement. Because of that very sympathy and disposition, he was driven out of France.

He found refuge in the city of Basil, Switzerland, and there began to write his very learned and popular Institutes. His object in this production, which is a classic in ecclesiastical matters, was two-fold. First, he wanted to influence the King in behalf of the reformation movement; and, second, it afforded him a fine opportunity to set forth his doctrine contrary to the Catholic church.

You ask, what the result? He became the founder of the Presbyterian church in the year 1535.

Now just as surely as history can be respected, and as writers have been authentic in their accounts, just that surely a Presbyterian church was then born upon this earth. Was that the Church of Christ? Of course not. Well, why? The Church of Christ was founded by the Lord in the city of Jerusalem in the year 33. Presbyterianism was founded by John Calvin, in the country of Switzerland, in the year 1535. That man does not live who can reduce them both to the same thing.

John Calvin is the author of the five main doctrines that have ever characterized the Presbyterian body. Here they are: first, election, predestination. Second, a limited atonement. Calvin seemed not to believe Paul when he said (Heb. 2: 9), "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

The third point is the doctrine of total depravity. Calvinism teaches that a soul is born into this world as black as midnight darkness. Here lies the foundation upon which

rests the idea of a direct operation of God's spirit. It was this thought that suggested the practice of baptizing babies. Rob the world of the idea of depravity, and there would never have been any kind of a reason for the preacher's laying his dirty ecclesiastical hands upon a spotless babe.

But be it said that this doctrine, of Roman origin, is rapidly passing, and some of the creeds have been forced to change their long time practices and articles of faith.

The fourth point or tenet of Calvinism is this: the effectual calling of the Holy Spirit. By that here is what they mean. If that man there chanced to be one of the elect, in God's own good time, he will work upon him, and it will be impossible for him to resist it. He may sit on the stool of do-nothing, and keep on doing less, but if God sees fit to call him, he must respond.

And the fifth point of Calvinism is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, the impossibility of apostasy. There is scarcely a denomination on earth but that has one or more of these unscriptural points prominent in its creed.

But here is one good thing that I want to say about Calvin. I appreciate his attitude toward the Bible. He and Luther held exactly opposite views regarding the rights and privileges of worship.

Luther said, "My conception of the church and of the worship of God is this: we are allowed to practice anything unless the Bible specifically forbids it." Luther's question was: Where does God say, "Thou shalt not?" If a thing was not directly and positively prohibited, Luther felt justified in doing it. John Calvin said, "Let us practice nothing unless the Bible specifically authorizes it." His question was: "Where does God demand it?" There is more Calvinism about me in that statement than in anything I ever read from him or about him.

The difference tonight between the Church of Christ and many others in this land cannot be better summed up than by the repetition of these words.

The attitude that I propose to assume toward the Bible is this: I want to preach nothing, practice nothing, be nothing, do nothing, unless the Bible specifically and di-

rectly authorizes it. Some of my good friends have the Lutheran approach to the Word of God. They say, "I propose to practice whatever I please, whatever suits my fancy, provided God does not directly and specifically say, "Thou shalt not." The questions, therefore, of these two are opposite; that is, one asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?" The other one says, "Lord, what hast thou said that I must not do?" One is a positive attitude; the other is negative. One respects the authority of God; the other takes advantage of his silence.

The spirit of Calvinism evidenced itself in France, Germany, England, Holland and Scotland. Strange as it may appear, Calvinism has assumed different names, and unless you become a diligent student, you may think some churches are different in their fundamentals. On the great European continent Calvinism was called the "Church of the Reformed Faith"; in France, Calvinism bore the name of "Huguenots"; in Scotland the very same body was styled "Presbyterian"; in England, they bore the name of "Puritans"; and in Holland the "Dutch Reformed Church." So then, when you speak about the Reformed Faith, when you talk about the Huguenots, and the Dutch Reformed, and the Presbyterians and Puritans, you are talking about bodies practically the same in origin, doctrine, and practice.

More than any other man who had lived since the apostles, Calvin emphasized the sovereignty of God. He magnified Jehovah, and ascribed unto him all power. He made man to recognize his utter dependence, his impotency, and his inability, and therefore stressed the dignity and the supremacy and the sovereignty of God Almighty.

There are ten different branches of Presbyterians mentioned in the religious report of our federal census at Washington. When I say to you that each of these ten branches is a total stranger to the Bible, I but tell you that which you already know.

Friends, are you willing to spend your time, your talent, your money, your influence, your all, in propagating and promulgating a doctrine and all institution regarding which the Bible is as silent as the grave? What will you

have to say in that great and awful day? Why turn from that which is plainly put upon the pages of God's Book, and lend yourself, lend your very best efforts to the fostering and to the building up of that which is purely of human origin ? It is because of these facts recorded upon the pages of history, that I do not hesitate to invite you to that church bought by the blood of Christ, and about which you can read in your own Bibles.

To you the gospel invitation is again extended. I respect your intelligence and your person, to the extent that I will not ask you to believe one thing, to do one thing, or to practice one thing, not directly found in the Book of God. If that is not safe, sound and sensible, then we have got the wrong book.

I do not want you to come and be Lutherans, or Presbyterians, and, of course, not Catholics. I want you to come and be simply a Christian—a Christian simply. I want you to be born again—born of water and of the Spirit—into the family of God, into that institution heavenborn in its origin. If such be the sentiment of any of you, the invitation is to you gladly tendered, while once again we join in singing the song.

**THE REFORMATION, NO. 2**

This is a magnificent audience assembled, and your very presence indicates the interest you have in those things thus far discussed. I called attention in ~ sermon preceding this, to the great Reformation of the sixteenth century. The fundamental cause of this was, doubtless, the Renaissance—that period of transition in Europe from the mediaeval to the modern world. Evidences of this are found in Italy even in the fourteenth century. The zenith, however, was not reached until two hundred years later.

Students of science, philosophy, and religion began to find out about the cause of things. The Bible, kept from the people for so long a time, was earnestly investigated. Superstition and darkness passed away and all things were viewed in a new light. Two great fundamental principles were enunciated. First, the right of private judgment. Every man could read and interpret the sacred volume for himself and according to his understanding. The second principle was that when the Bible was studied, union among Christians was possible. In the great Reformation, Martin Luther led the way in open defiance of the papacy, but instead of turning back to original principles, he sought simply a reformation of the things that then existed. As a result, he was ax-communicated, and soon after started the first of our modern denominations which have cursed the land from that day till this.

John Calvin followed Luther in opposition to Catholicism, and founded the Presbyterian church in 1535. Under various names his doctrine spread rapidly all over western Europe. The influence of Luther and Calvin, the charge of immorality against the clergy, the political feeling against the pope~ll tended to rob him of his power and lessen his prominence everywhere.

I next call attention to Henry VIII, king of England from 1509 to 1547. He was a devout Catholic, and made such all able reply to Luther's attacks that he was, by the pope,

called the "Defender of the Faith." His fame spread abroad throughout the regions of Catholicism, and he was the most favored emperor under the authority of the pope.

He had a lot of trouble with his wives, and the story regarding these relations is disgusting in its nature. He first married Catharine of Aragon, Spain, his brother Arthur's wife. He lived with her eighteen years, and by her became the father of six children, of whom all had died except Mary. Under the camouflage and excuse that she could not possibly become the mother of a male child who might inherit the throne, he one day told Catharine that their marriage was illegal and they were living in sin. He asked that it be revoked, but, of course, you would hardly expect his wife to agree with such a statement. Old Henry thought that all he had to do was just issue the decree, and his desires would come to pass.

Now the real cause of such all idea's having entered his head was not his wonderful interest in his wife's becoming the mother of a boy baby, but there was a young girl of nineteen summers in waiting at the court by the name of Anne Boleyn and with her he had become enamored, and he sought, therefore, under the excuse aforesaid, to get rid of his legal wife.

Now, it was a fact that he was married to Catharine by a special order of Pope Julius II, and he had all idea that the then reigning pope, Clement VII, would readily issue a decree by which his marriage to her would be annulled.

But there were two difficulties that presented themselves. First, it would have put Clement VII in the attitude of reversing a decree that the former pope had made. This is against the theory of Catholicism, even if their practice has varied time and again.

But there was another reason. Charles V was emperor of Spain at that time, and he was a nephew of Henry's wife. Of course, he sided with his aunt, and, therefore, matters were complicated, with the result that Clement delayed and deferred a rendition of his decision.

But you know (by observation, of course) that love will find a way. When Henry could no longer exercise pa-

tience to wait for a decree of the pope, he finally took religious matters in his own hand, appointed Thomas Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury, and then made him write out a bill of divorcement. This being done, the pope was forced to render a decision. This was against Henry who was, therefore, ax-communicated on the charge of adultery.

He resolved to break with the Roman church. The time was propitious for such all act. He immediately set out to have Parliament pass some laws according to his own fancy. I presume you know what was done. The first bill that went through Parliament along this line was to the effect that Henry VIII was made the only head on earth of the Church of England.

The second law stated that there is all absolute separation on the part of the Anglican church from the papacy in any form. The third was that any man was guilty of treason who denied the rights of Henry VIII as head of the church. By the passage of this and other acts, the Church of England or the Episcopal church, was born in 1535.

I sometimes meet with my Episcopal friends, and have them say that it is rather unkind for me to declare that the Episcopal church started under conditions like these. But, my friends, you have got to change every history on earth if you destroy the correctness of that idea. Even after the Church of England was established, it was, in sentiment, as much Catholic as ever before. Henry began what is styled the High Church in Episcopal circles, and that is but a step from Catholicism itself, as a further study will show.

The Book of Common Prayer was adopted in 1552. The first revision of it was ten years later, and then there came a second revision 100 years later, namely, in 1662. This little booklet contains 39 articles of faith, and it has been the guide of Episcopalians on down the line.

There has recently been quite a bit of agitation regarding a revision of the creed, and that agitation has stirred up the Episcopal Church of England, and has not been unheard of in the realms of the same on this side of the Atlantic.

During the latter part of last year, 1927, that bill introduced in Parliament to revise the Prayer Book made splendid progress, and came almost finding its way through the last ordeal. If you want to know exactly the route that was taken, it was after this fashion: That bill had gone before two houses of the convocation, back then to the bishops, then to the church assembly, and from that to the ecclesiastical committee of Parliament, and likewise through the House of Lords.

It got by all of those and there was just one more body for it to pass. When it came to the House of Commons it failed. Leading champions were on either side; the controversy waxed bitter; and a great threat was made that the Episcopal Church might be rent from top to bottom.

Let me say to you, friends, I have no disposition on earth to misrepresent matters of historic nature. Such misrepresentations would reflect upon me and lessen confidence in my statements.

The English church, the Episcopal Church, is purely a state church. It is governed by politics, and is as much a creature of the general assembly or Parliament as any other law ever passed in England.

No power on earth had the right, in the first place, to get up a ritual, or a prayer book, except the British Parliament, and there lives not one today who has the right to change one letter, even the crossing of a "t" or the dotting of all "I" except the Parliament which sits on the bank of the classic Thames.

Friends, the British Parliament is made up of different sorts of folks. Some of the members are, of course, members of the Church of England, some are Catholics, some are Jews, and some are Muhammadans. I want you to think of that religious conglomeration. Before any act affecting the Prayer Book can pass, not only the Jew, but likewise the Mohammedan, has got to vote upon it. Can you see this? It might come to pass that the balance of power in that British Parliament rests with the Jews, and it might be theirs to cast the deciding vote. Hence, it is possible for a Jew to

fix upon the Episcopal Church the doctrine, policy and practice for lo, many years to come.

But that is not all.

It might, perchance, come to this, that the Mohammedan members would exercise the controlling vote. Now, notwithstanding the fact that they reject Christ as the chief prophet, and substitute the Koran for the Bible, it could be that they might determine the doctrine and practice of the Episcopal church.

The whole matter of revision leaves God out of it; Christ has no voice; the apostles' tongues are still; and the Holy Spirit is all unknown character.

There never was a greater human ritual fastened upon a body of people than is the Episcopal Prayer Book—a product of the British Parliament. We should not be surprised at their troubles in England.

Even in America that same trouble threatens the Episcopacy of this land. I have here this week's *Literary Digest*, in which there are two pages on the very point I have mentioned, threatening the disruption of the Episcopalian church in America.

It is their custom to meet in general council every three years. In 1925 the general conference of the Episcopal church in America met in the City of New Orleans, and a majority voted to revise the prayer book. But before that vote can be made legal, and the verdict be fastened, it must be ratified by the next conference, which will meet next October in the city of Washington.

There are in the United States 72 dioceses of the Episcopal Church. Already 45 of these dioceses have circulated a petition among the membership and they are coming to Washington with their very best efforts to prevent the passage of that resolution of three years ago.

Episcopalianism, in this country, is divided into two classes. There is what is known as the Low Church. It is quite liberal in its views and recognizes almost all Protestants as branches of the true church.

And then there is what is called the High Church, or the Anglican Church. It is practically a Catholic church in

its essential features. The strange thing about these two branches is that, notwithstanding they are so different, they are under one bishop and one control. Let me tell you about it.

Up here at Monteagle there is a Low Episcopal church. At Sewanee another Low church, and at Tracy City still another. But right in the midst of them, not over five or six miles away, at St. Andrews, there is a High Episcopal church. The St. Andrews church practices auricular confession; it holds its mass as do the Catholics; it practices celibacy; and right in this week's *Digest* there is a picture of the "Father" up here at St. Andrews, Tenn., bearing the order of the Holy Cross, and in that reliquary he has one of the hairs from the head of old Charles I, a relic he is worshipping.

Perhaps some may say I ought not to talk about those folks. But they are talking about themselves. Here is the *Literary Digest* that goes to millions, and in this week's copy, the story is told. Buy one of them and see the picture of that hair from the beard of old Charles I. The Bishop of Tennessee exercises authority over Sewanee, Monteagle, Tracy- City, and likewise At. Andrews, but, it seems, no condemnation of such acts has been pronounced.

If I were the bishop and thought the At. Andrews church wrong, I would be certain to speak out against it.

But I don't think any less of Episcopalians than I do of any other religious order unknown to the Book of God. There is but one difference between the High Episcopal church and the rankest Catholic church in Tennessee or America. What is it ? It is simply this: the Catholic church believes that the pope exercises supreme power; the High Episcopal church says, and I think correctly, "Our bishop has got as much power as your pope." You eliminate that difference, and the two could easily blend.

I say these things because I think they are true. These bodies are posing as religious organizations, when, as a matter of fact, they are purely political and governmental products, subject to powers civil rather than religious.

In the year 1608, the first Baptist church on earth was born in Holland, and in 1611 another sprang up in England. In 1639, Roger Williams planted another at Providence, R. I.

I know, as well as you, that our Baptist friends have tried to establish a line of succession from the present back to the days of John the Baptist. Some have imagined they could make the chain rattle all the way, but, as a matter of fact, they never did hear it. But be it said to their credit that the most learned and intelligent, the most scholarly of the Baptist preachers no longer try to prove the unprovable idea of Baptist church succession. Long since the higher type has given up such hopes. Whenever you hear of any man's making these claims, you may assume that he is a partisan of the deepest dye, and hates to give up that which must be done in the light of intelligence and historic references.

There never was but one Baptist recognized by God on earth, and he said plainly that he was going to quit. In John 3: 30, the Baptist said, "I must decrease." A record of any other Baptists must be found in some other book than the Bible.

Baptist doctrine is made up of Calvinistic theology plus congregational government. There is not a single distinctive doctrine taught by the Baptists necessary to salvation, they themselves being judges. As a religious organization they are wholly unknown to God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Baptist preachers know that just as well as I do. The only difference is that I will say it and they won't. Everybody knows those things. Why should I be forbidden to tell this great audience, of possibly six thousand, matters of this kind ?

Now the next in chronological order is the great Methodist church. I speak of it candidly but with feelings of absolute respect. Some of my people lived and died Methodists, as well as Baptists and Presbyterians. I have nothing unkind to say regarding any individual, but I am talking about the doctrine, or rather, the church as a whole.

Methodism is a by-product of Episcopalianism. It is a step which was first taken, not to establish something new, but to overcome the coldness and ritualism that prevailed in the Episcopal church.

Methodism centers around John Wesley. As all ordained deacon in the Episcopal church, he looked over the field in 1725 and saw the coldness, formality and emptiness in the services and undertook to bring about a reformation of conditions. He thought the church needed some warmth and spirituality injected into its cold and almost lifeless, frozen form. So, together with three other young men, namely, Charles Wesley, Robert Kirkham and William Morgan, he met, and they began to think over it and meditate upon it, with the result that others joined them and their meetings continued.

Their purpose was not, I repeat, to start a new organization, but because Episcopalians refused to be reformed, such was the result.

The history, therefore, of Methodism traces back to the year 1729. At that time, Wesley was all unconverted man. He declared that he did not receive forgiveness of sins until 1738—nine years after Methodism was born on the earth.

Maybe some of you people would like to know where you can find these statements. Bishop McTyeire, of the Methodist church, has written a history of Methodism. You can secure it from the Methodist Publishing Co., here on Broad street. On page 125 he reports what I have said regarding John Wesley's unconverted condition at the time Methodism was founded.

It wasn't determined as to what kind or character of church the Methodists should be until the year 1784. At that time it had developed and grown to be so much like its mother, that it was decided to let it bear her name. Hence, it is the Methodist Episcopal church.

Again, the Methodist discipline is but all abridgment of the Episcopalian prayer book. While the latter has 39 articles of faith, the Methodist discipline has 20 and 5. That discipline is revised every four years' and it is doubtful if

any two issues are exactly alike. They not only change the rules and polity, but sometimes the doctrine itself.

Until 1910, the Methodist discipline taught that all men were not only conceived, but that they were born, in sin. Let me recite to you some things with which you are perfectly familiar.

When a good mother brings her baby up to be baptized by the Methodist preacher, he turns to his little book—not the Bible, for he has no use for it at all—but he turns to his discipline and begins to read: "Dearly beloved, for as much as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ hath said, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God: I beseech you to call upon God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of His bounteous goodness He will grant to this child, now to be baptized with water, that which by nature he cannot have; that he may be baptized with the Holy Ghost, received into Christ's holy church and be made a lively member of the same."

Then the preacher says, "Let us pray," and he reads this prayer from that discipline: "O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in this child may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in him," etc. He then asks the mother to "name this child." She calls him "Goliath" and the preacher either sprinkles or pours water upon it (or, if desired, immerses it in water).

That was Methodism until 1910. In that good year, at their regular conference, they changed their doctrine on the question of depravity and original sin. When they now go to sprinkle a baby, the preacher reads as follows from his changed discipline: "Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men, though fallen in Adam, are born into this world in Christ the Redeemer, heirs of life eternal, and subjects of the saving grace of the Holy Spirit; and that our Saviour Christ saith, 'Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God,' I beseech you to call upon God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of His bounteous goodness He will so grant unto this child, now to be baptized, the continual replenishing

of His grace, that he may ever remain in the fellowship of God's holy church, by faith that is in Jesus Christ." You will observe that all babies born before 1910, were not only born but even conceived in sin and to their case John 3: 5 applied, but all born since 1910 are born into this world in Christ, the Redeemer, and heirs of eternal life. To them Matt. 19: 14 applies.

What was the former passage quoted? John 3: 5, which says, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." If that does not refer to baptism I would like to ask the Methodist preachers, why did you put it in your creed and make it the only scripture upon which you relied for 150 years? In John 8: 5, the term water is found, but to a Methodist now, that passage is bone-dry. In Matt. 19:14, the word water does not occur, and yet a Methodist preacher can find enough to sprinkle all the babies on earth.

But again, the Methodist church never decided that it would have presiding elders until the year 1792.

Regarding the Lord's Supper, Wesley wrote: "I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them by baptizing and administering the Lord's supper. . . . I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord's Day."

There are but two consistent ideas about that, viz: Either partake of it on the first day of the week, or, like the Catholics, keep it forever ready. There is absolutely no authority for the observance of the supper every month, or three months, six months, or at any other period than the first day of the week.

Friends, the presiding elders of the Methodist church scarcely miss a Sunday during the year but that they eat of the Lord's supper. Why not insist that Methodists do likewise ?

Consistency is claiming their attention along this line.

But that is not all regarding matters of this sort. There are, in this land of ours, seventeen different kinds of Bap-

tists, likewise, seventeen different sorts of Methodists, but you know, and they know, and will admit it when directly pressed, that each of them is a total stranger to God's Book. The Bible knows nothing about Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Baptists or Methodists. Do I become your enemy because I so speak?

I tell you no secret whatsoever when I say to you, friends, that in this Bible no such organizations are mentioned. No such bodies are even one time referred to. It is not possible for it to be possible for the world to get together upon anything of a nature like these organizations or bodies, the history of which I have recited in your midst.

Therefore, I think the call comes ringing o'er the restless waves, and across the regions of our land, for us to halt, to examine our platforms, and take our bearings according to His word. Our divided state is indeed lamentable. Men exalt their creeds, discipline and confessions of faith—all of which were written by uninspired men. We need to lift up the Word of God, and raise aloft the gospel of Christ as distinguished from the doctrines of men.

The creeds of earth may be written by intelligent, honest and upright men, but they are human products. We have given unto us that which is a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path. All scripture is given by inspiration to the intent that the man of God may be perfect, in that he is thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

I want no doctrine other than that which I can read in the Bible. I need no reproof other than that the Holy Spirit has given. I need no correction other than that penned by inspiration. I need no instruction in righteousness, but that found in the Word of God, which thoroughly equips and perfectly furnishes unto every good work. Upon the Word of God as our only creed, we ought to form a solid phalanx against the onrushing tide of infidelity.

I believe that God expects and demands of us to blend our forces, combine our efforts, and centralize our powers against the dangers that are threatening the youth of our land, and are seeking to undermine the very founda-

tion of our hallowed hopes, and our holiest desires, both for time and for eternity.

Let me say that the opposition is not on top of the Church of God, seeking to tear down its loftiest spires; nor is it on the sides, trying to tear down the walls; but, with pick and with shovel in hand, it is digging away at the very foundation. That foundation is the sublime truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. That truth is denied and ridiculed in schools and institutions built and maintained by taxes that come from the pockets of professed Christian men. And while we pay the price and furnish the children, the enemy is pouring into their young heads and hearts the damnable doctrine that will tear down that institution for which Christ died. The skeptic would destroy the hopes of those of us who live here, and blight our prospects of wearing a glittering crown in that land of cloudless day.

Because of my faith in God's Book, I am here in your midst. The congregations supporting this meeting believe in that institution which rests upon the great truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We desire to teach only that which is found in the Book of God. I think I can pledge you 100 per cent of our number to forsake any doctrine or practice not so found. If you will suggest one thing in His Word which I do not preach, or try to practice, I want to incorporate that, not next week, not tomorrow, but I would be glad to do it yesterday, if such a thought were possible.

I want to be able to put my hand upon the very chapter and the very verse on which my hopes for eternity rest. I am, therefore, asking of you to accept no leader but Christ; subscribe to no discipline, prayer book or confession of faith but God's Word; be nothing except just a Christian; do nothing other than that which you know that God specifically demands; practice only those things authorized by the God of heaven; and then, with your hand in the wounded palm of His, sing the song, "Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads, I will follow all the way."

If you and I will so do, we can, at last, lean upon His everlasting arms, and know that He will initiate us into the

grandeurs and glories of that blissful home  
across which the shadows have never yet been  
cast.

I wonder, tonight, if there are not others  
who will gladly accept the invitation while we  
hymn his praises.

## THE RESTORATION

We come, friends and brethren, to the closing service of this week. I want to acknowledge my appreciation of your presence and faithfulness throughout the services thus far. I rejoice that such a large number of you has followed, with apparent interest, that which has been said, though, perhaps, many have not believed all I have stated. With you, personally, I have no fault to find.

It is necessary to understand the background of any movement. To illustrate, no one can appreciate the apostasy and the falling away of the primitive church unless first he has a conception of what it was. He would be utterly unable to gauge, as he should, the value of the great Reformation, unless he had a concrete idea of the ecclesiastical order that preceded it.

Just so, unless we had studied the period of the Reformation and the history as a background, I think it would be impossible for us to appreciate another great movement that followed about three hundred years later, known as the Restoration movement. Each one of these, therefore, is connected with the other, and serves as a background which makes each stand out in its own light all the clearer, and the more appreciatively by those who really want to learn the facts concerning it.

With the emergence of the world from the dark ages, those rays of light that were flashed across the Reformers' path of the sixteenth century have lent wonderful illumination to all succeeding ages.

I really feel tonight that I will never be able to express, or to pay the debt of gratitude that I owe to such men as Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesley and a host of others. I am glad they have lived. But for their breaking away from the hierarchy that held the world in subjection, we might still be in religious bondage, afraid

to express our independence, or to worship God as we might wish.

Martin Luther gave to the world all open Bible. He caused it to be unchained from the pulpit, flung it wide to the pew, and bade humanity exercise its own judgment regarding its sublime teachings.

John Calvin, in a most scholarly manner, emphasized the sovereignty, the dignity of Jehovah. Then came John Wesley, and put into the religion of the time, heart-power, spirituality, that warmth and devotion from the lack of which the world was then suffering.

All of these men taught a great many things that were true. And be it remembered that truth is a universal matter, not to be cornered on, nor to be monopolized by any religious set or order. Whatever truth Martin Luther presented I am perfectly willing to accept. The same can be said with reference to all the others.

The thing that I have condemned and sought only to emphasize, is that these men had no right to form all organization or a denomination concerning which the Bible hasn't a word to say: And instead of such organizations proving a blessing, I think a careful study of the historic past, as well as the lamentable condition of the present hour will evidence, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the exact reverse.

I come, ladies and gentlemen, to speak of another movement which had its beginning about the first of the nineteenth century.

Denominationalism had spread rapidly over the countries of Europe, and was well established in various parts of our own land. With the passing of the years, a general state of religious confusion and the retarding of the onward march of the banner of Christ were observed by those who had his cause at heart.

Good men, honest characters, souls devoted to the truth, and anxious to find it, began to make observations. Let us try to analyze some of the conditions that prevailed.

First, there was a divided church. Everybody who will stop to think about it knows that the forces of God's people ought not to be divided. There is not a man in Nash

ville who can successfully defend the present status of religious affairs.

The prayer of Christ, the pleading of the apostles and the admonition of the Holy Spirit were that God's people ought to be one. And yet more than a hundred denominations had brought the world into a state of confusion more and more confounded. Each of these was jealous of the other. Each one was contending against the other, and instead of being a solid phalanx, they were hopelessly divided into detachments prompted by rivalry and denominational jealousy. While they were thus warring, fighting, and trying to devour each other, the devil's forces marched on in a solid body.

But that is not all. History reveals the fact that about one hundred years ago the most arrogant clergy of all the ages led the religious element.

Preachers do not always know as much as they should, and it is a fact that ignorance and arrogance go hand in hand. Instead of the preachers being of the common mass, they sought to make broader the chasm between themselves and the common people. They got up, so to speak, on stilts, and bade ordinary folks look up to them as lords of all. They coveted such titles and distinctions as would galvanize them into prominence and respectability. They were in harmony with what the Saviour said, "the blind were leading the blind."

In those days there was a beclouded theology. The Bible, instead of being a book properly divided, was a perfect jumble, thrown together without harmony, system or order. Men considered that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ was a thing better felt than told, that man was wholly passive in conversion, and that the Holy Spirit, in some mysterious and miraculous manner, performed His wonders upon the hearts of men, who were wholly unable to resist His mighty power.

Physical sounds and noises, signs and experiences, dreams and visions, were taken as evidences of pardon, rather than what the Word of God said.

All of that but tended to retard and to hinder a lucid un-

derstanding of the Bible, and the blending together of religious forces.

Once more, that was all age when human creeds proved the general curse of the world. Let me say to you today, that creeds are comparatively harmless as to what they were a hundred years ago. Regardless of the type and the character of the man, he had to subscribe to the iron-clad rules of the creed, and if the preacher was too long they sawed him off to suit the creed; and if he was too short, they stretched him out to measure up to the full tenets of the declarations written, to which they had pledged allegiance and obedience.

Again, let me say, that the beginning of the nineteenth century was a period of blatant unbelief not far from atheism. The skepticism of Europe had taken firm root in America. Our own civilization was rapidly moving westward, but the church and its influence were not found in these border settlements.

Tom Paine had but recently written his great "Age of Reason," and it spread like wildfire o'er the face of the earth. Tom Paine was held up as all ideal, and in the great universities like Yale and various others, there were numbers of Paine societies, holding aloft the blackest banner, under which the youth of the land, in their educational period, was marching on to destruction, death and hell at last. The divided state of the world religiously was unable to meet the situation, and therefore something had to be done.

History tells us that even in the Old World they were not unmindful of these conditions, and certain men put forth every effort of their being to call ~ halt in the divided state of Christendom.

The Haldane brothers, of the country of Scotland, devoted a long period of their lives in all earnest, honest effort to cut loose from human affairs, human denominations, and return to the apostolic order, and to the restoration of the New Testament principles.

Thomas Campbell, long before he ever came to America, as a member of the Seceder Church of Scotland, labored

studiously and earnestly to bring about a oneness among the four branches of the Presbyterian Church then accepting the Westminster Confession of Faith.

While those efforts did not produce concrete results, they, doubtless, planted the seed which had effect, not only in the Old World, but also in our own fair land.

In the New World, long before the days of the Campbells, or even that of Barton W. Stone, the idea of oneness and the leaven of unity had already begun to work, and be it said tonight, that in the ranks of the Methodist Church the first outspoken word was presented.

The form of government adopted by the Methodist Church had brought division among them. Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury believed in the prelate system and demanded all episcopal form of government. James O'Kelly, a very prominent Methodist preacher of the time, rebelled and insisted that Methodism be launched on the principle of congregational government. When they could no longer walk together, on Christmas day, 1793, over here at Manakin Town, N. C., a secession took place. At first those led by O'Kelly called themselves "Republican Methodists," but later they threw away the name Methodist altogether, accepted the name "Christian," and declared that nothing but the Bible would be their rule of faith and practice.

You may think that Alexander Campbell was the first man who ever made such a demand, but you are wonderfully mistaken. All of this occurred eighteen years before Campbell ever saw America.

Now, you ask, what became of the O'Kelly movement? Because the time was not quite ready, and due to the fact that Mr. O'Kelly did not have within him sufficient ability as a leader, he was unable to gain headway, and the cause that he espoused was temporarily buried under the onrush of episcopacy.

The next movement along this same line was within the ranks of the Baptist Church, up in the state of Vermont, in the year 1800, when a very prominent Baptist preacher, Dr. Abner Jones, founded some churches at Lyndon, VT., Bradford and Pierpont, N. H., which threw away the

name "Baptist," and assumed the name "Christian." They repudiated the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, and declared the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the only standard by which to be governed.

Do you call that Campbellism?

That was in the year 1800. Alexander Campbell never came to America until nine years after.

Was James O'Kelly a Campbellite when he discarded the name Methodist, threw away the Methodist discipline, and announced the Bible as his only rule of faith and practice?

He had never heard of such a man as Alexander Campbell, who was then but a boy back in the schoolroom in Ireland.

Friends, these are efforts that preceded the coming of that matchless leader who was able to carry such a principle against the contending forces, and make it felt over all the world.

But that is not all. In the year 1801, Barton W. Stone, born at Port Tobacco, Md., had come to the state of Kentucky as a young Presbyterian preacher. He was educated in a Methodist theological school, and later held the chair of literature for quite a while. He was one of the most highly educated young men of his day.

In the summer of 1801, the greatest meeting of all history was held at Cane Ridge, Ky. It is said that more than 20,000 people camped on the grounds and remained until the food supply of the community failed. Mr. Stone was doing the preaching and was assisted by a number of colaborers, viz., Richard McNemar, John Thompson, John Dunlavy, David Purviance, and Robert Marshall. Their preaching was in direct opposition to the "Confession of Faith." They taught a universal salvation and that every one, without the aid of the miraculous influence of the Spirit, could be saved. Such preaching brought down upon them the wrath and condemnation of every one loyal to the creed. These men were tried for heresy, and would have been excommunicated had they not, themselves, withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the church.

When such news reached the synod, a committee was sent to wait upon these brethren and to reclaim them. Matthew Houston was one of that committee, and, after hearing their story, he was converted to the righteousness of their cause. By the year 1804, these were wholly out of the Presbyterian Church and had accepted the Bible alone as their only rule of faith and practice, with no family name except "Christian."

Old Cane Ridge meeting house, near Paris, Ky., stands unto this day as a monument to the cause of Christian unity, the discarding of human names, and the relegating of human creeds to the background.

In the year 1807, Thomas Campbell came to this country. He was a Presbyterian preacher, whose influence in Scotland had been exceedingly great, and whose personality, piety, learning and devotion won for him the admiration of those who came in contact with him.

Just as he reached the shores of America the Presbyterian synod happened to be in session in the city of Philadelphia. He went before that body, and was cordially received, and was given work in Washington County, Pennsylvania. He gladly accepted the mission assigned.

There were scattered Presbyterians all over that section who were as sheep without a shepherd, and who for years had not the privilege of the sacred supper. He set the table of the Lord on the first day of the week, and invited his fellow-Presbyterians of different congregations to join in and to celebrate the feast.

Now, mark this point. It was against Presbyterian custom for members of any congregation to partake of the Supper outside of their individual church. The Baptists of today have never practiced close communion any more strictly than did the Seceders at this particular time. When news of Campbell's practice reached the synod, he was called to account for it and was severely criticized. He argued the question with them, and made a masterly appeal. But it was all in vain, and in order to preserve his self-respect and loyalty to his convictions, but one course was left. He, therefore, said: "Henceforth, I decline all

ministerial connection with, or subjection to, the Associate Synod of North America." This withdrawal did not lessen his labors. He continued to preach in the homes of his friends, where the people heard him gladly. In a special meeting at the home of Abraham Altars, Campbell made a great speech, exalting the Bible as the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. In this speech he uttered those words which have been the slogan of unity from then till now, viz.: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."

On August 17, 1809, another important meeting was held, when it was determined to organize, not a church, but "The Christian Association of Washington." A report of this was embodied in that great "Declaration and Address" which has ever been the most remarkable production of its kind in all the world. In this he emphasizes the fact that the church of the New Testament is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one; that while there are local congregations, there should be no schisms or divisions among them. Furthermore, he said, "There shall be no tests of fellowship or anything practiced among us but that for which there is express authority in the Word of God."

Third, he declared that the New Testament is a perfect constitution, so that whatever is not authorized therein, or taught thereby, is not to be demanded of any man. And, again, nothing is to be accepted or practiced, unless it is as old as the New Testament.

Friends, these are the very sentiments expressed by the Methodist, O'Kelly, and by the Baptist, Dr. Abner Jones.

In the month of September following this declaration, Alexander Campbell came to America with his mother and other members of the family. The father, Thomas, met them, and on their journey from the coast back to western Pennsylvania, the father and son discussed the religious situation of the hour. But young Alexander, while in Scotland, had learned of the work of the Haldanes, and had been convinced that the religious curse of the world was the division that existed. When he read this address, and the declaration of the principles enunciated by his father, it was

found that their sentiments were in perfect accord. From that time, the young man resolved to dedicate the remnant of his days to the promulgation of the principles incorporated in that wonderful document.

By virtue of the superior strength and natural leadership, the relative position of the father and son was soon changed, and hence Alexander Campbell began to rise in the estimation of all men and continued to be able to show forth the soundness of the foundation and the wisdom of those principles that would, if carried into effect, result in the uniting of the people of God in all matters of faith. His theory and practice was: "In faith, unity; in opinion, liberty; and in all things, charity."

But this Christian Association of Washington did not want to become another church. They repudiated the name "Presbyterian," without any disrespect to the name, but on the ground that it is not the God-given name of the Bible. They would not accept the Philadelphia Confession of Faith as their creed, but said they were willing to work with the Presbyterians, rather than form themselves into a different body. They soon found, however, that the blending was not congenial and harmonious, and that there was but one thing for them to do, viz., to meet together as a band of disciples, wearing no other name than that found in the Bible, and subscribing to no other creed than the Word of God. Accordingly, on the fourth day of May, 1811, at old Brush Run, in what is now West Virginia, they assembled, thirty-six in number. Alexander Campbell preached to them and together they observed the Lord's supper.

Question: What kind of a body is that? What do you call them? They claimed to be Disciples, Christians, followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, aloof from any denomination under heaven, without allegiance to any man-made book, ritual or confession of faith known in all the world.

But not a single one of them had as yet been baptized. They had been sprinkled, I grant you, but that is not baptism. So a year sped by, and they were finding their way, guided only by the Word of God. Finally, in the month of

June, 1812, Alexander Campbell decided that nobody ought to be baptized except all adult, a character who could believe God's Word, repent of his sins, and acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord of all. He came to the conclusion from the study of the Bible that baptism was for the remission of sins. He simply read that word for word as recorded by inspiration.

So he set about to find someone to immerse him. He made quite a little journey up the country to the home of Elder Luce, a Baptist preacher. On his way he stopped by his father's home and his sister, Dorothea, told him that, after having read her Bible carefully, she had decided that infant baptism was untaught. Alexander replied that he and his wife had come to the same conclusion and he was then on his way to secure Elder Luce to immerse him.

Thomas Campbell and wife, James Hanen and wife, also decided to be immersed, and thus a great crowd assembled on the banks of Buffalo Creek to witness the unusual. Both Thomas and Alexander made addresses, stating their reasons for taking the step. As they talked about that, the Baptist preacher said, "It is contrary to Baptist doctrine to baptize upon the simple confession made by Peter, but I believe it is the truth." At the risk of being turned put of the Baptist Church, Mr. Luce performed the act in the name of the Lord.

Now, you ask what led them to do that? No church had so taught. No creed had made such a demand. The only influence in the wide, wide world was the teaching of God's Book. It meant to them the giving up of Presbyterianism, a doctrine then as dear to their hearts as it is to any of you tonight. But because of their having studied, and being sufficiently honest to accept God's Word, they walked in the light as it shone around about them.

It wasn't their purpose to continue as a separate organization. That was the very thing that they didn't want to do. Already there were too many denominations and religious bodies. When it was seen that they had accepted immersion as the only act, and adults as the only subjects, the Baptist organization invited them into the Red Stone

Association of Pennsylvania. With the hope that other differences might be adjusted, and that those who claim to be Christians should be united, they accepted the invitation and passed into the above association, where they remained for some time.

While with the Baptists, Mr. Campbell, at their request, met in debate Rev. John Walker in 1820, and Rev. William McCalla in 1822. Both of these were Presbyterians. At the close of the McCalla debate, in a private conference, he said to them: "Brethren I fear that if you knew me better you would esteem and love me less, for let me tell you that I have almost as much against you Baptists as I have against the Presbyterians."

At a meeting of the association at Cross Creek, Va., in 1816, Campbell had preached a sermon which proved to be the entering wedge of separation between him and the Baptists.

That day he took for his text the "Law of Moses" and preached one of the most memorable discourses that has ever been proclaimed this side of inspiration. In that sermon Mr. Campbell taught a proper division of the Word of God. He showed that there were three separate and distinct dispensations, viz.: the patriarchal, Jewish, and the Christian. He made the Bible a sensible, orderly, systematic book, giving to each one his portion in due season.

He also had occasion to suggest that while the law prevailed for 1,600 years, when Christ was suspended on the cross, he took it out of the way, having blotted out the handwriting of the ordinances which was contrary to us and nailed it unto the cross. He then gave us a better covenant, founded upon better promises. He also announced that conversion was sane, sober and sensible, rather than miraculous and mysterious as was generally believed.

When he had finished that address, which lasted, I think, for more than two hours, the great number felt that such was the exact doctrine of the Book, but some of the leading Baptist preachers of the associations took exception and declared it impossible for them to accept all analysis of that kind. So then, when matters were no longer congenial, and

the prospect of unifying their forces had been blotted out, Campbell and others withdrew from the Red Stone Association. Soon after a more liberal Baptist organization, of Ohio, opened wide its doors, and insisted that Mr. Campbell, and those with him, unite with it.

Because of all earnest desire to unify the people of God, and to bring to pass the answer to the prayer of the immaculate Son of Mary, whether wisely or not, they entered into the Mahoning Association. There they remained until about 1830, and then it dawned upon them as clearly as the rays of the noon-day sun that the Bible nowhere authorizes any kind of all association or body other than the church. Finally public announcement was made that they were not moving along Scriptural lines. Campbell preached to the people of the Mahoning Association, and declared that the very association itself was all organization unknown to the Book. The result was that the entire association was led to throw aside the Baptist name, all kinds of creeds, disband as all association, and together march under the banner of Christ Jesus our Lord, members of no organization save the church bought by the blood of Jesus.

Not until 1824 did Mr. Campbell ever meet Mr. Barton W. Stone. During these years, Stone, "Raccoon" John Smith, and various other prominent men had a great following in the State of Kentucky. At this first meeting at Georgetown, Ky., it was found that there was almost perfect agreement between them. Eight years thereafter, they met again in the city of Lexington, Ky., on Christmas Day, and there decided to blend together their efforts. From that day on the followers of Stone and those of Campbell became one. They wore no name but "Christian," subscribed to no creed but the Bible, and emphasized that unity for which Christ had prayed and the apostles pleaded.

I have thus recited to you that which is a matter of history. I think Alexander Campbell was a great man, but I do not think he was any more honest, any more sincere, or that he loved God any better than did any of those others whose history I have already recited. But when I tell you that he had the advantage of them, I but speak that which

you can see, with a moment's consideration. He lived 300 years after Martin Luther, and 100 years this side of John Wesley. He had all that they had taught. He had their experience, and had observed the fruits of their labors. Therefore, he was the better prepared to size up conditions as they were, locate the trouble, and to diagnose the ailment that prevailed among the professed followers of the Lord. Since the days of inspiration, I do not believe the superior of Alexander Campbell has ever lived upon this earth. He was great in almost every sense of such a word. I appreciate him and his labors as I do but very few of whom I have ever read or learned, but I do not wear his name or claim him the head of any church. This is not because I want to reflect upon him, but I believe that there is a name ten thousand times fairer and brighter and grander than was his. Hence, I prefer to wear the name of Christ Jesus our Lord, rather than that of Martin Luther, Calvin, John Wesley, Alexander Campbell, or any other human that ever lived or died.

You ask me tonight, "Hardeman, did Alexander Campbell found a church?" I answer, "No." Campbell disclaimed any such. I know that some histories so state, but in so doing they fail to understand what Campbell had in mind and the purpose of his labors. The one thing he tried to impress was that churches founded by men were unscriptural, and were responsible for a divided state of affairs.

Let me review by saying, it was the purpose and intention of Martin Luther to reform Catholicism, but by experience he found it impossible. It was the object of John Wesley to reform Episcopalianism, and likewise that was a failure. Alexander Campbell, together with the host of his colaborers, never started out to reform anything. Their purpose was to *restore* that which once existed on the earth, and which had been buried underneath the rubbish of ecclesiasticism for hundreds of year.

They endeavored to dig down beneath denominationalism and skepticism, and to plant again that which was inaugurated by the Man of Galilee, and form themselves into all

organization exactly like that which they read about on the memorable Pentecost of long ago.

There were two principles upon which they reasoned that made such a thing possible of accomplishment. First, a crop is produced proportionate to the seed planted, and second, according to the soil. They said, "If we have the same seed on earth now as Peter had on Pentecost, and if we have the same soil as they had back there, it is possible to reproduce a crop exactly like theirs."

Question: Is that good sense? Is that possible?

They verily believed that they had the same seed of the kingdom as was planted by Peter. They also believed that the ground or soil was just the same. Therefore, said they, "If we cut loose from humanism, and from things of a worldly nature, and will put into the hearts of men and women the pure, simple, unadulterated word of God, it will spring up and make nothing on earth but Christians. And if those Christians thus formed, and thus developed, will blend together, they will constitute a church like unto that we read about in the Bible.

Friends, this, in brief, is what the world calls Campbellism. This was the restoration of that thing which was begun twenty centuries ago, from which the early disciples departed and went out after the fancies of men. If you believe these principles and will accept the terms of salvation as outlined by the apostles, the invitation is yours once more. Let Christ be your Leader, His word your guide, the church He bought your abiding place, and the religion He inaugurated your life work. Faithfulness to His commands will guarantee you a home in that paradise beyond.

**UNITY (No. 1)**

My friends and brethren, I am sure that in our hearts there is profound gratitude to God for the wonderful opportunities of this hour. It is encouraging to find this great throng of people assembled. You have come, not for mere pleasure or entertainment, but with a degree of soberness and seriousness characteristic of those who are conscious of the fact that they are rapidly passing to the other shore.

I read to you from John 17: 20-23. This is a part of the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ the night He stood in the very shadow of the cross.

Having lifted His voice in petition to the Father, first for Himself, next, in behalf of the apostles, He then turns and incorporates others. So He says: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gayest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them, as thou hast loved me."

The paramount idea of the great Restoration Movement of which I spoke last night was the oneness and the unity of the people of the Lord. That which troubled great and good men was the divided condition among those who claimed to be followers of the Lord.

It is rather popular now for the world to talk about union. There was never a time in the history of the world when genuine unity was more in demand and more earnestly sought by real godly men than at this present hour.

In the most subtle manner known to humanity the very foundation of the Church of Christ is being attacked by the combined efforts of every school of skepticism known to mortal man. All of our fondest hopes and holiest desires

are threatened by the ever-increasing tide of opposition to things formerly considered sacred, holy and inspired of God.

There is, therefore, a call that comes to every lover of Bible truth to take notice of whither we are drifting, and what the responsibility resting upon us is.

When I talk to you about Christian unity, right on its face division is implied. That very announcement suggests that there are Christians on the earth whose efforts are not together blended.

The Saviour said, in Matthew 12: 50, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

I have never been so egotistic as to say that my brethren with whom I commune on the first day of the week are the *only* Christians on this earth. I never said that in my life. I do make the claim that we are Christians *only*. But there is a vast difference between that expression and the one formerly made.

But you ask what my objective is. Exactly that which prompted and moved those of a century ago. I am trying to get all of God's people everywhere to stand together as a solid phalanx against the opposing forces now seeking to destroy the church of our Lord. I know that the cause of Christ needs its full strength. I know that in unity alone strength can exist, and I think it a calamity for those who claim to believe the Bible, to reverence Jehovah, and to wear the name of Christ at all, to stand thus divided, and thereby invite the enemy to a victory over our scattered forces.

There are many blinded and deluded people who, perhaps, really think that a divided state of religious affairs is advantageous to the cause of Christ, and that it meets with heaven's favor.

As I now recall, I have never heard but one passage of Scripture cited in justification of such a claim. Sometimes thoughtless partisans, and preachers who glory in their sects and human denominations, try to obtain comfort out of the reading of John, fifteenth chapter, where Christ said, "I am the true vine, my father is the husbandman. Every

branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

In all effort to gain some comfort, as aforesaid, this has been repeated in justification of the great number of denominations on the earth. They are styled branch churches, and in them, folks abide.

Friends, that is a ridiculous conclusion. First, Christ was talking, not to human denominations at all, but to His immediate disciples. To them He said, "I am the vine, and ye are the branches." Ye who? Peter, James, John, Thomas, Philip, Nathaniel, Bartholomew, and other individual disciples of the Lord.

Hence I know that He did not have in mind organizations of which I have had occasion to speak during the past few nights.

Second, at that time there was no such thing on this earth as a denomination like unto those with which we are surrounded today.

In the third place, there has never yet been a vine producing different branches, from which one may gather different kinds of fruit. If, on one branch, clinging to the vine, you pick a tomato, every other fruit on that same vine will likewise be a tomato. It won't be even a different kind of tomato. They are all the same kind.

From such premises the conclusion follows that the man who seeks to justify religious division by the wonderful lesson taught in that connection is grabbing at a straw.

So I raise another question: is religious division wrong?

I think the answer comes from every thoughtful man that surely it is.

Friends, that division is wrong is evidenced by things quite familiar to us, and visible on every hand.

There are homes in the city of Nashville, this afternoon, wherein Jesus Christ cannot be mentioned, nor his word read, nor his cause discussed. Why? Because of division in that home. The father is a member of one organization, the mother is a member of another. Each of them is jealous, envious, and anxious to build up his own denomination, and the result is, they dare not mention the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

I have been invited into homes, either by the husband or the wife, and before I made my entrance there was this warning: "Now, Brother Hardeman, we are glad to have you in our home, but you understand that it won't be in order to discuss religion at all."

Of course, I understand that the devil reigns triumphant in many such homes, and that Jesus Christ is a total stranger. His name cannot be mentioned without the bitterest kind of feeling and animosity on the part of those thus bound together in sacred marriage ties.

I know again that there are sons and daughters in the homes of many who are not members of any religious body at all. Stop and ask why?

That respectful son knows that if he were to join Dad's church, Mother would feel bad about it, and would think he did not love her as he should. Hence he will not go with his father. On the other hand, if he went and became a member of Mother's church, Father would feel the same way as formerly pictured of her. Therefore, in order to remain neutral, and to show equal respect for both Father and Mother, he refrains from union with either of those wherein they have their membership. What the ultimate results? That son becomes hardened, grows wayward, drifts upon the bosom of the popular, current, and lands at last in hell. Why? Because of the fact that he was reared in a home where religious division prevailed, where the Bible lay unread, and the name of Christ unmentioned.

There was never a more sacred responsibility resting upon parents than that they do all within their power to blend together in perfect unity, and to make Christ the unseen guest in their home perpetually, and the word of God a matter of public and of private conversation within their realms.

I have seen neighborhoods and communities unable to make progress, unable to get together in things material, and to push forward many things for their own benefit. Why? Because of religious division.

I have known of schools that have been absolutely ruined, and educational possibilities for the children blighted because of religious prejudice, division, and partisan spirit.

I have seen small towns unable to make any progress. Whatever one side favors, the other says, "O. that is a regular Methodist trick, and we Baptists and Presbyterians are against that." And, vice versa: "The Baptists are trying to run everything in this town, and the rest of us are going to see to it that they do no such thing." What is the result? The wheels of progress are locked and a forward march is impossible.

Friends, it is positively wrong from every point of consideration, both human and Divine, for a people claiming to march under the same flag of Christ, to be torn into parties and different organizations.

But let me say to you that there is a difference between the words, union and unity.

I am pleading, not for Union, but for Unity. If you will allow technicalities to be mentioned, I shall suggest to you, as best I can, what I conceive to be the difference between these terms.

A unity is the blending together of particles which are identical, and of the very same kind. To illustrate: Were ~ to break the bone in that arm, and thus sever it into two parts, I would expect this bone, plus that one, to be knit together. That would be unity elements of the same kind blending together in ~ cohesive manner, and thus forming one out of the same material, and identical in nature. That is what we call *homogeneous Unity* or oneness.

But again: Sometimes, in all operation, we are told by the physician that the skin attaches to some other organ, and hence we have adhesion. What does that mean? The blending together of elements of different kinds. Such is a *heterogeneous union*. I can possibly make that clearer to you by all illustration. When our American boys, during the World War, were marshaled on the field of battle under the leadership of General Pershing, there was *unity*, but when the allied forces were brought together, and placed under General Foch, there was *union*. It was the coming together of the different nations, each with its respective constitution, idea and characteristic. For a common objective they blended together temporarily. There never was a *unity* of the allied forces during the whole war.

Now, what we want in this country, that thing which bids defiance to all kinds of skepticism, is not simply all amalgamation of the type last mentioned, but we want the forces of God to be one in the sense of a coherent unity of the homogeneous type.

But again: This meeting, being fostered by about forty different congregations, is a unity meeting. There is not a congregation having any part in it that differs in origin, doctrine or practice from any other one in it. That is unity and co-operation.

Kindly allow me, for the sake of the illustration, to refer to a meeting recently held here, conducted by the world-renowned preacher, Gipsy Smith. I don't know just how many were blended into that, but let me say, as a matter of fact, that meeting was not a *unity*. It was a *union* for only a brief time. There was no common flag or constitution, no common set of by-laws, rules and regulations governing the different denominations entering into it. For the time being they were together; but just as soon as that meeting was over, the union broke up and each one went back to his own denominational pen. Some of them had their feelings hurt, because they thought they had been used for their moral and financial support, and then insulted at the very last hour.

Friends, union is not the thing for which Christ prayed. As a band of Christians, we do not need that which simply superficially combines our efforts, but we need that which will make us all speak the same thing and be of the same mind and judgment. We want to be one in origin, doctrine, and practice.

The ideal of the late President Woodrow Wilson, wherein all the nations of earth would blend together, would have been a *union*. Not until all people accept just one flag, and one constitution, will there ever be *unity* among the nations of this earth.

I submit to you two fundamental propositions. I mention the first this afternoon, and it is this: God Almighty demands unity. If I meet with His approval I must do all within my power to bring about that for which Jesus prayed and the apostles so earnestly pleaded.

I call your attention, first, to the Scripture read at the opening, John 17, verses 20-22. This is in reality the prayer of our Lord. It is the last prayer that He prayed as he neared the tragedy outside the city's walls. He humbled himself, lifted his face toward the throne of his Father, and prayed that the glory which the Father had might be his to share. He prayed that he might have the strength and the courage to withstand all that confronted him.

The second division of that prayer was in behalf of those who had followed him, and upon whom, as his chosen representatives, the salvation of the world depended.

He next turned to the great mass of suffering humanity and prayed after this fashion: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

Faith comes by hearing God's Word, and if we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of that testimony announced by his representatives, we are included in this wonderful prayer.

Read the sentiment: "I neither pray for these alone, but for all them who shall believe in me through their word."

First, "That they all may be one."

Second, "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee."

Third, "That they all may be one in us."

Fourth, "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

There are four points emphasized in that brief statement. "I pray that they may be one in that same sense as thou art in me and I in thee. One in sentiment, one in purpose, one in spirit, one in action" Well, why?

Jesus Christ recognized that the most fruitful field of infidelity on this earth was division among his professed followers. He knew that the devil could wield that club more effectively than any other one possible. Therefore, to leave him without a weapon, and to rob the enemy of his gigantic power, he said, "Father, I want them to be one, that the world may know that thou has sent me."

Friends, right here in the city of Nashville, there is rank infidelity in some of your great schools. I regret to say that in them there is modernism, atheism, Darwinism. The Bible is ridiculed and reduced to a common level with uninspired books by many in our schools and by some in the pulpits.

What would be the greatest possible means on the part of the professed Christians of walking triumphantly over such opposition? Surely it would not be for them to divide into a thousand factions, but for them to see to it that nothing is preached or practiced which is unauthorized by the word of God.

Each religious body should earnestly ask, "Have we got something connected with our system of church government or our method of worship unknown to the Bible? If so, we cannot expect the possibility of unity on that which is foreign to God's word."

But again: Jesus said, in John 10: 16: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd"

Let me ask, how is it 1,900 years this side of the Christ's declaration? Instead of there being one fold in America, there are about 200. Instead of there being one shepherd,

at whose beck and call alone they respond, there is a multiplicity of just such.

Are you respectful of the prayer of the Christ? Are you seeking to cooperate in bringing about its answer? Is it the very leading idea of your being for there to be one flock and one fold, under the leadership of but one head?

If so, you have the spirit of Christ. Otherwise, you are none of his. But that is not all.

In 1 Cor. 10: 16, there are these significant words: "The cup of the blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Hear it—"For we, being many, are one bread, and one body."

Friends, that is the sentiment of God's Book.

As long as professed Christians are divided into denominations, what can be said to the infidel, who will charge openly and above board that they do not believe the Bible themselves? What answer can be made?

But again, in 1 Cor. 12: 12, there is this sentiment: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ."

Romans 12: 4, 5: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

My friends, division is wrong. I care not what else it may be. You may sometimes ease the situation and pacify your own conscience by saying, "Oh, our division is over a minor affair."

We sometimes get so big, broad-gauged and liberal that we ridicule all divisions of a minor type.

Let me say to you, friends, there is not one solitary division which curses the city of Nashville, but is as big as that which was condemned, in no uncertain way, by the peerless apostle to the Gentile world.

you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

That is Paul's pleading. May I cooperate with him in all effort to bring it about? When I kneel down to approach the throne of grace, am I so irreverent of His word as to thank God for so many divisions that every man can have a church to suit his choice?

Will you fancy, just a moment, a modern preacher on this side of the stand, in all candor and fervor lifting his voice, and thanking God for the multiplicity of churches on this earth ?

Picture in contrast the Son of God in the shadow of the cross, as he also lifted up his voice and said, "Father, I pray that they all may be one." I want to know with which of these sentiments we are spending our efforts, and putting forth our powers at this time?

And Paul said to the Corinthians: "It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I am of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ."

What was the trouble down at Corinth? There was division among them. Over what? Over their ideal of a preacher. One said, "I am after Paul, I am a Paulite; thank God for it." Another said, "I am all Apollosite, and I rejoice in his name." Another said, "Well, I am after Peter, I am a Cephasite." And still a fourth class said, "We are after Christ."

Friends, can you fancy such a condition among professed Christians in the city of Corinth, where there were 400,000 people at that time?

Here are the professed followers of the Lord divided into four parties. "Who is that crowd over yonder?" "They are Paulites." "Well, who are those over here?" "They are Apollosites." "And who are these?" "They are Cephasites." "And who are you?" "We are Christites or Christians" Such was the condition, and the things over which they were divided

I want you to hear Paul's reply.

"Is Christ divided?" You know the answer is, No. Then the implication is, "Why are ye?" Again, "Was Paul crucified for you?" Of course not. Then why be a Paulite? Again, "Were you baptized in the name of Paul, or Peter, or Apollos?" Certainly not. Then Paul raises the point and drives home the argument: "Why do you want to wear the name of Paul? He didn't die for you. You were not baptized in his name. It is wrong to be a Paulite."

Then to the others: "Was Apollos crucified for you?" "No." "Were you baptized in the name of Apollos?" "No, no." "Then, my friend and brother, why wear the name of Apollos?" And thus the argument continues. I certainly do not have to stop long in making the application to present-day affairs. Friends, it is not because I dishonor any great man of earth that I refuse to wear his name or become a partisan after his order, but because the teaching of God's book positively prohibits it.

Was Martin Luther crucified for you ? The answer, "No." Then why be a Lutheran? That is Paul's argument.

Were you baptized in the name of John Calvin? No. Then why be a Calvinist?

Did John Wesley die for you? No. Then why wear the name which refers to him?

Friends, I assert in the presence of God Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, it is wrong for men to wear human names, to be divided into human parties and thus to weaken the forces of professed Christianity. All such gives the devil the advantage in the march to victory.

But again, 1 Cor. 3: 1-4, let me read: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."

Well, why, Paul?

"For you are yet carnal." The word "carnal" means fleshly, physical the opposite of spiritual. Why, Paul, are they carnal? How do you

ing evidence? Hear it: "For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one of you saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

Brethren, the spirit of God does not dwell in people thus divided, and so forgetful as to wear human names. I never said that. But Paul, the peerless apostle, did, and it is applicable to the city of Nashville and to every place where people are divided into organizations for which there is not one syllable of authority in all the Book of God

When you profess to raise aloft God's banner, and, at the same time, wear some human name, Paul says you are carnal, fleshly, and walk as men.

If such remarks, coming direct from the Book of God, do not make us feel the fearful responsibility for the divided state of religious matters, I think, speaking reverently, that God Almighty could not make such all impression upon mortal man.

Therefore, regardless of what may be said later by way of the possibility of bringing about such a happy, glorious and delightful state, I conclude by pledging to you right now 100 per cent of my being to try to bring about that unity demanded in Holy Writ. I would be inexpressibly glad to see all answer to that prayer of the Son of God, to the earnest pleading of the Apostle Paul, and to the general sentiment that runs throughout the entire Bible.

Therefore, I maintain that the Bible alone is the only possible standard; that the name of Christ Jesus, our Lord, is the only name; and that the organization about which the Bible has so much to say is the only organization wherein such a unity is possible. Let us walk by faith, not by sight. Let us walk by the Word of God which will guide us in the same path, bring together scattered and diversified forces, and unify every man and woman on this earth who loves the Lord, and who delights in the promulgation of His cause.

It is to just such a principle and platform that you have been invited. Again we are going to stand together, and join in the singing of the song selected. While we sing it,

won't you who are thus disposed come forward, extend to some brother your hand and make known to him your will and wish? My friends, we plead with you to accept the Lord Jesus Christ; to wear his name and to be guided by his word forevermore.

**UNITY (No. 2)**

One week ago tonight I began the study of that institution established by the Lord Jesus Christ. Two talks were devoted to its study and history. As, doubtless, all of you know, I have followed the history of that departure from the New Testament order which resulted in the establishment of the greatest religious ecclesiasticism the world has ever known. I also pursued the study of the Reformation and the rise of the various denominations now prominent in our land.

After that I turned to the study of another movement known as the Restoration.

You have followed patiently. Some of you, doubtless, have been startled at some of the announcements I have made, but I believe you cannot doubt the correctness of them when you take the time to turn to history's page and there search as to whether or not the things spoken be true. And may I beg of you that before you pass adverse judgment, and evidence a feeling of unkindness, that you go into some of the libraries, delve into the history of these things and thus see for yourselves whether or not I have stated the facts. If I have stated facts, you owe it to yourself to accept them. If not, you need to tell me just what is true and thus prevent my repetition along these lines.

This afternoon attention was directed to the oneness, unity, that ought to prevail among professed Christians. We had a very fine audience, but tonight the attendance is larger by several hundred. I appreciate your presence beyond my power to express it. I just regret that there is not sufficient seating capacity for all of you to be as comfortable as I would like. But, knowing you as I do, I believe that you will be patient even though many have to stand.

Let me read, as all introduction, Ephesians 4: 1-6: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With

all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

There are seven unities manifest in that connection. I would hardly know how to begin to make all argument to him who would deny the teachings of God's Word respecting the unity of the body of Christ. On every page where the matter is mentioned at all, that paramount idea stands out boldly and emphatically. There is one God. Of course, there is but one. There is one Lord, only one. There is one faith—just one. There is one body—but one.

Jesus Christ established but one church. Our Lord shed his blood to purchase but one church. He is tonight the head of but one church. His spirit dwells in but one body, which is the church. That thing is settled and nobody but a rank, blatant infidel would dare deny the statements thus made.

In the light of that, what will you and I say, when on the plains of eternal judgment we come to stand, as all apology for the variety and the great number of different churches extant in this land? Somebody is responsible for their existence. I ask you, as a dying man to dying men and women, did the Lord organize about 200 different churches in this land? I am certain that you say, "No." Well, who did? I believe that I can plead, "not guilty." If I know myself, tonight, I have never tried to organize a church. I never expect to, and I do not want to be responsible for preaching or practicing anything that tends to bar or hinder a 100 per cent fellowship in the church bought and built by Christ.

It is one of the most difficult matters that I have ever tried, to get the conception of the church of God that I have in mind before my friends. It is hard to make them understand that the church about which I talk is not one of the denominations.

People ask why I don't give more concern to the other denominations? Allow me to say, I am not a member of a denomination. I don't want to be. I never made one step looking to that end in my life. I am against denominations, not because I hate them, nor that they are wrong *per se*, but because of the fact that they are of human origin and God knows nothing about such.

Do you believe, friends, that when Jesus Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church," he was talking about a denomination? Is that your conception of his statement?

Now, if that was a denomination, I want to ask, "Which one was it?" Do you know that there isn't a preacher in Nashville who will dare name that thing promised by Him and call it a denomination? You have as great men as dwell upon the earth, as learned and as honorable in all respects, but they know better than that. So do we all.

What shall we say about it? When Paul said, "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it," I stop and ask, "Was Paul talking about a denomination?" With one accord we all say, "No."

Now, this question: Is it possible for you and me to become a member of that church concerning which Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church"? Can I become a member of that? If so, I would not be a member of any denomination.

If I know myself, that is the only institution on earth with which I want to be affiliated.

I do not claim to be a member of any kind of all organization except that very one.

Now you may think that I am not a member of it. Maybe not, but I am surely not a member of anything else.

When I begin to talk about the church, my friends look upon it and seem to think it is a denomination.

Let me try to present the matter after this sort of all illustration. Suppose that 2,000 years ago there was all organization known as baseball. In a book all things connected with it were recorded. There is

regulations and everything governing that institution. The game was played according to its rules for a long, long time, but with the passing of the years that organization disbanded, the book of rules was laid aside and practically buried for a thousand years.

Suppose then, by some chance, you and I found that very same book and began the study of it. Finally we make a plat upon some field exactly like the diamond specified in it, select our right number of performers, lay down exactly the same rules and regulations, and start the game according to original specifications.

Question: Is that the same thing that was practiced 2,000 years ago? What would you call this game that we have now re-inaugurated? Would it be some phase of baseball, some department? Or would it not be the identical thing restored upon this earth? Of course, it would.

Beloved, that is my conception of the Church of God. I believe that by the Holy Spirit all organization known as the Church of God, the Church of the First Born, was planted upon this earth. I think that members were initiated into the privilege of the same, and that before it ceased its operations there was a book of rules giving all the details regarding it, the terms of induction, the principles governing its operations, etc.

But with the passing of the years there was the gradual fading away until at last all the players and all the performers were largely forgotten. There came a time when you could not find all institution like that anywhere. The very book of rules governing it was wholly in seclusion, and kept as a matter of privacy.

The years sped on, but by and by the old book of rules was found; men delved into it; they began to understand the nature of its organization, and to blend together, precisely as the book of rules suggested, and, therefore, set up housekeeping again. They were governed, regulated and ruled according to the simplicity of the old Book.

Question: Is that the same institution ?

I believe it is. And that is the principle, fundamental, of the great Restoration Movement, of which I have spoken.

It demands and it has taught that the very central thought was the unity of the people of God upon this earth. They looked over the field of denominationalism; they believed that many men and women had obeyed the gospel; and after so doing, had gone and united with some kind of a religious fraternity, the origin of which was purely human, and a knowledge of which is not even mentioned in the Book of God.

The Restorers sounded the invitation, and bade people come out of those things purely human in nature and stand together upon the original platform. They urged that all be governed by the original rules, and have the assurance that it is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, restored upon this earth in its ancient simplicity and primitive purity.

The afternoon talk was devoted to the one thought, namely: "Division is Wrong." God demands that His people stand as a solid phalanx. Such little progress has been made that, sometimes, it is really discouraging. The army of the Lord is divided into about 200 different detachments, each one striving against the other. A spirit of jealousy and denominational rivalry prevails, while the forces of His Satanic Majesty march solidly under their black banner. The condition is a lamentable one indeed.

There are many things upon which all denominations are agreed. For instance, the existence of a God, the belief in the virgin birth of His Son, the reality of the Holy Spirit, and the inspiration of God's word.

In spite of agreement on these we are divided. Whether hopelessly so, or not, only time can tell.

I cannot now mention all of the distinctions, and matters that differentiate, but I take the time to note some of the outstanding things upon which, if we could agree, it might be possible for us to come together and adjust all minor differences. If such were accomplished we could raise aloft the blood-stained banner, and openly defy all skepticism, infidelity, and even atheism, that curses the earth even at this hour.

What are some of those things over which we are divided ? I mention them after this order. First, the religious world

is divided over the question of creeds, disciplines, confessions of faith, etc.; second, over what constitutes valid, legitimate and acceptable baptism.

Third, we are divided again over the very names that Christians should wear.

Fourth, we are further divided over what constitutes acceptable worship. I stop with these four.

Ladies and gentlemen, is it possible for it to be possible to bring about a solution of item No. 1, and the world stand together, joying and rejoicing over a unity respecting a creed or confession of faith?

Now I want to proceed on this principle, and I do it not only because duty demands it of me, but because I owe it to you. I shall not ask you to make any sacrifice of faith or to give up any principle whatsoever. I tell you candidly that I would not do that myself, and I have never yet knowingly asked any man to do that which I would not under similar circumstances be persuaded in my own judgment to do.

But I want you to get this distinction. There is a difference between matters of faith and matters of opinion. Faith is that which comes by hearing God's word. It is the acceptance of evidence coming from holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

To make that just as emphatic as I can, let me say that whenever I tell you I believe a thing, I have put myself under obligation to turn to God's book and read the evidence from which that faith comes. And it follows that if I cannot find the evidence and the testimony in the book of God, I do not believe it at all. It was merely a matter of opinion. The world, tonight, is divided on the question of opinion.

When you ask of me to give up my opinion about a thing, you have asked nothing unreasonable nothing but that ought to be considered in the light of a desire to banish division. So, friends, let us not hesitate to ask that opinions be given up. I think this is absolutely necessary, but I am not going to ask any man to give up one iota or one syllable of faith that comes from the book of God.

How many creeds are there in the land today? I have never counted them, but it is said that there are about 1,600, or possibly more. At first, doubtless, you ask, how can these things be, if there are not more than two hundred different denominations? Friends, it is after this manner. Different denominations have a multiplicity of creeds. They are issued at regular and stated intervals so that, with the passing years, each denomination has a number, no two of which are exactly alike.

Pile up all the denominations, with their revisions, amendments and continued creed-making business, and possibly it reaches around 1,600, or more.

Question: Is it possible for the world to unite upon any creed that man has ever written?

I believe the very asking carries the answer in the negative. Without being unkind or discourteous to any soul, let me suggest, for instance, that here is the *Episcopal Prayer Book*, written by men scholarly, earnest and sincere. It is a great production. It has passed the British Parliament; it stands out hoary with age, and appeals unto humanity almost everywhere.

Would you Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians, who would really and sincerely love to see unity brought to pass, be willing to lay down your respective books, and, for the sake of unity, accept the prayer book of the Episcopalians? I know your answer. I would not do it, either.

Well, why not? Let us fancy a Presbyterian, just a minute. He could say, "Mr. Episcopalian, you are asking of me all unreasonable thing. I grant that you have in your midst learned men and scholarly men who wrote that prayer book, but let me tell you that we Presbyterians had as much right to make our confession of faith as you fellows did your prayer book. Therefore, I will not give up mine, which I admit is human, to accept yours, which stands on no higher ground."

Brother Methodist, what are you saying?

Hear him. "Mr. Episcopalian, while I borrowed my discipline largely from your prayer book, yet I do not aim to give it up, and accept yours instead. Mine is as good as yours." And, indeed, it is. Thus the thought continues.

Let me say, friends, that it is a matter of impossibility to bring the different denominations together by the acceptance of any human creed or discipline or prayer book the world has ever known.

"Well," says one, "Brother Hardeman, why don't you try them with your creed?" That is just what I aim to do.

"But," says one, "do you have a creed?"

Of course I do.

"Well, have you got a discipline?"

Certainly so.

"Well, have you a confession of faith?"

Yes, indeed.

"Do you have a book of rules governing the church?"

Certainly, and I am glad, tonight, to give answer to these questions that are sometimes on the lips of anxious inquirers.

Friends, the Bible is my creed. The word "creed" comes from that which signifies faith, belief. I am glad to tell you I believe God's book from lid to lid. It is my discipline. It is my confession of faith. It is my prayer book. It is my church manual, church directory in all of the affairs of life. I have never subscribed, nor have my brethren, to any human product on the earth. Any man who says to the contrary, speaks ignorantly regarding that concerning which he ought to be informed.

Friends, I, therefore, without timidity or reservation at all, come to you tonight and submit that the only way possible for the world to get together on the subject of a creed is to cut loose from, throw away, and bid good-bye to all those written by men, and accept the Bible and the Bible alone as its only rule of faith and practice.

During Gipsy Smith's first tabernacle meeting he said that if he had his way about it, he would gather every creed and put them all in one pile, saturate them, and strike a match that would send them into forgetfulness. I can most heartily join in such a sentiment.

I do not say that with bitterness toward the creed, nor to any man who has subscribed. I believe, before God and in

your presence, that they are largely responsible for the divided state, and a tearing asunder of people who otherwise might possibly stand together, and thus glorify the God of our being. Hence I submit the Bible as the one book and only one that ought to be recognized by mortal man.

Now, somebody may chance to say, "Mr. Hardeman, you don't go by the Bible." That is not the question tonight. My practice is not under discussion just now. I am talking about what the world must accept. If I haven't done it, all the worse for me.

The old question of baptism has agitated the mass of the people for lo, these hundreds of years. It can never be outworn, and it never grows old, because fellowship in no church, except the Quakers, can be had only through what the world calls the rite of baptism.

In this country there are three things presented for the study and acceptance of mankind. Here they are: sprinkling, pouring, immersion. On those three things the world stands divided. How can unity be brought to pass? Can the world unite on the practice of sprinkling? Our Roman Catholic friends, the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, and some others, could without any sacrifice of faith. They believe that sprinkling is acceptable. But what about the great eastern Catholic Church? What about the Baptist Church, with its seventeen different branches? They could never agree to accept sprinkling.

The brotherhood with whom I stand could not conscientiously unite with any people on the practice of sprinkling for baptism. It would be, to us, hypocritical in the extreme.

Could the world unite on pouring for baptism? Such all effort would prove all absolute failure.

My friends, if this world ever gets together on this item, immersion and that alone must become the universal practice.

But some one says, "Brother Hardeman, you promised that you would not ask us to give up any matter of faith." So I did, and to that promise, I'll be true.

"Mr. Roman Catholic, do you believe that immersion in water, to a penitent believer, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is scriptural baptism?" What do you think he will say? He must answer, "Yes."

"Well, could you accept immersion then, and not give up any matter of faith, or any principle?"

"Sure I could. I think sprinkling will do just as well, but that is all opinion, and I would not lose anything to accept immersion—in fact, I believe that is the meaning of the word 'baptize.'"

Friends, he does not have to give up any principle in accepting immersion.

I next appeal to my Presbyterian friends (and I am glad to number them by the scores). "Do you think that immersion to a proper candidate is scriptural and acceptable baptism?"

"Why, of course, I do."

"Well, then, would you have to sacrifice any matter of faith to accept it?" "Certainly not." He thinks sprinkling will do just as well and is more convenient, but he doesn't question immersion.

Now, for the sake of! unity, why not give up that which is in doubt in the minds of some, and walk by faith, and by that which is conceded by every scholar on earth?

Ask our good Methodist friends, "Would you have to sacrifice anything in order to be immersed?"

Of course not. For the Methodist Discipline says that if the candidate demands it, the preacher shall immerse him. Hence, it is a doctrine of the Methodist Church to practice immersion if they can't get by otherwise. So then, friends, there is no sacrifice, and if the world wanted that unity, and were willing to give up those things which are in doubt, we would soon see such a coming together of the forces of the Lord Jesus Christ as would electrify the city of Nashville, and from it there would radiate a wonderful influence that would be felt all over this broad land.

and not after immersion at all. In this act there is safety, soberness and soundness of principle. Immersion is all act of faith.

The next point I want to mention is this: we are divided in this country as were the people at Corinth. Instead of wearing the name of Christ alone, many of them were honoring Paul, Apollos and Peter by wearing their names. Paul condemned them most Beverly. We are doing similarly in the state of Tennessee tonight. If you had asked them were they not Christians, they would, in all probability, have said, "Yes." But while they proposed to be Christians, they exercised the right and the liberty to wear the names of Paul, Apollos and Cephas. Unanswerable arguments were made against such party names. In spite of such lessons, a parallel exists among us today.

One man says, "I am wearing the name of Luther."

Ask him, "Are you a Christian?"

"Oh, yes, I am a Christian, but I propose to wear the name of Luther."

Another says, "I propose to wear the name of John the Baptist."

"Aren't you a Christian?"

"Yes, sir."

Thus the world continues and division abounds because of such.

Will I be out of order, will I be unkind if I say, as did Paul to those at Corinth, "You are carnal and walk as men" ? When the Pharisees brought to the Master a piece of money, they asked him: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?"

He said: "Show me the tribute money," and they brought unto him a penny.

He asked the question: "Whose is the image and whose is the superscription?" Christ determined to what government that piece of money belonged by two things: namely, first, the very material that went into its makeup, and, second, the stamp or superscription it bore.

Friends, you want two things to be characteristic of you. First, you must be molded in heaven's mint, with all sin

driven away, and evil and hypocrisy burned out of your life. You want to come forth as a newborn babe, clean and spotless as the driven snow; second, you want heaven's stamp impressed upon your brow, so that it may be known to passersby exactly where you belong, and whose you are. That unity for which Christ prayed can only be made possible by every child of God wearing the name of Christ and that alone.

If I were to ask you to give up your respective denominational names, and let us all be Campbellite, I am certain that you would rebel. While Alexander Campbell was a great man, you do not aim to wear his name, on the ground that he did not taste death for you, and into his name you were not baptized. Therefore, you would kindly and positively refuse my request, and I could not blame you.

The same is true of every other name outside of that whereby man must be saved. If you reach heaven you have got to become a Christian. But you do not have to become a Baptist to go to heaven, and the Baptist preacher will tell you so himself. You don't have to become a Methodist to reach heaven. You don't have to be a Presbyterian to walk the snow-white streets of the city of our God, but you do have to be a Christian. Therefore, it follows that Christianity is one thing, denominationalism is another thing, and a useless thing, in the sight of high heaven. Therefore, for the sake of unity, let us cut loose from every name other than the name of Christ.

Mrs. Hardeman, who chances to be present, honors me by wearing my name. It would not set well at all with me if she, being my Wife, wanted to wear someone else's name. I would rebel. I would say, "My dear woman, if you expect me to love you, to care for you, to provide for you, and protect you, just leave off the other fellow's name, at least until I am buried." Friends, that is the way we feel about it.

The children of God are married unto Jesus Christ. He is the bridegroom; Christians are the bride. I hold that the child of God has no right to look to Jesus as the husband, and then go around this country wearing somebody else's name.

I think, if Mrs. Hardeman loves me as she ought, she does not want to wear someone else's name. And I am not afraid to say that if you and I love the Lord Jesus Christ as we ought, we will not want to wear any other name. Therefore, it is a matter of most serious concern. Are we honoring the husband? Are we honoring the bridegroom in his absence? Christ is away now preparing that house not made with hands. After awhile he will return to call the bride to himself. Will he find her wearing another's name? Let's be true to him, whose we are and honor him by making prominent his name alone.

Let us tear down our denominational fences, get rid of those things that pen us off into parties, and stand once more as a unit.

But again: is it possible for us to come together on the question of worship and no one have to sacrifice a matter of faith?

Consider the following. If a congregation simply teaches God's word and preaches the Bible, can't you join in with them without any hesitancy or compunctions of conscience whatsoever? If they earnestly pray unto our Father, either kneeling in humility, or standing with bowed heads and humble hearts, can't you join in that?

When they come together around the Lord's table, which is the Lord's supper, eat of the simple bread and drink of the simple fruit of the vine, surely you can have a part with no sacrifice of principle.

When it comes to the contributing of your means, do it with simplicity. Simply put your hand into your pocket and give according to how you have been prospered. Give without any great tooting of the horns, or sounding of the alarm, or any claptrap method. Give in a straightforward scriptural way, in the spirit of the gospel of Christ. Everybody can join in that, without the sacrifice of a single principle. When you come to the sounding of His praises, all can do it by singing and making melody in their hearts unto God. There is nothing objectionable; there is nothing that tends to drive you from participation therein. You can do that

honestly, conscientiously, believing that you are doing just what God demands.

On these matters there can be unity. But when you introduce the societies of men, and the mechanical machinery that some want to bring into the church; when you begin to burn incense, and to light candles, and to wash hands, then you bring in that for which there is no authority, and you ought not to expect the world to accept such, and upon it absolutely agree.

The primitive disciples had but one organization, viz.: the church bought with the blood of our Lord.

They carried the gospel, through this organization, into all the earth, and unto the uttermost parts of the world. If this program is not sober, sane and sound, big enough, broad enough, and wide enough for every man to occupy, without the sacrifice of any matter of faith, tell me that wherein it is lacking, and, if possible, I will supplement it. Suggest to me wherein it oversteps heaven's law, and I'll use the pruning knife and pare off that which is superfluous and unauthorized by the God of heaven.

Upon the terms of admission into the family of God, the world can also agree. You think it is right for men to believe in the Christ. Everybody in Nashville so does, except our infidel friends. You think a man ought to turn from sin, and face toward a higher, nobler and better life. You believe that men ought to acknowledge the Christ with their lips. There is not one present but who says penitent believers ought to be baptized.

You may not believe as I do regarding the purposes of baptism, but we are together upon the importance of submitting to God's will, and surely this is a part of it. If you can accept the platform as thus announced, I bid you do so now. I want you to take God at His word; believe what He says; become and be what He requires; live as He directs, and trust Him for the fulfillment of every promise.

### UNITY (No. 3)

Your presence indicates a fine interest in those things I have been discussing in your midst. I am glad to address you again along the same line of Christian Unity.

I read to you from Psalms 133: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore."

If I know myself, every utterance shall be prompted by a sincerity worthy of the subject presented.

I verily believe, friends, that the greatest hindrance to the acceptance of the gospel of Christ is a divided state in the religious world. I ought to consider most earnestly: Am I fostering division? Am I promulgating something not in the Bible which my friends and fellows cannot conscientiously accept? If so, I am treading on dangerous ground, and have a fearful responsibility resting upon me.

I wish every person in this audience would take all introspective view, and ask himself the question: "Am I practicing something untaught? Am I boasting something unknown to the Bible? Do I stand for that which is a bar to the unity for which the Master prayed?"

When such is discovered, the honest soul will be glad to give it up. The partisan spirit, the biased and prejudiced individual will hold on to it, regardless, and thus subject himself and those who might be influenced by him to hell itself, rather than admit any error and from it turn away.

I have here all extract from the *Nashville Banner* of March 22nd, this year. In the department of "Everyday Queries," answered by Dr. Parkes Cadman, there is this question from Bridgeport, Connecticut: "Why don't the churches of America get together and stop their waste of manpower, money and religious influence? I am not a

churchman, but I believe I should be if it were not for the useless divisions that exist among men and women who profess to believe in the Lord."

I do not know who asked that, but it is a sensible question. It hits the nail squarely on the head. I believe it is about the sentiment of a great number of sober-minded citizens all over our land.

Dr. Cadman answers by saying: "Much that you say is undeniable, but church union by force would be as impossible and as wrong as enforced marriage by the state."

Of course, I have to agree with that also. A union brought about by force, or by the passage of a law, would not be worth the time spent in writing it upon the books of our state. That is not the principle underlying Christianity. Unity can never be brought about as a forced matter. It can only come by our getting the consent of our minds that we are going to take the Bible just for what it says; that we are not going to be anything, preach anything, or practice anything, other than that clearly stated therein.

Now when we definitely decide to assume that kind of all attitude, a unity is possible, but if we maintain a partisan spirit, and are determined to be unyielding, regardless of whether a thing is a matter of faith or a matter of opinion, then our hopes for such a glad day are largely blighted. The devil will march triumphantly on with that solidity which ought to characterize the people of our Lord.

I want to speak for a while about the church, and see if we cannot come to a better understanding of its meaning. If possible, I want to eliminate the idea that the church about which I read in the Bible is a denomination. It is not. And one great step will certainly be gained if we can differentiate in our minds the church which Jesus died to establish, and the denomination organized by men uninspired.

The word church comes from the Greek word "ecclesia," which means all assembly, separated or called out, regardless of the character or kind of all assembly it is. The word, therefore, of itself does not carry any sacredness or holiness at all. I have attended political conventions in this

very auditorium. They were assemblies, but I would not accuse them of being either sacred or holy.

But the word has come to refer to that assembly under the authority of Christ, and in which his spirit dwells.

Now I think from some passages, you will be able to see why this term so aptly applies.

In the 15th chapter of John, verses 18 and 19, there are these words: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

That thing called the "church" is *in* the world, but it is not *of* the world. It is not even on good terms with the world. And there is no love lost between them. The church of God hates worldliness. The world hates the things of the church. Loyal, faithful disciples of the Lord were never loved by the disciples of the devil. The church is being led by the Son of God; the world is being led by the devil himself. These two armies are striving, the one against the other. They are the exact opposite. Each one is the perfect antithesis of the other. Therefore, if I am under Christ, and a member of the church, I am called out of the world, and am separated from it, in that I partake not of its evil. I am under the marching orders of Him whom the world hated long before it did His followers.

My friends, God's church upon this earth is God's people wherever they are, and whosoever they may be. I wish that I could get that across to you in such definiteness and concreteness as I now have in mind

For emphasis, I repeat it: God's church is God's people who dwell upon this earth. Every child of God, therefore, is a member of the church of God.

I read to you from 1 Corinthians 1: 1: "Paul called to be all apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth."

Every Christian in Corinth was then incorporated in the term

body, or some partisan sect. It was addressed to God's people, hence unto God's church in Corinth.

I call attention to 1 Peter 2: 9: "Brethren, ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, all holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness unto his marvelous light."

Who are those that constitute a peculiar people? Who are those that go to make up a royal priesthood? Who is that chosen generation, and that holy nation?

It is God's people, God's church. So, then, the church of God is big enough, broad enough, comprehensive enough, to embrace every child of God on earth. I would be one of the last to come into your midst, and even intimate that the institution bought with the blood of Jesus Christ, and filled with his spirit, did not comprehend and embrace every Christian in all the wide world.

If you have, ladies and gentlemen, in all candor, done the very thing that Christ bids you do, Brother Hardeman believes that makes you a member of the family of God. Many of my friends may have done this very thing, and then have gone and joined some kind of a church or organization for which there is absolutely not one word of authority in all the Bible. Herein lies our trouble. It is the business of "joining" that has brought division and parties into our midst.

Denominational names, creeds, and peculiarities, which many honest people cannot accept, are responsible for that divided state which unfortunately characterizes us as a people.

Not only is the church of God made up of God's people, but it is God's tabernacle. Hear Paul in Hebrews 8: 1, 2: "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such all high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man."

The context shows conclusively that the tabernacle is that spiritual building known, in another place (1 Cor. 3: 9) as

God's building, hence the church of God is God's people; it is God's tabernacle; it is God's building. But that is not all.

In 1 Cor. 3: 16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? and that the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Christians sustain their relationship to God, not by any process of joining something, but by virtue of the fact that they are Christians. That fact of itself makes them God's people, God's husbandry, God's house, God's tabernacle, that peculiar people, royal priesthood, holy nation, and chosen generation.

The church of God is, in addition, styled "all habitation of God." In Ephesians 2: 22, Paul says, "In whom ye also are builded together for all inhabitation of God through the Spirit."

The church is, therefore, a tabernacle, a temple, a spiritual house made up of lively stones. It is composed of men and women born again, who have been translated out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God. Surely we can appreciate the statement which Stephen made when he said, Acts 7: 48: "Howbeit, the Most High God does not dwell in temples made by the hands of men." The church of God is not a material thing.

With all the wealth of Tennessee, and the great material that might be gathered all over the earth, you could not out of that build the house of God. You could not build the church of God.

When Paul stood on the crest of Mars Hill and looked over the classic city of Athens, with its multiplicity of temples in which they gloried, he saw they had the wrong idea, and he emphasized Stephen's statement by saying (Acts 17: 24): "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands."

Hence it is out of order for me to talk about some building out here on your streets as God's church.

I now call attention to the use of the word church as it applies in the Bible. First, there is such a thing in the Bible as a house church.

In 1 Cor. 16: 19, Paul says: "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."

In the home of Aquila and Priscilla there were Christians, and Paul said that they constituted a church in the house of those mentioned.

Wherever Christians dwell together they can properly be styled a church. Every Christian is included in it.

Second, there is such a thing mentioned in the Bible as a city church. I have read to you 1 Cor. 1: 1 and 2, which I repeat: "Paul called to be all apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth."

How many are embraced in that? Every Christian in Corinth. If Paul were to write a letter to the church of God at Nashville, who do you think would be included in it? Every Christian in this city would be included and thus addressed.

Every child of God in this city is a part of the church, and, therefore, the obligation to lay aside everything tending toward a partisan spirit, rests upon him the more heavily.

Third, there is such a thing as Christians in a district which make up the church in that section. Hence, the church embraces every Christian in a certain territory or region.

Fourth, the church is used in a general, unlimited, universal sense. Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

In this and other passages the church comprehends and embraces every child of God on earth. When some of my friends charge that Hardeman thinks only those who meet at a certain place are members of the family of God, they misjudge that concerning which they speak.

I believe that any man in Nashville, or elsewhere, who has heard the gospel, who has believed it with all of his heart, from every sin has turned away, has acknowledged the Christ, and been buried in his name, trusting in him, looking to him and relying upon him, has become a Chris-

tian. You may well ask, Why am I pleading as I do? I am urging all who become Christians to be one and to have no divisions among us. In private talks I have been able to get numbers to admit there is no authority for many things they do, and yet they hold on tenaciously.

For instance, I want you to cut loose from some little man-made book, or creed. I do not believe in it and you admit it is purely human and unnecessary. Now let me ask, Why not discard it and let both of us stand together on the Bible alone? Who becomes responsible for division in this case? Surely it is the one who holds on to that which he admits is unauthorized.

Again, you wear some human name. Now, grant that both of us are Christians. I cannot conscientiously be a Campbellite or a Mormon or a Lutheran. Therefore, what is it that divides? It is that determination on the part of my fellow-Christian to wear some name other than, or in addition to, that of the Christ. The sin of division lies at his door.

I propose to be just a Christian—that is all. I think every man on earth can be the same thing, and have no offense attached whatsoever. I think the name Christian is big enough and broad enough and wide enough for all of God's people, and with it they should be content.

The following from Chas. Spurgeon and Jno. Wesley are in order. Spurgeon said: "We love Christ better than a sect, and truth better than a party, and so far are not denominational. He who searches all hearts knows that our aim and object are not to gather a band about self, but to unite a company around the Saviour. Let my name perish, but let Christ's name last forever.

In harmony with this, Wesley said: "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have long divided the Christian world were forgotten and that we might all agree to sit down together, as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear His word, to imbibe His spirit, and to transcribe His life in our own."

My friends, let's lay aside all party names that foster division and wear the name Christian only. Let's do away with every human creed and accept God's word only. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.)

What more do we need? What more can he say?

A good lady called me this afternoon on the telephone, and asked why it was that the people, who styled themselves the Church of Christ, oppose instruments of music? I do not know her name and, possibly, never saw her, but she impressed me as being perfectly sincere and anxious to learn all she could. Her question was wholly in order, and the obligation rests upon me to answer. She promised to be present tonight and, hence, a word along that line.

About the beginning of the nineteenth century, the great Restoration Movement was inaugurated. Its object was to break away from denominationalism and human parties, and to persuade all Christians to stand together upon the word of God. Its slogan was: "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is our only rule of faith and practice."

Time rolled on, and that sentiment grew. People flocked to such all announcement, until they numbered quite a few upon this earth.

I regret to say that, in the course of time, division came among them.

I want to tell you about how it came to pass. First, there grew a different attitude toward the word of God, and the Bible was preached with a different conception and from a different point of view.

Some in that movement began to look upon the Bible as a book for general guidance only. They came to believe that man was left free to be governed, in the details of worship and service, by his sanctified common sense. Whatever was not specifically forbidden was considered permissible,

provided it suited their fancy. Whatever was not wrong in itself, and not directly condemned by the Bible, could be used in the worship, if a majority of the congregation desired. Following that sentiment and attitude, human societies were organized, mechanical instruments were introduced, and almost every kind of sectarian practice was accepted. That element drifted into a denomination and has become one among the many.

Others in that movement, true to the platform first announced, assumed this attitude toward the Bible: they looked upon it as a complete guide in all of the affairs that pertain to worship and service to God. To them, whatever the Bible does not authorize, whatever it does not teach, and whatever it does not specify, is not a part of God's will. They refrain from introducing into the service of God anything for which there is no authority.

Friends, I do not know that I can present these lines of divergence any clearer than by these two general statements. One of them asks the question: "Where does God prohibit it?" The other asks: "Where does God teach it?" One of them draws the conclusion that if God does not prohibit a thing, he can do as he wishes. The other one concludes that if God does not teach a thing, he has no right to do it. Thus, you can begin to see the lines of cleavage.

It is agreed by all that the first thirty years after the establishment of the church was the most fruitful missionary activity this world has ever known, notwithstanding the great advancement, and facilities in material things at present.

It is further agreed that there was but one institution during that thirty years through which missionary activities were carried on. That institution was none other than God's great missionary society, which was the church.

With the passing of time, with the growing sentiment of denominationalism, even in the ranks of restoration, what happened? A missionary society of human origin was organized upon this earth, with the result that it supplanted the church, took charge of missionary affairs, directed the

missionary, received his report, made him amenable to the society and not to the church.

Those, therefore, who were not ready to be led away into human devices, and into organizations unknown to the Bible, had a right to oppose and to declare this a departure from the sacred oracles and from the original movement.

You organize one society, and that gives you the right to organize two. You organize two, and the third is in order, and there is no end to it. Therefore, those who had wandered away from the old paths found themselves submerged in a multiplicity of societies that made the denominational world ashamed. It came to pass that the denominations were almost forced to take a patent on everything they invented, lest the digressives might incorporate it, and claim it as their own. I thank God that many of them now are sick of societies and are advocating their abandonment.

What else? Everybody knows, who knows anything about it at all, that in the New Testament, when the church of God met to hymn his praises, they sang and made melody in their hearts. And it has been but a few recent years that our digressive friends have had the courage to affirm that the Bible teaches the use of mechanical instruments. They got rather brave a few years ago and, in one of their human conventions, passed a resolution to discuss their contention all over the State of Tennessee. Their courage was admirable, but their judgment was poor. After a brief experience the matter dropped and nothing more is now heard of such a desire.

My objection to mechanical instruments is not out of bitterness toward them; not because I think there is harm in the instrument, *per se*, but the objection is simply this: I have adopted the principle and pledged myself to the platform of not going beyond that which the Bible authorizes.

My digressives brother asks me: "Where does the Bible prohibit it?" I answer, "Where does the Bible authorize it?" Christians walk by faith (2 Cor. 5: 7). No man can use mechanical instruments and walk by faith.

By searching the scriptures you will find that God does not authorize it, does not command it, does not demand it,

and that there is no example in all apostolic history for such a practice. The man who is faithful and loyal to God's word will not go beyond it. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."

But there are people just as honest as I am, who say: "If the Bible does not condemn it and you like it, what is wrong in it?" Let me answer by presenting a parallel. If the Bible does not prohibit the burning of incense, in so many words, and if I love to smell it, as do my Catholic friends, on what ground can you object? I am frank to say that I do love to smell the incense a-burning. I sat for two hours in old St. Peter's in the city of Rome, and there enjoyed the odor of the incense continually diffused throughout that great audience. I sat there, and asked myself: "Where does God say, 'Thou shalt not burn incense'?" I could not think of a single passage in the New Testament. There is none. Is there anything wrong in the act itself? No. I asked, "Do I like it?" Of course, I do. Then why not go back to America and introduce the burning of incense? I can, on the very same ground, and by the very same argument that my brethren in error introduced mechanical instruments. They stand on the same parallel.

If there be a difference, it is simply this: I want you to see it. The instrument of music appeals to the auditory or hearing nerve. The burning of incense appeals to the olfactory or the smelling nerve, and the difference between the instrument and the incense is just the difference of nerve. That is all. Which nerve do you wish to satisfy? If you want to gratify, with pleasing strains and luring symphonies, the auditory nerve, then don't object to the Catholic when he wants to indulge or delight his smelling nerve, unless you think more of your hearer than you believe he ought to think of his smeller.

So, in the spirit that I trust actuates one moved with the anxiety for the unity and the oneness of people led by the Bible, I have not hesitated to ask my friends in error, "Why don't you, for the sake of unity, give up that which you yourselves admit is wholly non-essential and unauthorized, and let us stand together once more?"

But when a man departs from the word of God there seems to be no end, and no telling where on earth he will go.

I charge, candidly and respectfully, however, that my digressive friends have gone so far that they have become as much a denomination as any other on this earth. They have forsaken the principles of the Bible; they have fled the Restoration movement; and they are divided among themselves over matters once considered fundamental.

They are disturbed over whether or not the pious unimmersed shall be admitted into the fellowship. Some of them have gone back upon the doctrine of baptism—immersion— as all act of obedience to God, and as a condition of pardon. Hence, on foreign fields, and even in this land, they have become so sweet-spirited and so anxious to be one among their sister denominations, that they will receive members into their fellowship who have not been buried with the Lord Jesus Christ in baptism. They will blend in with almost any religious body—even those whose doctrine they do not believe. Therefore, to me, they are wonderfully inconsistent, even hypocritical in the act.

My brethren and friends, I allow no man to be more courteous than I try to be. I have tried to be polite and civil toward all men. But I want to tell you, when it comes to a matter of faith and a matter of conviction, I would not yield one inch to gratify any soul I have ever known.

If the time has come that men cannot speak forth their convictions, we are in a bad way, religiously, governmentally, socially, and otherwise.

I have mentioned to you some of the things that have marred the peace and happiness and unity of the body of Christ. I call upon you who are here to give serious consideration to these things. If you have named the name of the Lord, and have done that which Jesus Christ demands, and are willing to come down the aisle and give to me your hand on the principle and with the idea that you are going to accept a platform, every plank of which is found in the book of God, I pledge to put my hand in yours, and if I am not already on it, I will get there the very minute you point out wherein I am lacking.

But some may say, "You want everybody to come to you." No, that is not it. I just want you to get rid of things purely human, so that I can come to you. I will do every inch of the coming, if you will throw away those barriers that stand as a hindrance to that unity for which the Saviour prayed. If this be the will and wish of any, the invitation is now extended.

**VOWING (No. 1)**

I read to you this noon the first seven verses of the fifth chapter of Ecclesiastes: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not shine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few. For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou has vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel that it was all error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of shine hands? For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities, but fear thou God."

Then I read again from Deuteronomy 23: 21: "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee."

And then, finally, from Numbers 30: 2: "If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear all oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth."

Those words suggest to you the subject of today, "Vowing." That word simply means a pledge, a promise, or all obligation assumed. These passages teach that when we thus make our vows, make our pledges, or give our word, we must make good, and do according to that which proceedeth out of our mouths.

When I tell you that, as a people of the world today, confidence among us is largely lost, I tell you that which everybody knows. There is a restless state all over the earth.

Every kind of a suggestion is being made, the object of which is to try to still the troubled waters, restore tranquillity, and bring again that peace for which good men and women earnestly sigh.

What is the matter with things? I believe it may be summed up by saying that we are untrue to the statements I have just read in your hearing. It has come to pass that men occupying places of prestige and prominence have proved unworthy of the confidence of their constituency.

We have been taught in this country that the highest gift of the American people is to be chief executive of our land; that the heads of the cabinet departments are outstanding men of uprightness, integrity, honor and candor, whom we can trust to steer correctly the great ship of state.

What has come to pass within the last few years? It has been demonstrated that some of the heads of the different departments of government gathered around the table with our chief executive have been found rotten, corrupt, liars, and thieves of the deepest dye. Unfortunately, our President waited until public sentiment and public pressure demanded their removal and denunciation. This country today has a right to put a question mark after many who occupy places of prominence and trust.

The love of money, the root of all evil, has been evidenced until even the dignified body of the United States Senate has been compelled to exclude those who secured their places by means of corruption. There seems to be a price put upon thievery and rascality, and the greater the scoundrel in many respects, the more prominent some seem to be. So you know, friends, that with men of that kind at the helm, this country is headed toward the rocks, and the ship of state is bound to go over the mighty cataract and precipice into wreck and ruin at last.

I am not a politician, I am not making any kind of speeches. And as the good old darkey once said, "I have no reference to allusions whatever," but as a citizen I am interested in governmental affairs. The call today comes from all over the land for all outstanding leader of the American people; one who has been tested and tried, and

who has come through the turmoil of political conflicts and temptations with his skirts still clean, his honor still preserved, and in whom this country might have every reason and right to put confidence and trust. We need men who cannot be swerved by petty affairs, who have genuine convictions, and, regardless of other matters, who have the courage to stand for them.

Some years ago a friend of mine escorted me through the Fourth and First National Bank of your city, showing me all of the various departments of that splendid structure. I gazed upon those gigantic walls; I looked upon the fine iron bars and the steel vaults, and beheld all of the electrical equipment. I was told it was fireproof, burglar proof, etc., and that valuables deposited would be safely guarded and protected both from fire and robbery.

I really thought that he was telling me the truth about that. I still think it, but after passing out, I said to him: "That is fine and impregnable against attacks from without, but the safety of this bank, and the greatest guaranty of security, is not the gigantic walls, nor the steel doors, nor the iron bars, nor the electrical equipment, but, after all, the guaranty and the security rest in the honesty and integrity of those on the inside."

I went to a similar bank in the city of Jackson and, while down in the vault, and being showed some safety boxes, I rented one. I never have known just what I wanted with it, but it sounded just a little bit large, and so I picked out one, and paid the rent for a quarter in advance. The cashier, or one of the officials, handed me a little key, and I deposited some papers. Mrs. Hardeman and I then returned to our home at Henderson, and along the way I said to her, "How do we know but that the fellow who handed me this key has already made him one exactly like it, and tonight, while we sleep in absolute confidence, he may take out all we put into our safety box?"

Would the great walls of the building be any hindrance to him? Not a particle. Would the steel doors be any barrier? Surely not. He understood how to unlock them. What was there about the electrical fixtures that was any

hindrance to him? Not a thing on earth. Let me tell you, there has been as much money stolen from banks by those on the inside as has ever been by those on the outside. Steel doors and iron bars are no protection to us as a people whatsoever. Our protection lies in the honor, the integrity, the manhood, and the truthfulness of those to whom we commit ourselves and our possessions.

We spend our money for stocks, bonds and securities. We invest it in life insurance policies, and think we are "sitting pretty." Had you ever thought about it? What is that piece of paper that you call a bond worth of itself? Possibly not one penny. I have a life insurance policy. It is a great big piece of paper. How much is it worth? Of itself it is practically without value, and yet I prize it highly. I pay for it, and keep on paying, and must until the day of my death. Now, wherein is my guaranty? It is first dependent upon the integrity of the lawyer, the stenographer, and those who drafted that instrument. Second, it depends upon the integrity of the executors and their genuine signature. Third, it depends upon the integrity of our courts, enabling me to enforce my claims. Finally, my guaranty depends upon the masses of the people with the sentiment demanding that honesty and fairness be meted out unto our fellow citizens. As long as 51 per cent of the American people are characterized by integrity and honesty, this country is safe. But when 51 per cent are headed in the opposite direction, there is no guaranty of either life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness.

Do you have a Liberty bond which you are holding, and in which you have invested? How do you know that the bill authorizing its issuance was correctly drawn? How do you know that the proper authority signed it? Maybe it is a forged affair. Friends, when we buy a piece of property and pay our hard-earned dollars for a little piece of paper designated as a deed, how do we know that it will hold? I know there is much red tape and many technicalities in our legal procedure. What is it all about? It depends absolutely upon the honesty of our officials. The thing that is most needed in this country today is a restora-

tion of old-time, downright, rugged truthfulness and honesty.

I have to borrow money sometimes. Being both a school teacher and a preacher, you may think that ridiculously strange, but strange things happen. In our little town there are three banks. I know every official in them. I walk down to the bank and say to the cashier, "I want to borrow \$500 for a month." He says, "Well, Brother Hardeman, we have the money, and you know banks make their way by lending." "All right, sir, you have a customer." And then there is a little quiet spell. Finally the cashier says, "Well, Brother Hardeman, how do you want to fix it?" I answer: "I am a preacher." He says, "I understand that, but our finance committee has decided that the very fact a fellow is a preacher is not satisfactory security, and, besides, we have a whole lot of preachers' Notes in here that we would like to let you have at about fifty cents on the dollar."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it ought to be that the very fact that I propose to be a preacher would give me some business asset, but it does not, and I cannot borrow money on the fact that I preach. It just won't work.

I come back again and say, "I am a Christian." "Yes, we respect Christianity all right, but we have a whole lot of Christians' Notes in here that are past due, and we cannot collect on them."

I just want to ask you, since there is nobody here but us today, what advantage in the business world does a man who claims to be a Christian have? Don't you think the fact that my professed Christianity does not guarantee me any security in the business world is a great reflection upon our so-called Christianity? Of course, it is.

Now, who is responsible for that? Must I get mad and "cuss" out the cashier? No, no. He is not to blame. Some of my fellow preachers and pretended Christians have not made good their word. They have not kept their vows. They have not done that which proceeded out of their mouths. Therefore, the world has its question mark after them, and they are ridiculed as unworthy of business trust.

We have to say a whole lot of things sometimes when we don't want to say them, and I am doing that right now. I know men that "cuss," drink liquor and He in the back alleys, do things that are publicly condemned, yet, if I were the grocery man, I would rather have some of their names on my ledger than to have those of some pious, godly, sanctified preachers from whom you could not collect a dime to save your soul.

Now these are unfortunate things, and I want to say to you, brethren, I can preach faith and repentance and baptism all I please of course, I believe that Jesus Christ taught these things, and that salvation is promised unto the man who so does—but unless I make good my word, fulfill my vow, pay my debts to the very best of my ability, I am as certain to go to hell as there is one. I have no patience with, I have rather contempt for the fellow who will sit up on the front seat and warm the church bench every Sunday morning, and then cannot be trusted three inches in any kind of a business deal.

I had a letter from all infidel just a day or two ago, in which he said: "Mr. Hardeman, don't sneer so much at the infidel. I would rather be all infidel than to be a hypocritical church member." I am not going to have any debate with that fellow on that question. I, too, would take his side of it.

"When thou vowest a vow unto the Lord, or speaketh a word to bind thy soul, thou shalt do according to all that proceedeth out of thy mouth, thou shalt not break thy word." That is what this country needs. When a man says a thing we ought to be able to take it at 100 per cent. I think it a shame that in our governmental affairs there has to come any kind of a question or suspicion regarding public men. So far as I know Governor Horton is all honest man. I believe that Mr. Pope, another candidate for governor, is a man of the very highest type, and I feel certain also that Mr. McAlister represents the best type of citizenship. I would that all such men to whom we look as leaders would remove any kind of doubt, that all of us would quit trying to plan any kind of a deceptive scheme. Why not

come out in the open, say what we believe, speak forth our honest sentiments, stand by them until convinced to the contrary, and then be men enough to reverse our coats and continue on the broad-gauge idea of genuine uprightness and integrity?

Our boys and girls need to learn that the very finest dividends possible to them must come from the application of those old-time virtues that are being lost and relegated too much to the background. There is too much formality, churchanity, and playing to the galleries. The world looks on and points out the scoundrels, the hypocrites, and the whitewashed souls who are proposing to bear aloft the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ. The danger to the church and to Christianity is from within—from those who claim to be religious, while, in reality, they are not. There are not enough of the devil's representatives on earth, nor of his legions in hell, to stop the forward march, and the onward progress of the Church of God, and if it fails in this country, it will be by the suicide act, and not by defeat from without.

Lincoln once said, "This country need have no fear of some trans-Atlantic power coming and subjecting it to a state of slavery, but we will either survive or perish by the deeds wrought within and among ourselves."

That is equally true, friends, regarding the church bought with the blood of Christ.

If you and I could just be content with what the Bible has to say, and transcribe into our lives the eternal principles upon which our hopes of heaven must forever rest, and demonstrate that honesty, that fidelity, and that trustworthiness in our relationships as citizens and members of the body of Christ, there would be no need of long-protracted efforts from the pulpit. Our very lives would be all open epistle known and read of all men, and would draw the multitudes unto Jesus Christ our Lord.

The criticism in this country is not against Christianity, so far as its fundamental and foundation principles are concerned, but it is against men and women who claim to indorse it in theory, and yet slap it in the face in practice.

I appreciate the work being done in this city. I rejoice over the fine practical work being wrought by the Central Church of Christ right in the heart of this city. It is a place where the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the wise and the otherwise, may go and be made to feel at home. There are none so humble but that they are received with open arms, and their physical necessities administered unto. This is the practical application of that religion that is pure and undefiled. It is but the paying of our vows and the performance of our obligations as children of God. In so doing we are building upon the rock of Christ Jesus our Lord.

If I build a magnificent structure upon the shifting sand, it is certain to go to wreck and ruin of its own accord, but if I rear even a humble structure upon the solidity of the Rock, let come what may, it is as certain to weather the storms and bid defiance to the cyclones as God's Word is true.

But all of that is dependent upon my keeping my vows and paying my obligations both to God and man.

Christianity, friends, is a vow unto God. When you march down the aisle, and extend your hand, it is a pledge, a vow, a promise unto the God of the universe. Unfortunately so many have thus done, and later fallen by the wayside. The path of humanity is literally strewn with the bleached bones of those who were unable to press on to the completion of their journey.

I wonder if there are not those in this audience who would like to have part and fellowship in the work of the Lord. Won't you assume life's obligations and pledges, and, to the best of your ability, be faithful even unto the end? If so, come while you can.

**VOWING (No. 2)**

I must express my hearty appreciation for such splendid responses to these noonday addresses. Your presence has been both all inspiration and all encouragement, and whatever good may have resulted, I am sure that all of us rejoice together.

I read to you Psalms 66: 13, 14.

"I will go into shine house with burnt offerings; I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble."

The talk today is but a continuation of that begun yesterday on the subject, "Vowing." I said to you that a vow was a pledge or all obligation, and that the trouble with the world was largely due to the fact that we are not fulfilling our sacred vows, and living up to our pledges and obligations. I said that some among us occupying places of prominence had practiced deception and that confidence had been largely destroyed. After almost every man a question mark has been placed.

A nation is in a strait when such conditions prevail.

We are spending more money and giving more attention to the education of our children than ever before in the history of the world, but the great stream that comes forth from the schoolroom bearing its diplomas year after year is not such a stream as to elicit the greatest confidence on the part of the world into which it passes.

There is something lacking. They are fine specimens of humanity; their intellects have been trained and developed; their perceptive powers have been made acute; and all the intellectuality has been attained that could be expected; but somewhere there is something wrong, and the location of it is in the fact that the schools of the land are lacking in making moral and spiritual impressions upon those committed to their care.

We have got to reverse our gear before peace and tranquillity can prevail upon the earth, and confidence in our fellows be restored.

I had somewhat to say yesterday noon regarding our obligations, the breaking of our word, the failure to pay our honest, just debts, and also indicated that those with whom I am usually classed are not altogether free. All over this country there are preachers (and they belong to no special organization) who are questionable with reference to their honesty in the common business affairs of life. I have heard of preachers who would not pay their rents, grocery bills, etc.

Don't you know, my friends, that the cause of Christ cannot get anywhere with representatives and leaders of that type?

Now I feel sure that my heart is in genuine sympathy with preachers. I know that lots of times the remuneration is so meager that it becomes next to impossible for them to "get by," but that of itself is no reason for not making good their financial obligations, or, at least, doing the very best within their power.

I would not have any preacher on earth to misinterpret what I am now to say. I know that there are various reasons for preachers changing localities, but right on its face that does not always look good. Sometimes there is attached, in spite of what might be the real facts, just a little bit of question when you see a preacher here one year, somewhere else next year, and a third place the next year, and so on. Sometimes there are debts left behind; his influence has departed; his honesty has been questioned; and, hence, he goes to parts unknown.

Now that is unfortunate. I want to tell you that the preachers who have been the most influential are those who have settled down at some place, and have there stayed and built up the cause of Christ around about them. I say it with no reflection upon the others, but I just appreciate such characters as Brother John R. Williams, who planted himself in Obion County and there stayed until twenty and

four congregations were built up, most largely by his efforts.

Over at Greenfield is Brother J. L. Holland, who has been there since I can remember, and is as well beloved today as any citizen in that town or throughout the country.

Brother Joe Ratcliffe is but a synonym for Bardwell, Ky.—mention the one and the other comes to mind.

Brother M. C. Kurfees has been with one congregation in Louisville ever since I heard the name of Kurfees mentioned.

Brother F. W. Smith has been preaching for the church down at Franklin for lo, these many years.

Brother W. D. Campbell stayed with one congregation in the city of Detroit for more than thirty years. Now I think the recitation of these matters complimentary in every phase and feature. It shows that they have been able to make good not only their business obligations, but their lives have been such that there was no occasion for moving. They can look out over the field wherein they have sowed the seed and have developed the crop. It becomes to them a source of joy and rejoicing always.

Let me now call attention to some of the outstanding characters in the Bible, prominent because of the fact that they did what they said they would, and made good their obligations.

In the 14th chapter of Genesis, there is the record of Abraham's having pursued his nephew Lot and the citizens of Sodom far toward the northern part of their land. He wrested them from the grasp of old Chedorlaomer, who had subjected them and was carrying them away. This event is one of the outstanding features in the life of Abraham. Upon his return to the city of Sodom, he was met by the king, who offered to pay him handsomely and richly for such a wonderful victory attained.

Now there would have been nothing wrong in Abraham's accepting silver and gold. He wasn't prejudiced against having such, for the Bible says that Abraham was rich in silver and gold, in flocks and in herds. Well might the king

have given unto him sufficiently of material things for the return of his people.

Why didn't Abraham accept a great remuneration ? Anything wrong in it of itself ? Absolutely not. Would he have been condemned had he done so? Under ordinary circumstances, no. Then why didn't he do it?

My friends, there is just one reason: Abraham said to the king, "I have lifted up my hand unto God that I would not accept from a thread to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is shine." "Why, Abraham?" "I said that I would not." "Well, but, Abraham, did you give your note or sign a bond to the effect that you would not accept anything?"

"No."

"Did you mortgage any of your property?"

"No!"

"Well, what is at stake?"

"Just my word, that's all."

Friends, why has Abraham gone down on the pages of sacred history and his memory been perpetuated on down the line? It is because of the fact that such elements evidenced themselves when he had power to show to the contrary. Therefore, as long as time shall roll on, and God's Book be read, the story of the uprightness and the grandeur of Abraham will influence the generations of men.

Again, in Genesis 28, when Jacob left home at the threat of his brother Esau, and started back to old Padan-aram, he came up from Hebron to Jerusalem, and on twelve miles north to Bethel. Night overtook him and, there being no hotels or places where people ordinarily stay, he simply pillowed his head upon a rock, lay upon the kindly bosom of Mother Earth, had the canopy of the heaven as his cover, and the twinkling stars as his light.

There he slept and dreamed, and in a vision there was a great ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which the angels were ascending and descending. The result of that dream was a recognition of the presence of God. The next morning Jacob took that pillow of stone, and set it up as a pillar and designated that spot the house of God—which the

word Bethel means. Then he said this: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

That is Jacob's vow. That is the thing which proceeded out of his mouth.

Nobody went his security; no piece of property was tied up. Now I understand thoroughly that when a man like Jacob does not have anything, it is all exceedingly easy matter to make promises as to what he will do. Unfortunately, I have noted some characters who, when fortune did chance to come to them, forgot their pledges unto God and turned wholeheartedly away.

Jacob had vowed a vow, and went on his way. He met and married one whom he loved at sight; he stayed in the house of his father-in-law possibly forty years, and at last did return, rich in the affairs of the earth, but so far as history records, the time never was when Jacob failed to make good his vow. It became a law to all his posterity, that one-tenth belongs unto God Almighty.

Again, in 1 Sam. 1, there is a story of interest. A man by the name of Elkanah had two wives; the name of one was Peninnah, and the name of the other was Hannah. Hannah had not, and apparently could not, become a mother. In those days that was a great calamity. Of course, times and customs have changed. The matter grew serious with Hannah. Her desire was to become the mother of a manchild. Finally she went to the Lord in prayer about it, and made a vow unto God, saying: "Oh, Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of shine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget shine handmaid, but wilt give unto shine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head."

In the process of time that prayer was answered, and Samuel was born. His very name means "asked of the

Lord." The mother of Samuel kept him and nursed him and denied herself many trips and pleasures that otherwise she might have indulged in, until, by and by, the time cam' to wean the child.

Now she loved him as tenderly as any of you mothers ever loved your first-born babe, but because of her word, she brought him to the place assigned, and there parted with him, dedicating Samuel to the Lord.

Upon what ground did she part with the very idol of her being? On the principle, "I said I would."

What a fine opportunity today, with corruption and rottenness around about us, for some boy or girl to stand out, and impress the world so that it may say, "What he says you can depend upon." To be absolutely honest, perfectly reliable, plus competent, is the very best that can be had.

This audience knows the pathetic story of Jephthah, who at first was cast off by his brethren, on the ground that his mother was a harlot. They thrust out Jephthah, saying: "Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou art the son of a strange woman."

The time came when those very sons were in subjection to the Ammonites and were struggling and longing for a leader. They decided that there was only one man able to lead them to victory and to wrest them from the oppression. That man was none other than their half-brother whom they had cast aside. With humility they went to Jephthah and said: "Come and be our captain, that are may fight with the children of Ammon."

My friends, we ought to be mighty careful about kicking some poor boy aside, or ignoring someone who could not help conditions round about. That is not the only time that some big swell fellows have, in after years, had to go to some poor boy and ask of him favors. But anyhow, Jephthah came and led them, and as he passed over unto the Ammonites, he lifted up his voice and said, "If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the

children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

You know what happened. The battle raged, and by and by the smoke of warfare cleared away. Victory perched upon the banners of Jephthah's army, and with joy and gladness he returned home amid the anxiety of his people, and as he neared his own house, out stepped his only child, a fair maiden, beside whom he had neither son nor daughter. Upon her approach Jephthah bowed down, and said, "Alas, my daughter! thou has brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back."

The daughter said, 'My father, if thou has opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which proceedeth out of thy mouth.'

You ask, "What the result?" After postponing the matter for two months, the record closes by saying that Jephthah "did with her according to his vow which he had vowed." This meant that his name was to be wiped out and his posterity rendered impossible. But he stands today upon the pages of God's Book a fine illustration of a man's fulfilling his vow and making good his word.

Jephthah had not learned some things. If he had had one of our modern lawyers, he could have turned fool for awhile and had some alienist to sit on his case and declare him insane. But no such chicanery and camouflage had been thought of.

In the New Testament, we have the story of Herod the tetrarch. He had married his brother Philip's wife and had been condemned by John the Baptist. His ancestry was as mean as the devil could wish. Their hands had been dipped into the blood of their fellows, but they had great respect for their word. At a great birthday dinner, his step-daughter, Salome, danced in his presence and greatly delighted him. He was so enraptured that he promised with all oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. Prompted and coached by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of that preacher, John the Baptist." Old Herod did not suspect anything of that kind. He had forgotten all about

John's criticism. Men can do that, but women, never. He had made a pledge, and a vow.

Now Herod is up against this: he must either kill all innocent man or he must break his word. What shall he do about it? What would you have done? Here is the sequel: Herod sent and had John the Baptist beheaded, rather than to go down in history and transmit the story that he went back on what he said. I fancy that even God admired the high regard old Herod had for his word.

When a couple march down the aisle to be united in the sacred relationships of matrimony; when they come in the presence of proper authority and stand under the sacred arch where the orange blossoms kiss the brow of beauty and pledge themselves to live together the remnant of their days, a sacred vow has been made.

How are such treated in this country? Too often it is counted as the proverbial scrap of paper, and any little kind of excuse will be used for a separation. The failure to keep these vows is a stroke at the very foundation of our civilization. Instead of the characters who thus break their vows being relegated to the background and humiliated, it seems to galvanize them into respectability, and they shine forth with a greater luster than ever before. A woman divorced, if not too old, has a better chance to get married than some who have lived in single blessedness for many years.

When anybody comes in response to the gospel invitation, and acknowledges Jesus Christ as the Son of God, he has made the most sacred vow known to man. By that act he pledges, promises, and vows to God the remnant of his days to be consecrated unto His service. How many do you know who have thus made that vow, and today are back in the weak and beggarly elements of the earth? How many have grown cold and indifferent and have brought reproach upon the name of the Christ whom they publicly acknowledged ?

The trouble today with the church of God is not a lack of membership, but it is a lack of fidelity and loyalty on the part of those who pledged themselves unto the cause of Jesus Christ. There are enough Christians to be the light of the

world, which cannot be hid, if they would only cling together and work at the job. Some of us are Christians, nominally, but not in reality.

As we have, therefore, entered into this relationship, that pledge not only means a devotion to God, but my vow means all obligation to my fellows as well. This is a partnership business, and if we will but walk in the light, as He is in the light, we will have fellowship one with another assured of the fact that the blood of His Son will cleanse us from every sin. Therefore, Christians, as you have opportunity, "do good unto all men, but especially unto those who are of the household of faith."

If one of my brethren is in business, and a man not a Christian in the same business next door, and if I can get the same deal with my brother as I can from the one who is not, my obligation is to trade with him who is of the household of faith. And I do that. But I am not going to pay my brother all exorbitant price. I am not going to be out more money in order to accommodate him. If he cannot run his business on a parallel with the others, he has no right to expect my trade.

So then, I believe it to be the duty of Christians to participate in a joint program for the advancement of one another in all the affairs of life. I would like to see a closer tie and the bond of unity made stronger among us. I believe that my vow unto God imposes these things upon me.

But I must close. I wonder if there are any here who have never made that vow, but who now have the courage to pledge themselves and their all to the Lord Jesus Christ? Bring all you have and place it upon the altar, use it for the glory of God, the advancement of His cause, and for your ultimate salvation. If you will do that, it is a great privilege of mine, and a pleasure genuine, to extend to you the gospel call again.

**THE WAY**

Allow me to read to you from Isaiah 35, one of the most beautiful chapters in all the Bible.

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as all hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And all highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

If there is any beauty attached to what is stated, tonight it shall be embodied in its simplicity. It has ever been my chief ambition to present the matter of salvation, the principle by which men and women are to be saved, in such a simple way that everyone who hears may understand clearly what the will of the Lord is.

I want to present to you the story, under the likeness of a way leading from earth to glory—from this to the pilgrim's home beyond.

I know that this is all age of travel, more so than any period the world has ever known. We have largely forsaken the railroads. No longer do we consult the railroad maps, time tables, or schedules, but we now write the A.A. Association and get a map of the roads and highways over our land. We study them, and are directed accordingly.

Let us fancy that we wanted to make a journey to the city of Memphis. There are certain things we would desire to know. First, I would want to ask, is there a road or a way leading from Nashville to Memphis ? If that were answered in the affirmative, then I would ask a second question: where is it ? That being answered, I would ask a third: where can I learn all about it, and get complete information respecting it?

The fourth query is, how can I reach that road? Next, I would inquire, are there any hindrances to my entering into it?

With these answered satisfactorily, I would have one more question, how can I keep in it? Are there any signs put up? Are there guides along the way? With all this information before me, I would know positively that if I ever got into the road or way, and then would keep on going, never letting up, I would be just as certain to reach Memphis as I proceeded in my onward journey.

Now that is quite simple. All of us have had experiences like that. Now, I want to ask this: is there a New Jerusalem, a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God?

I am constrained to believe that there is. Next question: do I want to reach that destination when life's journey shall have passed, and its dream ended?

Of course, every sober, sane, sensible man would like to share the bliss of that wonderful land. So I become wonderfully interested in it, and want to ask some things regarding it.

Friends, is there a way that leads from this to that destination? If not, then we might close out all of our religious

services, and write "Finis" over every church building's door, and stop our activities in every way. We might haul down the blood-stained banner of Christ Jesus our Lord and erect the blackest flag that a blatant infidel could possibly fancy or picture.

Is there a way? Standing upon the hilltops of Israel in the long ago, Isaiah had somewhat to say along this line. In the 35th chapter, and verse 8, "All highway shall be there and a way." Now, I submit to you that Isaiah pictures two ways. How are they designated? One of them is called a *highway*, and the other is simply styled *a way*.

I do not think there can be any doubt about there being two different ways. Isaiah plainly pictures the coming of the Christ and the evidence by which he shall be known. He says, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as all hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing."

I turn to the New Testament about 800 years after and find that Jesus Christ did come. I look round about for these evidences of his appearance, and the illustrations are abundant' and examples are a plenty, where the eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf were unstopped, and other evidences thus pictured.

In that memorable sermon on the mount, Christ said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Isaiah said there would be two ways to challenge the attention of mortal man. Christ presented them. Isaiah distinguished them as the *highway* and the *a way*. Christ calls them the *broad way* and the *narrow way*. Hence the *high way* of Isaiah is the *broad way* of Christ. The *a way* of the prophet is the *narrow way* of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But look at it again. "All highway shall be there, and a way, and it"—not the *highway*, but the *a way*—shall be called the way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over

it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Friends, I am thoroughly convinced that there is a way. I need no further argument along that line, and I am glad, therefore, to repeat that which is in Holy Writ, viz: there is a way from this world to the eternal shore.

Now the next question: where is that road? What is it? Allow me to read to you, from the first part of John, 14th chapter, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way you know. But Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Christ never said, "I am a way," "I am *some way*," "I am *one way*," but He said, "I am *the way*." And to give emphasis, He added, "I am not only the way, but I am the truth and the life; and no man can come unto the Father but by me."

I have a great many friends who tell me after this fashion, viz: "Brother Hardeman, all of us are seeking the same objective. I am going one way, you are going another, but we will land at the same general union depot after all." That could not be true. The Bible knows nothing about any except one way, and it is positively stated that it is impossible for a man to reach that destiny by any other way whatsoever.

Friends, that thing is settled. "I am the way," and beside Him there is none other.

Well, the next question. Having learned that there is a way, and that it is Jesus the Christ, then I ask, where may I learn about it? Where may I get information regarding it?

In John 5: 39, Christ said, "Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify for me." But who is the "me"?

"I am the way." Therefore, all information, every chart, all manner of instruction necessary is found in the sacred oracles. Hence, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright God's word." It will direct you, and lead you into the way of truth and of light.

With these points thus far answered clearly, the next one naturally comes. How can I get to Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life? In what manner may I approach, or come unto Him who is the way?

In the 6th chapter of John, commencing with verse 44, there are these words: "No man can come unto me"—and remember, "I am the way"—"except the Father which has sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

I know good and well that teaches that a man must be drawn unto Jesus Christ, who is the way.

Just at that point much theology and speculation have been brought in. None of us rejects the statement or denies that a man must be drawn. If we allow ourselves to fancy how it may be done, without a further study of the Bible, we reach varied and scattered conclusions.

I cannot imagine tonight how any man can be drawn, even by God, aside from God's power. The only way possible for me to draw men my way would be by my power, and if a man must be drawn unto God, or unto Christ, it is done by the matchless power of Jehovah.

But you ask: what is that power by which men are drawn? The answer is found in Romans 1: 16, wherein Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth." Therefore, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." God's drawing power must be exerted.

But the very next verse, in John 6, says the same thing, and now I bid you hear verses 44 and 45 together: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of

God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Who is "me"? "I am the way." Man comes unto Christ by hearing, learning, coming.

Friends, the Christianity of this book is all intelligent affair. The religion of the Bible is a thing that man learns: and learning is the first step toward Jesus Christ, the way that leads from this to the other shore.

No wonder, then, it is declared, "They shall be all taught of God." No wonder that the Christ said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." And again, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." For it has pleased God, by that which the world calls the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.

Therefore, friends, a man comes to Christ, is drawn unto him by hearing, by learning.

But as a result of hearing men receive faith. "Faith comes by hearing God's word," and when a man is led to believe a thing, the very next step, naturally and logically, is that he turn toward its acceptance. Hence, the items in the plan of salvation—faith and repentance are those things that draw a man unto Jesus Christ.

But what does *unto* mean? A very small, little word, I grant you, but words are the signs of ideas. They are the wrappers in which God's thoughts are conveyed to mortal man. That word simply signifies, "to, toward, in the direction of." It never means transferred from without to within, but it carries the idea of approach, coming toward, moving in that direction. Every step that you took, tonight, from the time you left your home until you were yonder at the front door, was a step of *unto*. That brought you up to the margin of the tabernacle. There you fulfilled all the significance of the word *unto*.

Then what? It was necessary, in the illustration, for you to take another step, and that next step was not characterized by the word *unto* but by the word *Into*.

I know there is a mighty little difference in the spelling. Just drop the "u" and put all "I," and you have the other

word, but it has a different meaning and carries with it this thought, viz: transition from the outside to the inside.

If I wanted to get this knife within that hat, it must first be brought *unto* the hat. Hence, as I move it toward, or in the direction of the hat, the word *unto* prevails. It has now been brought to the margin. Now you want to put it *into* it. What does *into* mean? From the outside to the inside. All right. I transfer the knife from without to within.

I walk up to the home of some neighbor, and knock at the door. I have come *unto* his home. I knock, and courteously he opens the door. He does not say, "Walk *unto* the house," but "Walk *into* the house."

Back in the country, when I was younger than I am now, we use to slip off and go to the old mill pond. We didn't go in bathing either, we went in a-washing. Of course, I would say now, "Let's go in bathing," I remember quite well how we hastened toward the margin of the creek and removed the little paraphernalia we were accustomed to wear. Those were steps *unto*. Then we jumped *into* it. I knew exactly what these words meant before I ever saw a dictionary, or learned anything about the Bible.

Friends, make the application further. How come into Christ Jesus? Faith that comes from hearing and learning God's word, plus turning in the direction which I have learned, are those steps that bring us *unto* those things we desire. That's the way the Bible talks about it.

In Romans 10: 10, Paul said, "With the heart man believeth *unto* righteousness." The word *into* never follows faith. The idea of a man's having faith *into* a thing is contrary to good sense. Nowhere, in the Bible or out of the Bible, is it correct to talk about a man's believing *into*. You could not believe *into* the Masonic Lodge to save your life. In addition to that faith you have in it, you must ride the goat.

You cannot believe *into* the Odd Fellow Lodge. I once was a member of that, and I know whereof I speak regarding it. You may have faith in it, but you cannot have faith *into* it, because the word does not so signify. So Paul

said, "With the heart man believeth *unto*." Acts 11: 18, "Repentance is *unto*."

Those are steps that bring a soul unto Jesus Christ, who is the way.

My next inquiry was this: are there any stop signals? Is there a bar across my passage? How may I enter *into* the way?

I wonder if it would be possible for all of us to be willing and candid enough just to accept what the Bible says about it without any comment or explanation? In the sixth chapter of Romans, I begin with verse 1 and read four verses, which I bid you hear carefully:

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Now I never put that in the Bible. God said that.

But you ask, "Brother Hardeman, what does that mean?" I think I know. It means this: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

That is what it means. Now if you ask me how do I know, here is the answer: that is what it says, and I do not think that God was joking about it, or merely playing upon words.

Friends, Paul says, "We are baptized *into* Jesus Christ." Now what does *into* mean? Transition. From where? From the outside to the inside. But you know that you could not possibly baptize a man *into* Jesus Christ, unless first, that man had come *unto* him. It would be impossible for you to come *into* this tabernacle without having come *unto* it. You took certain steps that brought you *unto* it. You took a final step that transferred you *into* it. The idea

of a man's thinking he can be baptized *into* Jesus Christ without the proper antecedents of faith and of repentance, is all idea foreign to the teachings of God's book.

Again, Paul said, in Galatians 3: 26, 27, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ."

How many are in Christ? "As many of you." How many? Just as many. Any more? No. Any less? No. We are children of God by faith in Christ.

You who have been baptized *into* Jesus Christ have put Him on. Friends, that is the way it is in your Bibles. Numbers of people, up in Alaska, may not believe it, but it is there nevertheless.

But some of my good friends say, "Well, Brother Hardeman, I cannot understand it." My friend, I do not much believe you can misunderstand it. I doubt if there is a responsible man in Nashville who is able to misunderstand that by himself. He might get some expert help, and, finally, have the matter clouded, and imagine that he does not understand it, but that would be a mere fancy.

But again, 1 Cor. 12: 13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized *into* one body." That body is the church, the family of God.

Who is the way? Jesus Christ said, "I am the way." How get into Christ? The Bible says we are baptized into Him. Friends, that is all I know about it. But that is enough.

Question: am I willing to accept that, or will I raise a question of doubt, and try to ease my conscience by respecting the commandments of men?

Do you think that because Christ commands a soul to believe, to repent and to be baptized, the matter of grace is eliminated from salvation? Can it be by grace, and yet upon the terms that grace imposes? There is not a man or a woman in Nashville who believes that salvation is by grace any more than does your humble servant. With all my heart I believe that it is by the grace of God, and through

the faith of man. But a faith that stops short of obedience is not the faith that brings the salvation or blessing.

But, says one, "I don't believe in baptism." Hardeman doesn't either. I believe in Christ. He is the object of all my faith, for He is the way, and I cannot believe in Christ, and disbelieve in anything that He said. Faith in Christ implies all acceptance of what He says.

When any of my people get sick, I send for the doctor. My faith rests in him, but it would be a sorry faith that would not do what the doctor said.

But, friends, having entered into the way that leads to Memphis does not mean that we are certain to reach that city. We are now ready to commence to begin. To stop now would be futile to our first ambition. We must travel in that way until the journey is over. There are marks all along to guide and to assure us of our safety.

So when a man enters Jesus Christ, who is the way, he must likewise continue his course until the end is reached and the crown is won. That straight and narrow way has its signs all along. On one you see written, "Pray without ceasing." On another, "Practice the principles of pure and undefiled religion." Still further, this, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." And then, "Let your light so shine." Finally, "Be thou faithful unto death."

As you near the end and come to touch the waters in that last stream, you may ask, Master, what is this? The reply will come: "Hold fast your hand in mine." A little later, the white caps may burst round about you and the waves sweep over your brow. Jesus will then say: "This is the end of life's journey, and I now transport you into the golden glories of our Father's home."

Will you, my friends, enter into that way and pledge the remnant of your days to His service? If so, I now bid you come, while angels watch and wait.

**AUTHORITY**

I want to discuss today the question: What Constitutes Authority in Religion?

I read from Matthew 7: 21-29: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine; For he taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

The Christ is here pictured in contradistinction to the scribes then prominent. By virtue of the fact that they copied the Law of Moses repeatedly, they were supposed to know quite a bit about what it said, hence were often consulted regarding legal matters.

Christ came publicly announcing that while Moses said this or that, I say unto you otherwise. Thus he impressed the world from the beginning that he spake as one clothed with authority from on high.

Therefore, he said all power in heaven and in earth has been delegated or given to me.

My friends, in the religious world today, as well as in the political and social, there is much disturbance. A spirit of restlessness prevails. I may not know the cause of it, but, in my humble opinion, very much of this disturbance and chaotic condition everywhere in evidence is due to the fact that we are lacking in the recognition of the right standard of authority to govern us in our respective affairs.

Men do not always see matters in the same way. Disputes arise; conflicts over our rights and privileges abound; and, but for the fact that there has been established in this land, civil courts by which our troubles are to be settled, we would be hopelessly in a continued state of confusion.

I recognize full well that when I am abused, or my rights are trespassed upon, I can appeal to the courts of our land. These are arranged as a graded system so that from the lower I can appeal even to the supreme court of our state. The decision then rendered becomes authority and beyond it I cannot go.

In the business world there are standards to govern our transactions. I go into the grocery store, to buy, for instance, a dollars worth of sugar. How do I know that I am getting 16 ounces to the pound? Of course, I see the merchant's scales, but sometimes there has been doubt as to their correctness. What are you going to do about it?

In the department at Washington there are standard weights and measures, and everyone's scales are right or wrong according as they conform to the standard adopted by our government.

How do you ladies know, when you buy a yard and three-quarters of dress goods, that you are getting 36 inches to the yard? Of course, you see the merchant measure it, but there may be some doubt of its correctness. Our government has a platinum stick 86 inches long. By this others are to be determined, and thus the controversy is ended. In every department of life, there must be some standard of authority to determine our affairs.

In religion it is, perhaps, more essential than anywhere else that a correct standard be adopted. With reference to what that standard is, there are two schools to which all

conceptions and ideals may be reduced. These two opposite thoughts are challenging our attention and demanding consideration.

They are designated by terms that are rather new, namely, Modernism and Fundamentalism. The question then comes, Am I a Modernist? or, Am I a Fundamentalist? With one or the other I am almost forced to take my stand.

What do these terms mean? If I am to discuss matters that now attract attention, I must acquaint myself with these words, and find out their use and significance. I have read the literature and journals of both these schools of thought. I think I know what they themselves mean.

"Modernism" is a word coined by Pope Pius X, and first applied to teachers in Europe who, he thought, had departed from the original teaching and platform of the fathers. It has culminated into a great force, and there be many today, not among the lower, ignorant class, but among the very best minds of the land, that have drifted into its teachings, and stand as propagators of the theory summed up in it. What does the word mean? Modernism represents that attitude of the heart and trend of the mind which rejects the Bible as authority, and substitutes each one's intellect as his sole guide and criterion.

I have nothing to gain, but all to lose, in misrepresenting anything, regardless of what I think about it. I have, therefore, been rather careful to try to frame up, from the writings of Modernists themselves, just what they indicate and signify in such a statement. So I repeat, Modernism rejects the Bible as authority; relegates it to the background; reduces it to a common plane with uninspired writings, and exalts the intellect of man as the sole standard by which one is to be governed.

I want you to think on that just a moment. Since the drift of men's minds is not always in parallel lines, there will be, of necessity, everlasting conflicts.

The ultimate analysis of that very thought would mean this, viz: each individual would become a standard of his own, and, therefore, the world has never dreamed of the confusion, the contradiction and the wonderful chaotic state

of affairs that would result if such a thought were universally adopted.

Under such conditions, I would become amenable to no power on earth. In the courts of our land I could appear in my own defense and announce that what I have done meets with my approval. I see nothing wrong in it. My conscience is clear. Therefore, I am guilty of no wrong whatsoever.

The ultimate thing to which Modernism objects is the idea of miracles. The theory is that whatever cannot be understood and thoroughly comprehended should be rejected as unworthy of acceptance. The adoption and the acceptance of a thing that one cannot understand is belittling to his good sense, and a reflection upon his mentality. Such is the essence of modernism.

But, friends, a moment's reflection ought to suggest to you that this world is filled with miracles. There are hundreds of things I know to be true and, yet, I do not understand them. As to what life is, we know no more today than did the first pair in paradise sixty centuries ago. I know quite a bit about its principles, about the laws governing it, the rules and regulations for its perpetuity, and so on. But what is that thing which, having, a man moves around among his friends, and having not, his body lies cold in death and we bury it away in the kindly bosom of mother earth? What is that thing?

The chemist can go into his laboratory, take a grain of corn, analyze it into all of its physical elements, and tell you exactly its composition. Then he can take the very elements out of which it was created and bring them back together in such accurate proportions and present you with a grain of corn that you cannot tell from the genuine; but you plant his into the soil, and you can bid it good-bye. Pluck one from the ear, and plant it, and it will burst through the crust of earth, be kissed by the sun, and caressed by the showers, and at last bring forth others after its kind.

What is that in the one, that is not in the other, that thing we call life? Why doesn't the chemist put it in his? Don't blame him. He would if he only knew how.

Friends, when you go into the dining-room to partake of the good things this country has, and eat to your satisfaction, do you understand how it is that some of that food goes to supply bones, some muscles, some nerves, etc.? A part of that food will make your nails grow and other parts will send you to the barber shop.

Does the professor in the school understand these things? He does not, and yet, we all accept such as facts. The same food will produce white skin on you, black skin on the Negro, and yellow skin on the Chinaman. Why all this? Miracles never bother anybody in the kitchen or dining-room. It is only in the pulpit or in the school room. It becomes ridiculously absurd for us to talk about the rejection of miracles.

I wonder if some professor in Nashville can tell me why it is that a black cow can eat green grass and give white milk from which we get yellow butter?

But, friends, the serious part of this is, that Modernists reject the Bible on the ground that it contains miracles. Inspiration is a miracle. I don't propose to explain it. I don't understand just how God enabled Holy men of old to speak. Because of this inability, Modernists claim that the Bible should be rejected as all inspired volume and be reduced to a level with Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," Milton's "Paradise Lost," or any of the great classics that have come down through the ages.

Modernists reject the Virgin birth of Christ, on the very same principle, namely, they cannot understand it. Well, of course, they can't.

They begin to reason as follows: In the vegetable world there must be two kinds of plants, male and female. They talk fluently and intelligently regarding the transportation of the pollen from one to the other, and the depositing of the very germ out of which new life springs.

They go to the animal world and ask of our boys and girls, did you ever see all animal, unless back of it there were both male and female as parents? Of course not. Then they make all appeal unto humanity. Did you ever know of a character born on this earth of just one parent? Surely not. Now, upon that process of reasoning they conclude

that the story of the Virgin birth is incredible. Because he cannot understand it, and it is contrary to any of his observations or experiences in life, the Modernist thinks it belittling to his intellect to go along blindly, and accept that which he cannot understand.

Again, he asks, with a spirit of superiority, how is it that the blood of a man shed two thousand years ago, and eight thousand miles away from Nashville, can affect the sin of a man here in *1928*?

Well, I don't think he can understand it. I don't myself. Then, because he doesn't understand that, and see just the philosophy and just the connection, then what? He rejects the atoning power and the efficacy of the blood of Christ. But he wants you Christian parents to know that he believes the Bible all right; he just doesn't accept its inspiration, and the atoning power of the blood of Christ.

Then again, the resurrection from the dead is contrary to our experience and observation. There is no data from which one can lay down premises and from them draw a sensible, logical conclusion, that all the dead will come forth. It is miraculous, and the Modernist says, "I cannot accept it on the ground that I do not understand it."

Friends, to a Modernist there is no resurrection; there is no power in the blood of Christ; the Bible was not penned as the Spirit moved holy men of days gone by; Jesus Christ was but a man. Notwithstanding all this, they have the monumental gall to tell me they believe the Bible. Not so. Absolutely not.

If they had the boldness to express their real sentiments, they would come out plainly and repudiate the Word of God.

If Christ has not been raised from the dead, and if he did not ascend to the Father where he was crowned both Lord and King, surely he will not come to earth again. Hence Modernists reject the second coming of Christ.

Modernism stands for everything on earth that was ever taught by old Voltaire, David Hume, our own Tom Paine, or any other skeptic of whom you have ever heard.

It has some exceedingly nice terms to be applied to such as I. By Modernists, I am called a reactionary, a non-pro-

gressive, uneducated, unscientific, uncultured, all ignoramus, all old mops back, a back number, a bigot, a crank, a legalist, etc. But these things move me not. These go to make up the devil's effort to brow-beat, to bulldoze, and to run rough shod over all opposition. They announce that all the educated, the first class, and the learned of earth are marching under the banner of Modernism. That is not so.

God be praised because thousands there are who believe His word and crown Him Lord of all.

There are many more today as devout, as learned, as intelligent, and as scholarly, who accept God's word, than there are of those who bid defiance unto Jehovah, repudiate his word, and make light of the cause for which Christ died.

I now turn to the other line of thought and call your attention to the term Fundamentalism. This word is the exact opposite of Modernism. Whatever one means, the other signifies the reverse. They are antithetic in all respects.

Modernism relegates the Bible to a common level with uninspired writings. Fundamentalism exalts the word of God and believes it was penned by inspiration. Modernists ridicule the story of the Virgin birth. Fundamentalists accept Christ as the Son of God. Modernists repudiate the atoning power of the blood of Jesus; they sneer at the resurrection; and they blight the hope of our Lord's coming again.

Fundamentalists believe that the blood of Christ can cleanse a soul from sin; they entertain a hope of the resurrection, and look for his glorious appearance at the last day. To a Modernist, this life ends it all. To a Fundamentalist, this is but the beginning. He believes there is all existence beyond this vale of tears.

Unfortunately, Fundamentalists are divided into three classes, viz: Catholics, Denominationalists, and Christians. All claim to believe the Bible and to accept every miracle it contains. They are, therefore, classed as Fundamentalists. You have a right to ask, wherein do they differ? May I answer that the difference among these three classes is purely a difference of what constitutes authority?

When any matter of doctrine or polity arises in the Catholic church, by what authority is such determined? Is the question settled by the Bible? Absolutely not. The pope calls together his cardinals who, with himself as chief justice, form all ecclesiastical court. Any question unsettled is thoroughly discussed and, at last, a verdict is rendered. That decision is by them counted infallible, and it is fastened upon the churches throughout the world. Their opinion is authority for any doctrine or practice among them.

Denominationalists and Christians repudiate their claims of infallibility and hence, while all are Fundamentalists, they are hopelessly divided on the question of authority.

But, practically all denominations are only a step removed. In becoming a member of them, one must take a solemn pledge and make a sacred vow to support the discipline, confession of faith, prayer book, etc. These little man-made books govern the denominations and become authority among them. Who made the creeds? Of course, they are written by uninspired men, and hence, they become authority in every denomination accepting them. Ask any member of these human organizations about any point of doctrine or practice, and he invariably turns to his creed for authority regarding such. They are all creed bound, and are as much under the authority of the uninspired as any Catholic in all the land. Among our digressive friends, the same principle prevails. They have accepted no human creed but parts of their doctrine and practice are determined by a majority vote of their members. The organization of societies, the introduction of mechanical instruments, and the reception of the unimmersed as members are all determined by the voice of uninspired men. These matters are voted on, and the worldly-minded and untaught usually are in the majority. This then becomes the doctrine and polity of the church. These things are fastened upon them by human authority, and they make of our brethren in error one among the denominations which hinder the progress of the cause of Christ and render impossible that unity so earnestly sought by Christ and the apostles.

Christians claim to be fundamentalists, but they cannot indorse such practices, neither can they recognize human

authority. To them, the Bible and the Bible alone is the source of authority. Whatever it teaches, demands, or commands they are ready to accept. Beyond its declarations they dare not go. To them the Bible is to be taken in full or it is unworthy of serious consideration. It is either the sum of all authority or it is none at all. It is either the work of God or it is a product of man. It is either a lamp unto our feet or it is a shadow along our way.

Christians propose to take God at His word; believe what He says; become and be what He requires; try to live as He directs; and trust Him for the promises.

They claim to be nothing, preach nothing, practice nothing, for which there is no authority in the word of God. When any matter is presented, they ask: Does the Bible authorize it? Does God demand it? If so, they are ready to accept it and make it a part of their religious program.

In the brief time allotted, I have submitted these conceptions of authority. I beg of you today to accept the Christian idea, and to plant your feet upon the Bible and upon that alone. If such be your will now, the invitation is extended.

## **IS THE BIBLE CREDIBLE?**

Your continued presence and evidence of interest in these talks are genuinely appreciated not only by me, but by those brethren who are making possible this meeting. Allow me to read to you 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Again, I read 2 Peter 1: 3, "According as his Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness." With the passing of the years, issues change and a different line of preaching is in demand. The paramount issue today is not what the Bible teaches on some special subject, but whether or not the Bible itself is credible and reliable. The time and place of the establishment of the church, the design of baptism, the operation of the Holy Spirit, etc., are, for the time, largely relegated. Men who claim to be educated are ridiculing the Word of God, and declaring it unworthy of the confidence of man. In discussing matters today, one must know the meaning of certain terms and be able to defend the claims of Christianity. I call attention to such words as Integrity, Genuineness and Authenticity. What do we mean by these words? Without being tedious, let me submit that by the integrity of all ancient book is meant its wholeness, or its uncorrupted preservation. That integrity has been preserved when it has come down the ages without material change. The branch of science treating of this subject is called Textual Criticism or Biblical Criticism.

There is not a writing of antiquity but that in passing down the ages has had some change in it. A restoration of the original text has ever been a useful and important work. Christians believe that our Bible today is a true and accurate statement of what God revealed through holy men of old. They accept the integrity of this sacred volume. By the genuineness of a book is simply meant that it was written

by the one whose name it bears. In case no name is attached, its author would be determined from other considerations. Was the letter to the Romans written by Paul, or did another write it and forge his name?

The authenticity of a book raises the question of its credibility or reliability. In order to be authentic, a book does not have to be infallibly accurate, but it must possess that degree of reliability which belongs to historical writings of the better class. In the light of this setting, is the Word of God authentic? This involves the science of Historical Criticism or Higher Criticism. This again is of two classes. Christians are interested in Higher Criticism of a constructive kind. Infidels are engaged in the destructive type.

To determine the authenticity of any writing, certain canons have been formulated. The following are generally accepted:

1. The writings of a contemporary, who is credible, and who has had opportunity for personal knowledge of the facts recorded, have the highest degree of credibility. Under this head, public records, monuments, and inscriptions, made by contemporaries, are included.

2. Those of a writer who may be reasonably supposed to have obtained his information from eye-witnesses possess the second degree of credibility.

3. Writings based upon oral tradition have the least degree of credibility, but when the traditions of one people are corroborated by those of a foreign and even hostile people, their value is wonderfully increased. Their value depends upon the improbability of accidental agreement, and the impossibility of collusion.

4. The concurrent testimony of independent writers greatly increases the probability of all event; and their agreement has the greater force when it is purely incidental, as when one only alludes to all event which the other narrates, or mentions a circumstance incidentally explained by another.

All application of these canons to the writers of the New Testament will be classed as follows:

Of the four Gospels, Matthew and John come under Canon 1, because they were eye-witnesses of what they wrote. The same is true of Luke regarding that portion of Acts in which he speaks in the first person; and of Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John in their epistles, so far as they record things that took place under their observation. The two Gospels, Mark and Luke, and a part of Acts come under Canon 2, because they wrote such events as were narrated to them.

So, out of the eight writers of the New Testament, six possess the highest degree of historical credibility, so far as opportunities to know are concerned, and only two have the second degree.

The high character of these writings evidenced by the purity of the sentiments expressed, lifts them above the suspicion of being untrustworthy, and secures to them a credibility equal to that of the very best historians.

Unless there is special reason for doubt, their writings should be accepted as readily as any of the facts which go to make up history.

The evidence from external sources regarding Jesus is indeed meager, but there are reasons for such. At the time he lived, the world was absorbed in military greatness. Only heroes and heroines on the field of battle attracted attention. Worldly glory and deeds of earthly valor were worthy of mention, but moral force and spiritual achievements were passed into obscurity. The weapons used by Christ and His disciples were not carnal. He had no great armies, clad in brilliant uniforms, bearing aloft His unfurled banners. He had no great political powers or men of wealth to sing His praise. He was from a despised town and lived among the poorest of the earth, and hence, why should a historian take notice of one so humble?

Among Jewish writers who possessed information necessary to speak with any degree of accuracy, there is only one. Of course, I refer to Josephus, the son of Matthias. He was by his mother descended from the Asmonean family, which for a long time had the supreme government of the Jewish nation. Josephus was born in Jerusalem in the year 37 A.D. This was four years after the death of Christ

and the establishment of the church. James was beheaded in the same city when Josephus was seven years of age. He made such progress in school that, at the age of fourteen, the high priests and some of the principal men of the city came to consult him about the right interpretation of the law. At the age of sixteen, he retired into the wilderness, where he spent three years in seclusion. Having learned fully of the three sects, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, he, at nineteen, determined to follow the rule of the Pharisees. Thus he entered public life.

Governor Felix had sent some priests to Rome to be tried before Caesar, and Josephus, being then twenty-six years old, resolved to go to Rome and plead their cause. He had a bad voyage; the ship was wrecked; and out of six hundred on board, not more than eighty were saved. He met in Rome the emperor's wife, and through her interest procured the release of his clients. Upon his return to Judea, he found things in great confusion. His people were revolting against Roman rule. After the war Began, he was sent to take command of forces in Galilee, and there he fortified the cities as best he could from the attacks of Rome. He was finally shut up in a city for forty-seven days, and then took refuge in a deep cavern with forty other men of prominence. A woman revealed his hiding to Roman authority and only Josephus and one other escaped death. He was present when Titus marched against Jerusalem and he saw the ruin of his city and his country. After the war, he went to Rome and was made a citizen. He drew all annual pension the remnant of his days and died in the year 100.

He was prominent as a great writer, and herein he is best known to us. His works are considered authentic. He wrote *History of the Jewish War*, *The Jewish Antiquities*, and his *Autobiography*. In all his writings, he had but little to say about Jesus. Well might we expect to look to him for all account of the stirring events of the early church, but in this we are sadly disappointed. Perhaps there is a good reason. He could have given no truthful account of Jesus or the church which would not have been a story of shame

for the sect to which he belonged. His chief purpose was to elevate his own people in the minds of both Greeks and Romans, who hated them most bitterly. Hence the best policy was that of silence regarding the Christ. Others have adopted the same policy toward those who claim to be Christians only. Experience has taught them that discussion is fatal to their views, and their extorts are centered on fighting Christianity by letting it alone. The silence of Josephus and all early Jewish writers is illustrated by the following story: Less than a hundred years ago, the Congregationalists and the Baptists of England sent each a deputation of two ministers to visit the United States to ascertain the true state of religious societies in the new world as respects doctrines, practices and parties. They were then to report the same, truthfully and faithfully, to the nation of Great Britain. They came and later made a voluminous report. In this country there was a community of Christians of about 150,000 members, with various periodicals promulgating their views through every state and territory in the Union. They were, however, unpopular with the leaders of these two sects which nicknamed them "Campbellite" and their profession, "Campbellism." One of their teachers had said: "The most successful way of fighting Campbellism is to let it alone." In giving a full and accurate report of religious societies in America, the Congregationalists had this to say: "In this disorganized state, Mr. Campbell came among them (the Baptists) with his new lights, and nothing now is heard amongst them but Campbellism, as it is called. The people of this denomination, and especially the teachers, had made too much of their peculiarities as Baptists. Campbell came amongst them, and made everything of them, and has succeeded to all alarming extent. He denounces everybody; he unsettles everything, and settles nothing; and there is great present distraction and scandal."

The Baptists made the following report: "In the State of Kentucky there was some distraction in the churches in consequence of the introduction of Campbellism."

Do not wonder then that Jesus, the apostles, and the ancient Christians received so little consideration from Josephus. Human nature still runs in its ancient channels. But he does corroborate the Bible in his discussion of many matters. His testimony is all the stronger because it was never intended to strengthen the sacred oracle. In giving all account of a war between Herod the Tetrarch and his father-in-law, Aretas, King of Petrea, he tells of the intrigue between Herod and his half-brother's wife, Herodias. While old Herod was visiting Rome, it was agreed that when! he returned home she would go and live with him. A part of the contract was that the daughter of Aretas was to be put away. A war arose between Herod and his father-in-law and the former's army was practically destroyed.

Josephus says: "But some of the Jews were of opinion that God had suffered Herod's whole army to be destroyed as a just punishment on him for the death of John, called the Baptist."

He also says, "Herod had killed John who was a just man, and had called upon the Jews to be baptized, and to practice virtue."

The details of all the above are not mentioned by Matthew, Mark and Luke, but they do tell of the incestuous marriage described. Here, there is perfect agreement on matters of fact, and it is evident that the reports are quite independent of the other.

Josephus also gives all account of the death of James, the Lord's brother. In that account he calls him "the brother of Jesus who was called Christ, whose name was James." This shows that these two persons, and especially Jesus, were well known in the heathen world.

I next call your attention to the first Roman writer of note. Caius Cornelius Tacitus, whose ancestors are unknown, was born about the middle of the first century and died in the year 117, Thus he lived contemporary with the apostles and early Christians. He was chosen praetor of Rome in the year 88, and was made consul in 97. He wrote, *Description of Germany*, *The Life of Agricola* (his father-in-law), *History of Rome*, and *Annals of Rome*. He is

one of the most reliable of Roman writers and his superiority of style is such that two of his books are used as texts in our best colleges. Tacitus had no respect for Christians and speaks of them in the bitterest terms. His evidence, therefore, is the evidence of a foe, and becomes all the stronger because of such. Summing up his testimony, we offer the following:

1. That Christ is the *founder* of the *sect* of the *Christians*.
2. That Christ was *put to death as a criminal*.
3. That He was put to death by *Pontius Pilate*.
4. That Tiberius was then Emperor of Rome. Hence--
5. The Messiah was born in the reign of *Augustus*.
6. This "pernicious superstition" was then checked for a time.
7. This "pernicious superstition" *broke out again*, and spread not only over Judea, but reached the city of Rome.
8. That Christians were persecuted in Rome as early as the year *64*, about thirty years after the death of Christ.
9. A vast number was discovered and condemned, not only because they were accused of burning the city, but because of their hatred for mankind.
10. They were hated as the offscourings of the earth, and as the filth of all things; their executions were so contrived as to expose them to derision and contempt.
11. They were destroyed, not out of regard to the public welfare, but to gratify the cruelty of one man.

Tacitus hated the Christians, because they refused to worship his idol gods, and thus disparaged the national religion which, as a Roman statesman, he delighted to honor. There is no crime charged against the disciples of Jesus in all the volumes of this great writer.

If the New Testament had failed to come down to our age, these statements alone would have furnished all account of the origin, progress and sufferings of the church, practically as found in the New Testament which we have.

This testimony, independent and even hostile, according to Canon 4, enhances the probability of the facts themselves.

The next Roman writer is Pliny, "the younger," to distinguish him from all uncle bearing the same name and a man of some repute. Pliny was born near Milan, Italy, in the year 61 A.D.

He was all elegant writer of the epistolary type. He witnessed the eruption of old Mount Vesuvius in the year 79, as it buried the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii thirty feet beneath the surface, and he has written the best account of that tragic event. He was made consul of Rome in the year 100, and was proconsul of Bithynia under Trajan in the years 106-108.

Upon entering Bithynia he found a great persecution waged by government authority in progress. For a while he continued it, but finally wrote a letter to Trajan, the emperor, in which he stated the facts he found and asked for instructions of procedure. From his letter the following points of information are gathered.

1. A vast number of Christians were then in Bithynia, of every age and rank, of both sexes, and in all parts of the country.

2. Such was the influence of their teaching, that the heathen temples were almost deserted, and the victims for heathen sacrifices could hardly find a purchaser.

3. None who were really Christians could, by any means, be compelled to make supplication to tile image of Caesar, or the statue of the gods.

4. After the most searching inquiry, including the torture of certain Christians to force confessions from them, he had found no vices among them.

5. They suffered for the name of being Christians, without the charge of any crime.

6. They were accustomed, on stated days, to hold two meetings, one for singing "in concert" hymns to Christ, and for making vows to live righteously; and the other for eating a "harmless meal."

7. Those who were Roman citizens were sent to Rome for trial.

This testimony comes from all independent source and is prompted

It is in perfect harmony with the New Testament narrative. The sending of those who were Romans to Rome is parallel with the experience of the Apostle Paul.

"If any suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."

The most skeptical of earth are forced to accept the evidence that comes from Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny and other classic writers. But should there be any discrepancy between these and those of the New Testament, the preference would be with the latter because they were much better informed on the subject.

The period covered by New Testament history was characterized by frequent and complicated changes in the political affairs of Judea and those countries round about. None of these are accurately described in the New Testament and yet it contains many allusions to them in all incidental way. Josephus gives a detailed account of all. This fact affords a most excellent opportunity to test the accuracy of sacred writers. Agreement can be accounted for on no ground except perfect information on both sides. The New Testament reader who has no other source of information is left in great confusion. In the history of Matthew and Luke we read of "Herod the King." In Mat. 2, we find that Herod the King dies, yet in chapter 14, Herod appears again and is called "the king" and "the tetrach." In Acts 12, Herod the King beheads James. In these statements not a word of explanation appears. In Mat. 2, Archelaus is king of Judea, and in Mat. 27, Pilate is governor of the same region. In Acts 12, Herod is king of Judea, and in Acts 23, Felix is its governor. No explanation is made, and yet by consulting Josephus, all is in harmony with the facts of history. The Herod under whom Jesus was born died and was succeeded by his son Herod as ruler of a part of his father's dominion with the title of both king and tetrarch. The Herod who beheaded James was a grandson of the first, and was made king by Claudius Caesar. Herod the tetrarch was deposed by the Romans and procurators were sent to rule in his stead. They came as follows: Coponius,

Marcus Ambivius, Annius Rufus, Valerius Gratus, Pontius Pilate.

The government of Palestine was again changed and Herod who beheaded James was made king over all the land. Upon his death three years later, governors were again appointed, of whom Felix was one. Thus it appears that the Bible is absolutely accurate in all these matters pertaining to political changes so frequently made.

In Luke 2: 1-7; 3: 1, 2; Acts 25: 21, we find that Augustus Caesar issued a decree that all the world should be enrolled. When John begins his ministry, it is the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, yet many years after Paul makes all appeal to Augustus. Here is apparent contradiction and confusion. Unless one has made a study of the political affairs of that land, it is impossible to get through this tangled network of allusions. But, as already stated, the name "Herod" Noms attached to both son and grandson of him who was king at the birth of Jesus. The government was first a kingdom; then it was divided into four parts or tetrarchies; then placed under procurators; again changed into a kingdom; and at last back under governors.

The Augustus who appears in Luke as if dead and alive again was none other than Nero who bore the title of Caesar Augustus Nero, and by his flatterers he was styled Augustus.

No other record of that decree, other than Luke's, could be found and infidels boasted that no such a decree ever went forth. Their conclusion was that Luke or someone else forged it. More than 1900 years went by with none other found, but, in the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* of December 18, 1927, Mr. William T. Ellis has all article declaring that on the walls of all unearthed building in Angora, Asia Minor, the original decree has been found, and Luke has been corroborated in full. Let me say that all discoveries during the passing of the years have served to confirm the Word of God and render its statements credible.

Thanks be to those who are spending millions in the field of archaeology. Many times their object may be to find something contrary to the Bible, but every time the result

is the exact reverse. God is the author of that sacred volume and its statements are absolutely reliable and wholly dependable.

The New Testament was written when Palestine was under the dominion of the Greeks and Romans. Jewish coins went out of use when these nations gained control and others took their places. In the New Testament no mention of this change is made, and yet there are many allusions to the coins then in use. The shekel, the one most common among the Jews and the one found in the Old Testament, is not even mentioned in the New Testament at all. Had these last writings been of a later age, and after the Jewish nation had dispersed, they could not have contained such thorough familiarity with these matters. All this evidences all accurate knowledge on the part of those who wrote the New Testament and renders their words credible.

The Bible represents a woman of Samaria as being surprised that Jesus should ask her for a drink of water. She explains by saying that the Jews and the Samaritans have no dealings with each other. Luke says that on one occasion, Jesus and his disciples were going towards Jerusalem, and that they wanted to lodge in a Samaritan village, but "they did not receive him because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem." These statements were made, incidentally, in giving all account of other matters, and no word of explanation is made regarding the cause of feeling between the two peoples. Josephus gives absolute corroboration of the inspired record by telling of the same animosity. He says it was the custom of the Galileans when they went to Jerusalem to the festivals, to pass through the country of the Samaritans; and that on one occasion certain persons belonging to the border town of Ginea came out against a company of the Galileans thus journeying, and killed a great many of them. This led to retaliation on the part of the Jews, and to contentions before the Roman commanders, which finally culminated in a settlement of the contest by all appeal to the emperor (*Antiquities* xx, 6). In Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts, constant reference is made to the Pharisees and Sadducees; but there is

not one word explaining their origin or their full peculiar) ties. The writers assume that they were well known among the people and hence, all references to them are made in quite all incidental way. Josephus mentions them frequently and, being himself a Pharisee, his statements regarding them are authentic.

By comparing his formal account of them with the allusions made in the New Testament, perfect harmony prevails. Matthew represents Jesus as alluding to the reputation of the Pharisees for righteousness of a high order. He said to his disciples, "Except your righteousness shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Josephus says, "The Pharisees are a certain sect of the Jews who appear more religious than others, and seem to interpret the law more accurately" (Wars, I, 5, 2).

He also declares that the Pharisees have so great power over the multitude, that when they say anything against the king, or against the high priest, they are presently believed.

And again, on account of their doctrines they are able to greatly persuade the body of the people; and whatever the latter do about Divine worship, prayers, and sacrifices, they perform according to their directions.

This is the exact kind of influence ascribed to them in the New Testament and this is why Christ devoted so much time to all effort to break down their power over the people. The writers of the inspired record are corroborated on every point, and that, too, by one unfriendly to the claims of Jesus.

One of the greatest difficulties of writers and travelers is the maintenance of geographical and topographical accuracy. This is peculiarly so when one is trying to give all account of any country with which he is not perfectly familiar, and even then egregious errors appear.

When the Encyclopedia Britannica first appeared, although its articles were written by experts in the various departments, it contained so many errors in regard to places in America, that the publishers of the New American Cy-

clopedia issued a pamphlet exposing the blunders of its rival.

When Tacitus wrote his Description of Germany, it had so many mistakes in geography and topography that some doubted its being the product of all author so well known for reliability. The principal task of those writers who have visited Palestine, for the purpose of describing its localities, has been to correct the topographical mistakes of predecessors. Even the guide books written for the special benefit of tourists have been found quite erroneous in these particulars. Let it be said without fear of contradiction that in the New Testament not a single error along this line can be found. Whether the writers speak of Palestine or of foreign lands, their statements are absolutely reliable. The argue-eyed critics of twenty centuries have been unable to find a blunder made. Very few of us can speak of places here in Tennessee and know whether it is up or down from where we are. But in both the Old and the New Testament the writers are never at fault. The man who fell among thieves was going "down to Jericho." Everybody went "up to Jerusalem." They went "down to Gaza"; "down to Caesarea"; "down to Lydda"; and "down to Antioch." Such accuracy, in these matters as prevails throughout the Bible, can only be accounted for on the ground that those who wrote were guided by a higher power. My friends, if the Word of God is found to be in harmony with authentic writers on matters it mentions incidentally, how can you and I doubt its statements made direct regarding the issues of life and death?

The Bible was by inspiration given. Its statements are reliable and its promises are dependable. I am begging you to accept it and let it be a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. Won't you accept it even now, while we sing the gospel invitation ?

**For much of this sermon I have quoted and copied statements made by Brethren A. Campbell and J. W. McGarvey.**

**THREE PRAYERS**

In the 23rd chapter of Luke we have all account of the trial and the crucifixion of the Son of God. I read to you a part of that story, beginning with verse 32: "And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

I read again from the 7th chapter of Acts, commencing with verse 57, in which we have a record of the death of Stephen: "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord.... And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Then in 2 Timothy 4:14-16: "Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works. Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me; I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."

I have read to you three prayers, one from Christ, one from Stephen, and one from Paul. Regarding these I would have you think for the time allotted.

Some years ago a man by the name of Sheldon, of Kansas City, wrote a very fine little book, the name of which was, "In His Steps." Its very name carries the idea that is described and splendidly discussed throughout the same. I think it would pay every one in this audience to read that little book and meditate, and to take all introspective view as to whether or not he is thus trying to walk and to follow.

The author outlines the life of Christ, picturing that straight and narrow path so wonderfully described by Him

and then appeals to the reader, by the way of questioning, "Are you walking in His footsteps, are you always doing good?"

My friends, the purpose of Christ Jesus upon this earth was to show humanity how to live, as well as how to die. He was a great philosopher and theorist respecting life's affairs. Not only did He teach things in theory, but His very life was the practical application of these principles enunciated time and again.

Along at the first of His career He preached that memorable Sermon on the Mount, in which he said: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

Was Christ a mere theorist when He taught this?

My friends, Paul also taught lessons like this. Romans 12: 19-21: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if shine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." "If any man does not have the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Those are the statements and theories announced by the Man of Galilee, but they were said, friends, when there were no enemies gathering round about. As yet his pathway was clear, and the sky was unclouded.

As long as everything is lovely, matters going our way, it is such all easy thing to be sweet-spirited, kindly disposed and wonderfully charitable in our relationships toward our fellow men. But when we get up against it, face to face with the carrying into effect of our own philosophies, there is, many times, a different story to be told.

I wonder how it shall be in the study of the life of Him who said, "Love your enemies, pray for them that hate you, and do good unto them that despitefully use you, and persecute you."

I read to you from Luke 23: 34, which is another part of the story pertaining to the life of Christ. He is standing at the very end of His earthly pilgrimage, with life's con-

flicts largely past, its relationships to Him all in the background. He has now withstood the vile epithets, the fiery darts, and poisonous words intended to bring sorrow and grief to His heart. With all the rebukes, the troubles, the storms, and the sarcastic things cast at Him now in the past, Christ comes to make good the declaration of that Sermon on the Mount. He is standing at the time of the enemy's triumph. The dark hour to Him has come. He is in the custody of the opposition, with death glaring Him in the face. On the tree of the cross He hangs suspended, and receives the sneers and the jeers of a cruel world.

Will He make good that which He taught yonder on the Mount? Will He verify those principles He enunciated to the disciples, or shall He fail?

It is the climax of the Savior's career. Hence, in the darkest hour, measuring up to the full application of every philosophy suggested, and of every theory taught, surrounded by the triumphant enemy, that now rejoices and joys at His humility, Christ comes out gloriously, lifts His voice heavenward, and says, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

How great the contrast, how noted the distinction from the time when thousands gathered around Him and were swayed by His matchless power! How wonderful the converse of the time when He raised the dead, opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the deaf ear, and walked upon the bosom of blue Galilee! Those were hours of grandeur and of glory, and of earthly renown, but now, the reverse. He was in the hands of those who hated Him and who would spitefully use Him. Even now He could have pronounced a curse upon them and, possibly, have wrested himself from the cross. But, knowing the hour had come, He gracefully yielded to the will of the enemy, and simply said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Jesus lived upon the earth. He left <sup>us</sup> all example, that in His footsteps we should walk, and, therefore, the recitation of these matters is to <sup>us</sup> timely, and I trust may be fitting and emphatic to all who chance to hear.

Was that prayer characterized by a spirit of earnestness ? Did the Father above lend a listening ear to that last petition of His dying, agonizing Son ?

I tell, you, friends, if I thought that prayer was not heard, I would never have the courage any more to lift up my voice to the Father of Spirit? with any hope of response from the eternal world. If I were to decide that the prayer of the Christ was unheard, it would destroy my faith that I now have in the Book of God and in the promises of Holy Writ.

But I want to ask again: was that a conditional, or all unconditional prayer? When Christ raised that voice and said, "Father, forgive them," did He mean regardless of any act on their part? Was it implied that they might go ahead in their wayward, wicked, murderous way, and still Christ expect God to forgive them ? Has it ever been a principle of God's dealings with humanity to forgive men unconditionally ?

I believe, upon second thought, that you are constrained to say that that prayer must have implied certain conditions with which those for whom He prayed had to comply.

So far as I know, have right or reason to believe, there is not a statement in all the Bible announcing forgiveness to humanity independent of its submission to the terms that have been interposed.

Therefore, I am going to conclude, in perfect harmony with the entire Bible, that when the Christ prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," there was all implication that time might be granted, and opportunity be afforded when their hearts should be touched by the story of redeeming love, when they would come to a state of penitence, bow in submission to heaven's will, and thus bring about the answer to the prayer of the Son of God.

This petition was made on the cross. That afternoon He died, was buried, and three days passed, but that prayer was not answered. He rose from the dead, walked about among men, demonstrated His identity beyond the shadow of a doubt for a period of forty days, at the end of which that prayer back yonder on the cross had never been answered by the God of heaven.

Another ten days go by, and Jesus Christ bids good-bye to the things of earth, wends his way back to the gloryland, and dispatches the Spirit from heaven to earth.

As yet, that prayer uttered 50 and 3 days ago has never been answered by his heavenly Father.

The day of Pentecost finally comes. Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven are gathered to attend the memorable feast. On that day the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit; a great demonstration was made; multitudes gathered together with various charges and different explanations, all of which failed to explain.

Finally Peter, unto whom the keys of the kingdom had been given, gained the attention of that wonderful audience, and spoke to them, for the first time, the story of the resurrection of the Son of God. The gospel was that day first proclaimed, and, in that sermon, there is evidence that this prayer is not yet answered, for Peter said unto the same crowd that gathered round about the cross, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know: Him being delivered by that determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

There was the same company who some time ago had stood about the cross, and had put to death the Son of God. Here they are today, on Pentecost, with their hands dripping with the guilt that attached to the greatest murder and the greatest tragedy recorded on the pages of history. Peter brings home to them their guilt by saying, "You have taken, and by the hands of lawless men, have crucified the Son of God." He drove home that thought to their hearts. He made them feel guilty in the presence of God Almighty, and then opened to them the possibility of forgiveness through that same Jesus whom they had executed.

Hence he climaxed that wonderful address by saying, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ."

As yet, that prayer, prayed by the Son of God, when he said, "Father, forgive them," has not been answered.

And when they cried out, having been cut to their heart, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" there is again the implication that they were not yet free from sin, that they had not been forgiven, that the prayer of the Son of God had not been answered.

In response to their query, Peter said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

"And with many other words did Peter testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

Then what? "They that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added about 3,000 souls." My friends, the very minute they rendered obedience unto Christ as stipulated and demanded, there was a glad response from high heaven, and the prayer in their behalf, fifty and three days ago, was answered. Angelic hosts in heaven rejoice together with those upon the earth, because those Jews, bloodstained by the crucifixion of the Christ, now stand forgiven. Christ's prayer in their behalf is answered.

Friends, that is the teaching of God's book from beginning to end, and there has never yet been a single prayer answered in behalf of humanity, unless man had done his best to comply with the conditions made obligatory upon him.

Therefore, it is my duty today to pray for my fellows everywhere. If I walk in His steps, I must so do.

We sometimes embody a great truth in our petitions. While praying for all mankind, we say, "Lord, we cannot consistently ask Thee to save them in their sins, but grant them time and opportunity to hear again the story of the cross, that by it their hearts may be touched and tendered, and that they may repent of their sins, and obey from the heart that form of doctrine which has been delivered."

After this manner I pray for sinners today. I know that God will not save them as they are. I know that Christ has never promised to pardon any man, until that man submits to heaven's terms. My prayer, like that of the Son of God, is that they may have the privilege of hearing the gospel story, that, as were those Jews on Pentecost, those who hear me may likewise be cut to the heart, that I may have the courage and the boldness to announce to them that which Peter preached. I know that when I do this faithfully and they hear, believe, and obey, God will pardon their sins and add them to that church bought by the blood of His Son.

There is no other way of salvation outlined in God's book. Implicit and absolute obedience is demanded of all men.

But from that now I turn to the second. Stephen was a man filled with the Holy Spirit. He was selected as one of the first deacons to look after the daily ministration to some Grecian widows. He was a man able to preach the gospel of God's Son with power. Such preaching always elicits criticism and bitterness on the part of those who are to the contrary. He was finally accused of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God. They came upon him, caught him and brought him before the Council. The elders and scribes were told that he had said that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy this place and change the customs delivered by Moses. To all the Council, his face appeared as it had been the face of all angel.

To these charges Stephen was privileged to reply. Never has there been so much history crowded into so short a space as was recited by Stephen on that occasion. He went back to Abram in Chaldea and traced the story of the patriarchs as they descended into Egypt and spent 400 years in captivity. He told of their deliverance by Moses. He recited the story of Aaron and his golden calf. He mentioned the building of the tabernacle and the temple, but assured them that now the most high God dwelleth not in temples made by the hands of men. He concluded by saying: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and in ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."

When they were conscious of the fact that they could not successfully answer his speech, they gnashed upon him with their teeth. They cursed him, said all manner of evil against him; surged about him, and led him out through the eastern gate that, today, bears his name, down to the foot of the hill by the side of the brook Kedron, opposite the Garden of Gethsemane, and there those pious Jews laid aside their long robes and stoned him to death. Just here we are introduced to a young man, for the first time, by the name of Saul, who held their garments, and gave consent to that atrocious deed enacted. And as Stephen, underneath their blows, bowed down in the very agonizing hour of death, he forgot not that he should walk in the steps of his Lord and Master. Perhaps he had witnessed the death of Christ and had been wonderfully impressed by His last moments. He now determined to duplicate the spirit of Jesus in behalf of his own enemies. So he lifted his voice unto the Father, and said, "Lord, lay not this sin unto their charge." And having so said, he fell asleep.

My friends, how came him to manifest such a spirit? The answer is: he had learned what it means to be a Christian. The influence of the Master had made a lasting impression upon him. He remembered the Savior's teaching and was determined to carry it out. He walked in His steps. Therefore, he died praying a similar prayer.

But I wonder if Stephen meant for God to overlook their crime regardless of their penitence? Was his prayer without implied conditions?

Stephen knew then, just as well as we know now, that the gospel demands obedience on the part of humanity. He understood full well just when those who killed the Christ were pardoned. His prayer implied that those who stoned him might come to themselves. "Lord God, grant that they may hear the story of the Christ, that they may recognize their great sin, that from it they may turn away, and walk in obedience to heaven's demands."

But, friends, that is not all. There was a young man by the name of Saul who watched this great tragedy. At that time he was not interested in Christianity. He was then a young Jew, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, who believed that

Jesus Christ was all impostor and that every one following in His footsteps ought to be put to death. But in spite of that, he was evidently impressed with the way and manner in which Stephen died. Here was a despised Christian praying for those who put him to death. Such a scene could not be forgotten.

Finally Paul himself was led to accept the Christian faith. On the road to Damascus he was arrested by the shining of a great light brighter than the noonday sun, and there he heard the words of Christ who said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutes" thou me?"

The result of that arrest led to the ultimate conversion of him who had held the clothing and given consent to the stoning of Stephen some time before. From that moment Paul championed the faith which he once sought to destroy. He became the most outspoken character to the Gentile world in behalf of Christianity. It was he who raised aloft the banner of Christ, and carried the flag of high heaven into the region of Asia Minor, wherein he had formerly lived. It was none other than Paul who heard the Macedonian call, and gladly responded. He set out across the waters of the Aegean Sea and planted the banner of Christ on the foreign field for the first time.

He led a wonderfully checkered career. His experiences were such as you and I will never be called upon to endure. He counted all else but loss that he might win Christ. Having suffered, sorrowed, and sighed, he came at last to the end of life's journey. The past stands ever present before him. Life's battles, conflicts, and toils are practically over. He spends his last days in all underground prison and there pens his final message to his faithful son. In 2 Tim. 4: 14, he said: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works; of whom be thou ware also: for he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."

I ask you, my friends, where did Paul learn how a Christian should die? He never saw the Christ crucified, but he had seen Stephen suffer death. While at that time he was

not a member of the body, there was all indelible impression made upon him, such as could never be erased. And when he came face to face with his last moment on earth, he duplicated the spirit of Stephen, and, likewise, that of the Master, by praying: "Father, lay not this sin to their account."

My friends, if I have not that spirit today, I am none of His. It matters not how much of God's Word I may speak, or how wonderfully I may proclaim His great truth. I am conscious of the fact that if that same spirit is not mine, and has not become a part of my being, I am weighed in the balances and found wanting.

But I want to say this to you: I do not believe that God demands of you and me forgiveness until there is evidence of penitence on the part of those who have sinned against us. I must differ perhaps, with some of my own brethren, when I announce to you that God has never promised to forgive any man short of penitence on that man's part. I have got to be made over before I could do such.

I cannot forgive a man who is still my enemy, obstructing my progress, hindering my onward march, blighting my happiness, and destroying my pleasure upon the earth. So long as that man persists and continues, it is not in me to forgive him. God does not ask it, and the Bible does not require it.

The Saviour said in Luke 17: 3, "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." I am glad I can do that. In my relation to my fellows, I have got to be mighty careful to know whether or not my own skirts are clear. There is great danger of my thinking the other fellow is wholly wrong. When convinced and assured that I have done all on my part that duty demands, then I must stand in that attitude of forgiveness, or else God's spirit does not abide in me.

Let me insist that those of you who have sinned against your fellows manifest a spirit of penitence, and if they will not forgive you, the fault and the responsibility is theirs.

Such is the Christianity of the Bible. It is surely the spirit of Christ that prompts Christians to pray for the salvation of the world. Let us hope that our friends and foes,

if such there be, may hear the gospel, repent of their sins, confess the Christ, and be buried in the sacred ordinance of baptism from which they can rise with sins forgiven and the hope of eternal life theirs to share.

If any of you have never confessed your wrongs, it is none too early for you to begin.

If you have never bowed in submission to the authority of high heaven, nor rendered obedience unto the gospel of Christ, this is the hour you should do so. While today you are here in the enjoyment of reasonable health and strength, come and stand upon his promises. Life is wonderfully uncertain. Death is absolutely sure. Tragedies are happening all around us. Today is, therefore, the day of salvation. If you would hear His voice, harden not your hearts, but respond to His call. Come saying, "Lord, speak, thy servant heareth. Command, and I will obey." Put yourself in that attitude where God and man may forgive you. If you have sinned against the Church; if you have sinned against some man; repent of that wrong, and, to the extent of your penitence, there is not the shadow of a doubt but that God will forgive you. Any Christian will do the same thing, and thus you may go on your way rejoicing.

We are going to stand together once again and sing to you the gospel invitation. While we sing that song gladly respond to the call of Him who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

**THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP**

We come, my friends, to the closing service of this series of meetings. I feel that great good has been accomplished, and I recognize the fact that this was made possible by faithful brethren who have gone before and prepared the way.

Long before I ever tried to tell the story, the foundation for this meeting was being laid by faithful, godly men, who sacrificed much more than I have ever done, to plant the cause of Christ within this splendid city.

Unto God be all the praise for such loyalty and fidelity and sacrifice on their part. Those of us still here ought to be greatly encouraged to press on with a zeal greater than ever before.

This meeting has been characterized by absolute simplicity. There has been no effort to entertain you, other than by the hymning of these good songs and the recitation of stories recorded by the sacred oracles.

The financial part of it had been arranged in advance in a quiet manner by those who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the finest evidences that good has been accomplished is the discussion on the streets, in the places of business, and the very kindly criticisms that have been offered through the public press. I want those who have seen fit so to do, to know that I think none the less of them. I appreciate the man who has convictions, and then the courage to press them to the ultimate result.

I noticed in today's *Tennessean* a criticism from a Mr. Taylor. I understand he is yet a schoolboy, and perhaps this fact explains his rushing in where others fear to tread. He felt that our Lebanon friend had made a complete failure in his attacks, and hence, this young man seeks to save a last hope. Doubtless Mr. Taylor is a bright boy. I feel sure he knows more now about some things than he will in the years to come. I once heard of a young fellow who had so

much knowledge that a part of his brain had to be removed to make room for what he knew.

Mr. Taylor should bear in mind that "larger ships may venture more but smaller boats should stay near shore." It is a great pity that such stupid fellows as Drs. Westcott and Hort, whose Greek Testament has become standard, did not consult Mr. Taylor on Matt. 16: 18. Even the great Joseph Henry Thayer, the Greek lexicographer, lived and died without the benefit of such wise counsel.

I appreciate all these criticisms. They make the truth stand out the more prominently. Those who so desired have had ample time and I hope no one will take advantage of my absence and hurl his darts. This would indicate cowardice on the part of him who so does.

Let me read to you from Luke 14: 25-33: "And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever cloth not bear his cross, and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth all ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hash, he cannot be my disciple."

The subject tonight is, "The Cost of Discipleship." What does it cost to become a child of God, and to meet His approval in our onward journey?

There were great multitudes that frequently gathered round about the Christ, prompted by various reasons. Some of them followed for the loaves and fishes which He

was able to multiply. Others followed, doubtless, out of curiosity, and to behold the great miracles, signs and wonders which he was accustomed to evidence in their presence.

Jesus once said to the company, "The foxes have holes, the fowls of the air have their nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." As much as to say, "Don't follow me with the hope of dwelling in a palace on earth, or of sharing the good things this world may have, for such I do not possess."

I want to say to you, friends, that it really costs much to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

To this multitude, in Luke 14, He has this to say: "He that will come after me must hate his father, his mother, his wife, his children, his brethren, his sisters, yea, and his own life. If that be not true of him he cannot be my disciple."

There are many hard sayings in the Bible, things that challenge our very serious concern, and call upon all within us to make that decision which is fraught with much expenditure on our part. I just wonder if it is possible for us to become disciples of the Lord.

Upon the condition that one must hate his father, his mother, and those generally nearest and dearest, who can be a disciple? Friends, I think I know what the word "hate" means in modern speech, and I am frank to admit to you, tonight, that I cannot comply with such, if that be the idea expressed in this scripture. And if the significance of that word be as I now understand it in ordinary use, I must confess, I am not a disciple of the Lord.

I do not hate the father responsible for my existence upon the earth. When I was wholly unable to provide for myself it was he who cared for me, made provision, and guided my feet in what he thought was the right path, and though for twenty years he has been gone, his memory lingers still. I feel certain that the time will never come when I can say, "I hate him."

What shall I do about it? Christ said that I must hate, not only my father, but likewise my mother. My mother died when I was about fifteen months old. I never knew what it was to recognize her. All I know about her is what others have told me. But from that, I cannot say that I hate her. I know that her very life trembled in the balance and was suspended quivering on the pivot when I first opened my eyes to be greeted by the light of God's day. I do not hate her.

Likewise may I say regarding the brothers and sisters that I have in this world.

But Christ said, "Hardeman, unless you hate your father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife, children, all, you cannot be my disciple."

For twenty and seven years I have walked down the pathway of time side by side with her who decided to share my sorrows and my joys. I would not say that every step has been absolutely harmonious. She has a head of her own, and many times her judgment has been contrary to mine. I might not admit it, in her presence, but I must say to you that, sometimes, just once in a while, she has been right on a few points. Regardless of any differences whatsoever, I cannot say that I hate her.

In our home there have been three children born. All of them are now grown to manhood and womanhood. In their interest our very hopes and ambitions are centered; and upon them we may be forced to rely in our declining days. Of course, I do not hate them.

And then, my own life is as dear and precious to me as the ordinary one. For that life the Bible says a man will give all that he has. And yet Christ says I must hate my own life, or else I cannot be his disciple.

Brethren, what shall I do about it?

I am glad to say that I never have in my life tried to find one passage in the Bible to offset or to contradict any other statement made. I know that God is the author of this book, that every word of it is true. I know that all truth runs in parallel lines, and if there be a seeming discrepancy, or a

contradiction, it lies somewhere in my own mind, and not in Him who spake the word, or caused it to be penned.

But words do not always carry the same significance. The word "hate" is one of that number. Tonight, it means to despise; to dislike; to detest; to abhor; to abominate, etc.

But it does not mean that in the Bible. All expressions of emotion and physical passion as used in the Book of God are comparative in their nature.

In a parallel passage, Matthew 10: 37, Christ said this: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

But again, in the 29th chapter of Genesis, verses 30 and 31, there is more light that will help us to all appreciation of what is here said. The Bible teaches that Jacob ran away from home and went to Padan aram. There he married Leah, the daughter of Laban, and seven years later, Rachel, her sister. The Bible says, verse 30, that Jacob loved Rachel more than he did Leah. But the next verse says, "And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren."

What is the point about that? Simply a comparative idea. God says that Jacob loved Rachel more than he did Leah, and the very fact that he loved Rachel more justifies the next statement that Leah was hated, or loved less.

Hence the text tonight reads with a different idea when I submit to you that general statement regarding this word. "If any man will come after me and does not love me more than he does father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, yea, his own life, he cannot be my disciple."

I want to say to you that with many of us that test has never come. And yet there are those possibly dwelling in your city, and may be in this audience tonight, who have demonstrated in their lives the thing thus presented.

Suppose a man wants to become a Christian and decides in his heart to obey God, but his wife rises up in rebellion and files all objection. The man, therefore, is put to the test. Shall he obey God, or

The man who will yield to the latter is unworthy of the sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ. If that father of whom I have spoken had objected to my becoming a Christian and I had yielded to his demands, rather than have gone forward in obedience to Christ, it would be all exhibition of the fact that I am unworthy of discipleship with the Lord.

Many there are in this land who have been told, in advance, that their becoming a Christian means that another home must be found.

Christ would say, "Go right on; become a child of God, pay the price." Unless you are willing thus to do, you will be unworthy of that relationship you hope to sustain.

Friends, I believe that men ought to become children of God prompted by the loftiest incentive, and the highest motive known. I have never yet had so little respect for any man as to ask him to become a Christian other than as he was moved by a conviction of the truth of God's Book. I know that it is fine for husband and wife to be members of the body of Christ together. But, hear it, any man who will profess to become a Christian just to please his wife is unworthy of the name of the Son of God. And any woman who has no higher conception of rendering obedience to (loaf Almighty than simply to please her husband will, I think, die and land in hell at last.

Therefore, my friends, let us take Christianity out of the idea of its being a kind of social club. Let us be moved by genuine convictions, and higher ideals.

If you think a thing is the truth, accept it, and stand for it four-square. If you do not believe it is the truth, let no consideration of earth induce you to the acceptance of the same.

The Church of Christ is calling, not for great numbers to swell the roll, but it is calling for men and women genuinely, really and truly converted to the truth, with a backbone and a courage to stand for it against public sentiment, against criticism, against everything; and to hold aloft the banner of Christ everywhere.

There is nothing but that must be subordinated to the will of God.

1 John 2: 15 says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

That is also a hard saying. My friends, I am frank to tell you, I do love this old world out of which I was created, and on which I dwell, from which I get my support, and in the kindly bosom of which I expect, at last, to pillow my head, and gently dwell in her tender and encircling arms.

I love the beautiful birds and the sweet-scented flowers that cheer us along our way and make pleasant the path in which we move.

I love the glittering chandeliers of the sky twinkling from their far-distant home, and lighting up the earth, after the sun has sunk behind the western hills.

But I do not think that the passage forbids my having regard for these things. The word "world" does not in this passage refer to things material, but it is used in contradistinction to the term "spiritual." Therefore, we speak of a man's being worldly-minded, yielding to carnality, and to fleshly appetites, lusts and passions. The Bible outlines quite a little catalogue of things that are incorporated in that term.

In Galatians 5: 19 there is this recitation: "The works of the flesh (and he might have said the attributes and characteristics of the world) are manifest," and here they are: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Therefore, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Friends, this story, read in Luke 14, carries another fine consideration. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that be-

hold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth all ambassage and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hash, he cannot be my disciple."

You ask what is the point in that splendid illustration. I think it may be summed up after this fashion; hear it, if you contemplate fighting against God, going through life, and meeting the judgment in disobedience to him, you had better sit down, my friends, and count well the cost.

If you are marshaling your forces against Jehovah, it would be well to think seriously, and come to a decision to send all embassy and seek peace while the opportunity and the time is yours.

As a matter of fact, you are certain to be defeated, if you wage war against the authority of God. Every thought suggests that we had better come to terms with the great Father of Spirit?.

But friends, when I begin to count the cost of a thing from a business point of view, I raise the question, will it pay for me to make this investment? If I spend so much, do I have assurance of a return? Is there a guaranty of any remuneration whatsoever?

I want to call your attention to some of the characters of earth who have invested in the service of God Almighty, and let you decide whether or not that investment was wisely made.

Along the lower course of the river Euphrates, in that splendid, rich, alluvial valley Abraham was, so far as I know, well fixed. He was there with his family and friends, enjoying the good things of earth.

The call of God came and bade him forsake all that he had, and start out into a land later to be revealed. With a faith undaunted and a courage heroic, Abraham launched out and invested all in the call of the God of the Universe.

Up the Mesopotamian valley he went, until he came to Haran, where he buried his beloved father. Around the Arabian desert he swept to the south and west into the land promised some years before.

Time rolled on. Many were the experiences and the things unpleasant that Abraham had to share. He was practically alone as a standard bearer of God. He was a stranger in a strange land, but he had put himself and his all in the service of God Almighty. Question: did it pay?

Let that remain for just a moment.

Moses was adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh, tutored and disciplined in Egyptian learning, and was a mighty man in word and in deed. With the passing of the years he reached his majority, and came to the point in life where a decision had to be made. In response to the God of the universe, Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and invested everything with the people then in bondage.

He made that investment on the ground that he counted the reproach of God greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of reward.

Was that a good investment? That is what Moses did.

That is not all. When Daniel was carried away into the land of Babylonia, a demand was made that he eat of the king's meat and drink of the king's wine. True to his convictions, he rose to the height of his manhood, and positively refused to be corrupted or rendered impure by any such practice. He cast it all upon Him who cared, and invested 100 per cent of his affairs in the promises of God.

Again, the disciples came to the Master once, and said, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed after thee." What shall we have? We have invested everything; all else has been given up.

The peerless apostle to the Gentile world forsook the fine opportunities of the Pharisaical realm, counted all things but loss, and the very refuse of earth, that he might march under the blood-stained banner of Jesus Christ our Lord.

There is another record in Luke 18: 18-30. It is the story of a man clothed with riches and wealth. Christ demanded of him that he sell all that he had, pay the price, and follow after the Lord. But he clung to his riches; refused to pay the price demanded; turned away; and so far as you or I know, he was shut out of the kingdom of God. He went to that country where hope is a stranger and where mercy has never yet been known.

Does it pay to become a disciple? Were these characters mentioned justified in the acts described?

You know the story of Abraham. He wandered in a foreign land for about a hundred years, sorrowing and sighing. Disappointments and calamities to which humanity is heir were his to share. By and by the wife who had traveled so long with him, sickened and died. He bought a burial ground from the sons of Heth, and there deposited her in the cave of Machpelah at old Hebron. And after a while, at the age of 175, he bowed his head; gave up the ghost; and was buried far from the old homestead, and likewise, in a foreign land.

I reflect upon his varied career, and ask tonight, did that choice that he made, that investment back yonder at Ur, turn out well?

Had Abraham not done this, you and I never would have heard his name called. He would have been unknown and unsung, except by a very small, limited number; and even then, for only a few months or years.

But as it is, notwithstanding the fact that almost four thousand years have passed; forty centuries have come and gone since Abraham made that investment, he has been and is called the friend of God, the Father of them that believe. "If ye be Christ's, ye are Abraham's and heirs according to the promise."

So long as time shall continue and men and women are born and buried upon this earth, Abraham will be to us a household word. He stands as God's great example of undaunted faith.

He towers above his fellows like some peak above the lofty plains. He took God at His word; believed what He

said; lived as the Lord directed; and trusted Him for the promises.

When Moses cast his lot with a despised people subjected to the most cruel bondage, he did not know what the result might be, but with the passing of the years he was privileged to stand as the leader of the greatest number of people ever marshaled under one command.

He led them across the Red Sea, and to the foot of old shaking Sinai. He ascended its heights as the confidant of God and there received the decalogue, which has become the foundation of all laws of all civilization from then till now.

Under the Divine guidance of Jehovah, he led them for forty long years. At last he climbed to the summit of old Nebo, and there, but a youth of 120, with his physical forces unabated and his eyes undimmed, he caught a vision of the promised land.

From that summit, four thousand feet in height, Moses could look to the east across the great Arabian desert and view all ocean of golden sand. He could then look southward over that land where they had wandered for those forty years. Turning northward, he could catch a vision of old Mount Hermon, ten thousand feet high. Then he could look to the west across the River Jordan and behold the fields of ripening grain, silvery streams and the beautiful hills of that land which flowed with milk and honey.

While enraptured by these splendid scenes, God came, took him, and buried him in some secluded spot, as yet unknown to man.

But, friends, was that all ? Oh, no. Fifteen hundred years from that time the Christ, together with Elias and Moses, stood on old Mt. Hermon, where Jesus was transfigured in their presence. Moses was privileged to talk with Christ regarding the tragedy that was soon to come to pass. Then Peter said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias."

But, friends, that is not all. When time's knell shall be sounded, and the ransomed of the earth shall be gathered

home, on fairer fields and in brighter climes, we will sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, in the glad by and by.

Of course, it paid to make that investment.

You ask, what about the peerless apostle?

At the close of his wonderful career, Paul said, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, all house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." His parting declaration was, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

You ask about all others. David sums it up in a general blanket proposition, when he said, in Psalms 37, verse 25, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread."

Friends, neither have you. The time has never been when the really righteous souls of earth were forsaken, or their seed begging bread.

Isn't it fine, beloved, as we contemplate our investment in the matter of Christianity, that such splendid sentiments and thoughts come down the line to inspire fidelity, loyalty and genuine perseverance on our part? We ought to rejoice and be glad, because we can say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Brethren, if we who have invested in Christianity can but be faithful to the end of life's way, we are certain to receive the fullest fruition of all our hallowed hopes and fondest desires. We can approach death with a smile, and meet it with the joy and gladness characteristic of the child of God.

Friends, I believe it is worth your while to invest in the service of God. I think it the greatest investment you ever made. The time will

its battles have been fought and its victories won; when you must launch out into the fathomless depths of the eternal beyond. Are you ready for that day to come? Where will you spend eternity? Make your decision tonight. This is all important hour. The very angels crowd the galleries of glory to watch, with breathless interest, the struggle in your soul. Turn your face toward the Master before the hour of choice shall pass away forever. Invest your all in the service of Him who died that you might live. Pay whatever price is necessary; become God's child, regardless, and then lean upon His everlasting arms while the shadows are passing. If this you'll do, heaven will surely send a company of angelic pall-bearers to gather round about your dying couch, and when the spirit takes its flight, they will gladly bear it home to glory, where it may nestle in the bosom of a Father's love, while eternity's ages roll by.

As we sing the last song of the meeting and extend the last invitation, come without delay.

**THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST**

I have been requested to speak tonight on The Crucifixion of Christ.

I read Matthew 27:15-26: "Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, what shall I do then with Jesus who is called the Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; See ye to it. Then answered all the people and said, His blood be upon us and our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them. And when he had scourged Jesus he delivered him to be crucified."

This is one of the historic accounts of the greatest of all tragedies. To appreciate this matter as we should, it seems to me necessary to go back and review the history leading up to the coming of the Christ and his execution on the cross.

In Genesis 12:1-3, we have these words: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from

thy kindred, from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

The first religion ever established upon this earth was purely a family religion. There were not so very many people, of course, and wherever a family chanced to go, or be, the father had the right and the privilege to offer a sacrifice unto God, assured that his doing thus would meet the approval of Jehovah. Twenty-five hundred years passed during which time that order prevailed.

God called Abraham out of his native land of Ur of Chaldees and gave him the promises I have read.

With a courage undaunted, and a faith centered in Jehovah, Abram bade goodbye to family ties, friends, financial relationships, and the old home, and started out under the leadership of Jehovah, not knowing where he was going. Because of that one thing, Abraham has become God's great definition of faith. If you want, therefore, to know just what faith means, the answer is, Abraham. He took God at his word; believed what He said; did as He required, and trusted Him for the fulfillment of the promises.

He took with him Sarai, his beloved wife, his father Terah, and his nephew Lot. This quartette left their homes and started up the Euphrates river, for a distance of something like 500 miles. They stopped at Haran, in Mesopotamia. There Terah, the father of Abraham, died, and he was buried in that strange land. The Lord bade Abraham go on.

The promises to him were two-fold. God said, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Six of these promises refer to a literal posterity, and the inheritance of a land into which the Lord would lead him. All of these were developed during the passing of the years.

When, in the course of time, it seemed impossible for Sarai to become a mother, she said to Abraham: "Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai."

This audience knows how that Ishmael was born of Hagar; how that later he was driven out and Abram made to know that the nations were to be blessed through a son born in his own house and of his own wife.

The time had passed, according to natural law, for Sarai to become a mother. By a miracle's being wrought, Isaac, the child of promise, was at last born.

In every phase and feature, Isaac became a type of the Christ, the ultimate seed to whom the promise was made. Time rolled on, and at the age of forty, Isaac married. At the age of sixty, two sons were born, namely, Esau and Jacob. The years sped by again, and Jacob went back to the land of Padan-aram. There he married Leah and later his beloved wife, Rachel. At the end of about forty years more, he returned to the old home with his family, flocks and herds.

Due to a great famine, they passed into the country of Egypt, about seventy and five in number. There they remained for a period of 430 years, during which time they multiplied and became a nation of, possibly, three million souls.

Under the leadership of Moses they crossed the Red Sea and came to Mt. Sinai, at which place a new religion was inaugurated upon this earth. No longer now was it a mere family affair, but here God inaugurated a national system of religion.

The posterity of Abraham, separated from the country of Egypt, marching on to the land promised unto their father, were especially protected, guided, and governed by the Lord. They became Jehovah's chosen people, through whom the promised seed was to come.

At shaking Sinai, God gave to them the foundation of that law which was to govern them for the next 1,500 years.

This law forbade their association, mixing or mingling with the nations round about.

With the fall of the kingdom under Zedekiah they were subjected to Babylonia, and there was never a king of the seed of Abraham to occupy a throne until the resurrection, ascension and coronation of Jesus Christ. Therefore the character reigning tonight is the climax and the culmination of that promise vouchsafed to Abraham.

When I tell you that the first promise, of a physical and literal nature, was fulfilled by Abraham's posterity occupying Palestine, I tell you that concerning which nobody has ever had a doubt. In the fulness of time, Jesus of Nazareth was born upon the earth. He was of Hebrew ancestry, with a sprinkling of foreign blood injected by the marriage of Boaz and Ruth. He came in perfect harmony with every prophecy from the hilltops of Zion. He came in absolute fulfillment of every prediction, and of every type presented in the Old Testament. There is not one single thing outstanding in the life of Christ but that was clearly prefigured and certainly announced long before his advent upon the earth.

The life of Christ was in perfect harmony with the law of Moses. For it he had absolute regard, and he lived in strict obedience to its demands.

Finally, he died a felon's death, just as the prophets and the law had declared. At his death, this law, which pertained purely to a national religion, having served its purpose, was fulfilled. It was then taken out of the way and a better covenant founded upon better promises was given to humanity. A world-wide system or religion was soon inaugurated for the consideration of all men of every nation, kindred and tongue.

I said to you that Christ lived in harmony with the law. I want now to call your attention to some phases of that wonderful theocratic form of government, which prevailed from shaking Sinai down to bleeding Calvary.

May I raise the first question? Unto whom was the law ever given? In Deut. 5: 2, 3, Moses had this to say: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord

made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." That was just two months after that host had come out of Egyptian bondage and across the Red Sea. Therefore, unto Abraham's seed was the law made.

The next question: Why was it ever given at all?

In Galatians 3: 19, Paul said: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator."

Paul said that the law was added because of transgressions. There may be several phases respecting that one idea, but there is this that I want to emphasize to you tonight, viz: that law stood as a middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile; the express purpose of which was that Jewish blood, from Abraham on down, should be kept absolutely pure.

But, friends, I think you ought to be able to see that when the law had served the purpose of preserving the purity of the Hebrew blood from Abraham down to Christ, it would no longer be necessary to preserve it.

Our next question is: For how long was the law intended ? Was there any limit of time regarding it? The very verse, Galatians 3: 19, answers also. Hear it again: "It was added because of transgressions *till*." Friends, that fixes the end of it and suggests the duration. Well, until what? "Until the seed should come to whom the promise was made." That law was given at Sinai to the posterity of Abraham because of transgressions, and intended to last until the promised seed of Abraham should come.

Question: Who was that seed?

In the 16th verse of this same chapter the peerless apostle said, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

Paul declares that when God said to Abram while yet in Ur of Chaldea: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," he

This being true, I now ask: What was the attitude of Jesus toward that law under consideration ?

In Matthew 5: 17, Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am come not to destroy; I have come to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

Jesus Christ was not a law violator. He was a fulfiller. Hence, said He, "My purpose is not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it."

Thirty and three years passed, during the life of this man called the Christ, when, at last, the tragedy outside the city's walls culminated.

While suspended between the heavens and the earth, Christ bowed his head and said, "It is finished." What finished? Among other things, I am certain there is included that which he came to fulfill, namely, the law.

I ask, finally, if the law was thus fulfilled, and finished, what became of it? In Colossians 2: 14, there are these words: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." It was on the cross that he said, "It is finished." Read Eph. 2: 14-16.

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one." Both who? Both Jew and Gentile. How did he do it? "Having broken down the middle wall of partition between us, and abolished in his flesh the enmity." What was the enmity? "Even the law of commandments contained in ordinances."

The time came when Christ fulfilled all the prophecies, and all the types, and finally broke down the middle wall of partition which was the law of Moses. It was taken out of the way and nailed to the cross. But why all this? Hear the answer: That he might make of the twain—these two nationalities, Jew and Gentile "one new man, so making peace, and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

As long as that law stood it was indeed a wall separating the two great nationalities. By the law, the Jews were

forbidden to mix or mingle, marry or associate with the Gentile world.

During the personal ministry of Christ, and also the twelve under their limited commission, and likewise the seventy who followed, he said: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

This was their first, limited and restricted commission. After the death of Jesus, all barriers and distinctions having been done away, He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Since the greatest of all tragedies, there is neither Jew nor Gentile, male or female, bond or free.

During the life of Jesus, the Jews were divided into three sects, viz: Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Two of these are prominent in the New Testament.

The Pharisees and Sadducees were bitter enemies. There was a spirit of jealousy and of rivalry between them. They were agreed upon one thing only, and that was, that the teaching of Jesus was contrary to their particular doctrines, and, if accepted, it meant the death knell of their religions. Therefore, it was their combined sentiments that something must be done with this man who is called the Christ.

You ask, how did they proceed? May I answer, just about like humanity has ever done. Their first effort to get rid of the Christ and his wonderful teaching was to ridicule, to ignore, to sneer at, and to make light of him. When he first began to attract attention, and some told others respecting him, it was received with a sneer and with a jeer.

The very fact that Christ came from Nazareth was evidence that there was nothing to him. By such insinuations, they sought to hinder any influence that might be by him exerted.

I want to say to you, friends, that many times, such is all effective way of killing the influence of some man. Ignore him, disregard what he has to say, cast insinuations and reflections upon him, and he will naturally fade away. But

that didn't work. It mattered not with the Christ if he had come from the very humble of the earth; it made no difference if he was clothed in the very garb of humility and poverty. His greatness depended not on the city wherein he lived; neither upon the garb he wore nor the humiliation he endured.

There was real merit and genuine worth in that which he had to say, and he had the courage to say it regardless of the ridicule and the innuendoes hurled against him.

When the enemies saw that their first method was not producing the desired result, they inaugurated Method No. 2.

You ask, what was it? They began to ask him questions, to file objections, and to try to entangle him in his speech. They concocted different schemes, outlined different dilemmas, and approached him with hypocrisy and flattery upon their lips.

The Sadducees came and presented what they considered a very plausible objection to the teaching of Christ by telling the story of a woman who had married, and had seven husbands, all of whom had died. They denied the resurrection, and they thought that if Christ's theory of the resurrection be true, there would be a wonderful state of confusion on the other shore as to which one of these men would want that woman, or which one would have to take her. This appeared to them unanswerable.

But, without a mental strain, Christ said: "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." In that blissful paradise beyond, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage. Earthly ties and human relationships do not prevail. Therefore their question was wholly out of order.

Then the Pharisees, together with the Herodians, a bunch of politicians, said, "Lord, tell us, what thinkest thou, is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" His answer was convincing. He said unto them, "Show me the tribute money." And they brought unto him a penny. And he said unto them, "Whose is the image and the superscription?" When he found it was the image and the superscription of Caesar, he said, "Render unto Caesar that which is his, and unto God that which belongs unto him."

Therefore, having been defeated, the Bible says they turned away, disgusted at their inability to involve him in any kind of difficulty, or in any state of confusion. Friends, when that method failed, and their objective could not be attained, the last method humanity has ever used was theirs to execute. They must get rid of him whose teaching was exposing their rottenness and sounding their doom.

Hence, the death plot was secretly formed. They entered into a conspiracy with Judas Iscariot and made clear their plan of execution.

But, just at this time, it is necessary for you to know the political history of the land wherein they dwell. Palestine was under the control of Rome. She selected procurators or governors for this little country, and from the year 26 on to the year 36, embracing the time of the public career of Christ, Pontius Pilate had been sent to rule over them.

Now bear it in mind that the Jews were kindly treated, in many respects, by the Roman government. Rome cared nothing about their religion. She allowed them to worship as they saw fit; to execute any of their laws; to reprove, rebuke and administer punishment unto any of their number. There was just one thing the Jews were prohibited from carrying into effect, and that was, capital punishment. This they could not inflict without the authority of the Roman governor.

So then, when the Jews agreed and declared that Jesus Christ should be put to death, only one trouble remained, and that was, to get the consent of Governor Pilate.

Christ was arrested in the lonely Garden of Gethsemane, and during the same night was rushed through various trials. First, he stood before old Annas, the ex-high priest, and the father-in-law of Caiaphas. After that, he was brought before the Jewish court of which Caiaphas was the chief justice. There he was condemned as worthy of death. When he acknowledged himself to be the Son of God, Caiaphas rent his clothes, saying, "What further need have we of witnesses? He has spoken blasphemy. What think ye? They said, He is guilty of death." He was then carried before Governor Pilate; next, to old Herod, who had

come down from Caesarea, and then back to Pilate for final disposition. Just at that time a great feast was on, and it had been the custom all along the line for the governor to release to the crowd some one person of their own selection. At this particular feast there were two prisoners in the custody of the country. One of them was Jesus of Nazareth, and the other was a noted robber by the name of Barabbas. He was a murderer who had raised all insurrection against the government. He had been tried by the Jewish court, condemned and put in prison to be executed.

Therefore, on this great day, the governor came to that multitude and asked: "Whether of the twain, Jesus or Barabbas, will you that I release unto you?"

I think I can see Governor Pilate as he seeks to hide behind the great Jewish nation, and put them in the lead. He thought they would surely demand that Jesus be released. He knew there was no cause for his death. He expected them to insist upon the death of Barabbas. But, contrary to his expectation, they answered and said, "Give unto us Barabbas, let him go free, rather than the other." And then old Governor Pilate said, "But what shall I do with him who is called the Christ?" And the answer came from the crowd and the mob that had been worked up by their leaders, "Crucify him." The governor then asked, "What evil hath he done?"

Instead of trying to give a just answer, they came back with their demand, saying, "Away with him, this man is not worthy to live."

Three times the governor went through a formal trial and each time announced that Jesus was innocent, and that there was no just accusation against him. The multitude would not accept that decision, and, while Christ stood there humiliated, that judgment rendered by Pilate in his behalf was taken away, and the judgment of the mob was forced in its stead. Hence, there was the fulfillment of the prophecy found in the 53rd division of the Book of Isaiah, where it is said, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away."

Friends, don't get it into your minds that Christ ever lost his balance, or that his judgment had fled away. That is not the thing taken away. That judgment rendered by old Governor Pilate was not allowed to stand, and the immaculate Son of Mary stood hopeless and helpless.

In the crucifixion of the Christ, that Hebrew prophecy had its fulfillment.

When I was here some years ago, and made mention of that fact, a Jew of Decatur, Alabama, wrote me a letter, saying that I had missed the interpretation of Isaiah 53. He said that was fulfilled in the year 70, with the destruction of the Jewish nation. They were led as sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb before the shearer they opened not their mouths. But, he failed to understand that Isaiah said "he," not "they." Furthermore, the Jews had waged a constant losing fight from the year 65 to 70 and were not led as sheep to the slaughter. They died fighting to the very last hour. Isaiah 53, referred to none other than Jesus of Nazareth.

When that judgment was taken away by the cries of the surging mob, Pilate was at the very crisis of his career. Numbers of cases had been to him appealed, and he had passed judgment upon them, but this was the most trying hour, the very crucial moment, when his destiny was trembling in the balance, and suspended upon a quivering pivot.

Have you ever stopped, friends, to think how Pilate must have reasoned about this matter? Consider what possibly passed through his mind, favorable to him who is called the Christ. First, he knew Jesus was innocent. Of that fact he hadn't a shadow of a doubt. Three times had Christ been brought before him, and three times he had said, "I find no fault in him."

Second, he knew that because of envy Christ had been delivered into his presence.

Third, he knew that he had the power to release him. One word from the governor in his behalf would have meant legal freedom.

Fourth, after the governor had been called from the night's sleep to enter into the court, old Mrs. Pilate had a

dream, and it so disturbed her that she rushed a message to her husband, which said, "Have thou nothing to do with this just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." All these things were favorable to Jesus. Conscience cried out to old Pilate saying, "Release him, have the courage and the backbone to do your duty."

But there is another side to the question. Now note these things against the Christ in the mind of the governor.

First, "I am the governor of the people whom I serve. It is the duty of all official to recognize the voice of the people."

Second, Pilate looked out upon that crowd assembled and saw that they were a wild set. The vast majority did not know what it was all about. They were only echoing that which their leaders had announced. The governor possibly said, "Doubtless it will do no good to object. This crowd is determined. They have already voted. They will carry into effect that which they have in their hearts. They are not only going to get the Christ, but the chances are that they might get me as well. Therefore, in self-defense, I must yield to their wishes."

Third, possibly, the straw that broke the camel's back, was the charge that, "If you let this man go, you are no friend of Caesar's." Why? "This man has said in your very presence that he, himself, is King, and to that end was he born. Therefore, governor, we will report to headquarters that you are disloyal, and that you are recognizing a man who claims to be a king in opposition to him who sits upon the throne in the City of Rome."

Then what? Pilate weighed these matters pro and con, back and forth, with his conscience saying, "Release him," but with self-interest saying, "Yield to the people." When the governor saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was raised, he took water and washed his hands in their presence, and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man."

The last thing old Governor Pilate ever said about Jesus was, that he was a just man. And yet he didn't have the

moral courage, the manhood, and the stamina to go against the great throng, and declare liberty and freedom to him who was both innocent and just.

Hence the Christ was led away, while those who were his accusers gladly said, "Let his blood be upon us and upon our children."

The greatest mistake any favored nation ever made on this earth was when this responsibility was invited upon them and their children. It was all the result of a partisan, prejudiced spirit. It only sounded the death knell and announced the doom that came to pass but thirty and seven years thereafter. As a people, they were scattered abroad o'er the face of the earth. From that hour they have been wanderers, strangers and pilgrims in every nation under heaven. They have ever had their faces turned toward Jerusalem, under the delusion that the real Messiah is yet to make his advent, and gather them from the various nations of the earth.

My Jewish friends, I think you are sadly, woefully and sorrowfully mistaken in such a prospect as that toward which you look, and I would to God this night that that splendid nationality of people which has maintained itself, and made its impress felt wherever it has gone, would accept Jesus Christ as the culmination of its prophecies, and in their hearts crown him Lord of all.

It is possible for that nation to be forgiven, just the same as those multitudes, yea, as thousands of them were, fifty and three days after that tragedy came to pass.

When Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven, assembled in Jerusalem, Peter, one of their number, stood in their midst and said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him being delivered by that determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by the hands of lawless men, have crucified and slain; whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

By his triumphant resurrection he plucked the very rose of immortality from the midst of the hadean realm, and planted it upon the bosom of his open grave, thus evidencing the sublimity of his matchless power. Peter told that great multitude just what they might do to cleanse their hands, and to free themselves from their guilt. As a result, conviction was brought to their hearts, and they cried out to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, saying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

The answer was, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is not only to you Jews, and to your children, but it is also to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything or uncircumcision." What does? A faith that works by love. In Christ Jesus, all barriers are torn down. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." I can clasp hands with any Jew on earth, and rejoice in the fact that the wall of partition is gone. I do not want to be distinguished. I love the sentiment, "You are all one, and if you be Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

I said some nights ago that I propose to be a child of Abraham. In Romans 4: 11, also verse 16, Abraham is said to be the father of all them that believe. He is my father in spirit, as he is the Jewish father in the flesh. Since the spirit is far superior, why not let us all stand together spiritually in that promise made by God to Abraham?

Let us be heirs of that promise, and look not to physical Palestine, with its rolling hills and silvery streams, but let us look to that Palestine beyond—the New Jerusalem.

I have now talked long enough. I conclude by saying that the invitation of Jesus Christ is just as big and as broad

as was the provision for the plan of salvation. Just as he tasted death for every man, so every man is included in his invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Come tonight with your faith centered in Christ, the Son of God. Abandon every sin, and resolve to acknowledge him who died that you might live. Come with a full purpose to follow all the way, to be buried in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, from which you may rise to walk in newness of life. Then by his grace walk in his counsel the remnant of your days. If this you'll do he will gladly conduct you home to glory that you may dwell in his paradise forevermore.