

Spiritual Call

A Continuance of "Macedonian Call"

To be carnally minded is death, but to be
SPIRITUALLY minded is life and peace.
—Romans 8:6

Walk worthy of the vocation (calling)
wherewith ye are CALLED.
—Ephesians 4:1

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A Prayer

Make me Thy laborer,
Let me not dream of ever looking back,
Let not my knees be feeble, hands be slack.
O make me strong to labor, strong to bear,
From the rising of the morning till the stars appear.

Make me Thy warrior,
On whom Thou canst depend to stand the brunt
Of any perilous charge on any front.
Give me skill to handle sword and spear,
From the rising of the morning till the stars appear.

Not far from us, those stars—
Unseen as angels and yet looking through
The quiet air, the day's transparent blue.
What shall we know, and feel, and see, and hear
When the sunset colors kindle and the stars appear?
—Amy Carmichael, *Heart and Life*

The Road to Hell

Let me read you a portion of a letter written to President Grover Cleveland in 1895, by a fifteen-year-old child—one of the quaintest letters in the whole White House collection:

"Dear President: I am in a dreadful state of mind, and I thought I would write and tell you all. About two years ago—as near as I can remember, it is two years—I used two postage stamps that had been used before on letters, perhaps more than two stamps, but I can only remember doing it twice. I did not realize what I had done until lately. My mind is constantly turned on that subject, and I think of it night and day. Now, dear President, will you please forgive me, and I will promise you I will never do it again. Enclosed find cost of three stamps, and please forgive me, for I was then but thirteen years old, for I am heartily sorry for what I have done. From one of your subjects."

Even we adults smile condescendingly today at such seeming simplicity, but I say to you in all earnestness that my heart's desire is for a return to such a state of conscience. Our Lord Himself said that "whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

I say "return" to such a state of conscience because there is not one Christian in a thousand today who hasn't left it. And that brings us to a consideration of God's Word on Christian conscience in decline. This will not be pleasant, nor soothing, nor immediately comforting, but we trust it may work the peaceable fruit of righteousness to anyone who may be exercised thereby.

Scripture is very plain on this subject of conscience disregarded, so plain that we dare not ignore it. For it reminds us of that which we all know by personal experience as well, namely, that *conscience unexercised and disregarded speaks*

with a weaker and weaker voice, and eventually no longer speaks at all. And the tragedy of this is that this silencing of conscience is just the counterpart, the inevitable accompaniment, of departure into sin.

First of all, our Bibles tell us that when we begin to grow careless in this matter of conscience, it immediately becomes what Paul calls "emboldened" (I Cor. 8:10). Read that passage and you will see that it has to do with the matter of casting a stumblingblock before those who are spiritually weak. If one such should happen to see any of us who have greater spiritual knowledge engaging in that which in itself may be harmless enough, and such a one should be *emboldened* to do likewise, then, Paul says, your Christian liberty becomes *sin*. If our brother's conscience in such a case becomes *emboldened*, the greater sin is ours, for causing it to be so.

"There are two stones we may not cast:
The stone of stumbling in our brother's way,
The stone of censure at our brother's past,
For we ourselves have gone astray."

May God forgive us for our willful disregard of the plain truth of Scripture on this subject: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself . . . wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

You know what the word "emboldened" means—to be encouraged in something. And the Greek word thus translated in I Corinthians 8:10 literally means to construct, or build. Every time we refuse the voice of conscience we lay in place another stone in the erection of the mausoleum in which it can eventually be buried.

This same portion of Scripture tells us that a weak conscience thus emboldened or strengthened in sin is in reality "wounded" (v. 12). And note that this wounding of a weak conscience is a sin against Christ Himself! I beg you to remember this, the next time you selfishly insist on gratifying some personal desire, innocent though it may be to you, but a stumblingblock to the weak.

It is only to be expected that a wounded conscience begins to *swerve*. We read in I Timothy 1:5, 6 of a "good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside." The Greek word translated *swerve* means literally "to miss the mark or deviate from truth."

An airplane pilot flying blind depends upon three instruments to keep himself on course—the turn-and-bank indicator, the rate-of-climb indicator, and the altimeter. An experienced pilot knows that when flying blind he must absolutely ignore his feelings and depend solely on his instruments. But *suppose* one or more of his instruments begin to do what Paul says here some do as to conscience—to swerve, or "to deviate from the truth." You know what will happen to that pilot unless he gets out of the cloud or the darkness immediately. You read about him in the papers next day.—Moody Monthly

Remember When?—

- The church congregation was like a family,
 - When each member considered it his or her duty to help care for sick members,
 - When elders regularly endeavored to feed spiritual food to the flock,
 - When sermons were few minutes longer and scripture references greater in number,
 - When preachers gave, "Thus saith the Lord," as reason why,
 - When at services members had in heart (mind) psalms (hymns), prayers or scripture to exhort *one another*,
 - When the needs of members were looked after if possible,
 - Remember when the gospel was preached with power from the heart,
 - When no preachers or elders were for fine meeting-houses or costly paintings on the walls of same,
 - When preachers gave much scripture in language simple and easy to be understood,
 - When no Christian attended services to be popular or to show new "togs,"
 - When members were not for physical strength in games, nor for side religious organizations to help (?) the church (family of God).
- In short, remember when more scripture was quoted and practiced in church, and "it was good to have been there?" "Ask for the old paths and walk therein." "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto Him, Lord, Evermore give us this bread." (John 6:33, 34).—An Old Timer

Christ is not Only a Lamb, But a Lion

There is something lacking in most of the popular portraits of Jesus. Love is there. Gentleness, meekness, and compassion are also there. We would not think of erasing a line from any of these. But the portrait of Jesus as painted in the scriptures exhibits, in addition, a ruggedness and severity which the artists generally have passed by.

The popular conception of Christ today is that of a tender Jesus, meek and mild, loving and compassionate, too kind to punish and too softhearted to resist the aggressors of wrong. He is lauded as a beautiful example, a matchless teacher who sweetly forgives his enemies and who sacrificed his life to a worthy cause.

Devotion to such a Savior must create a corresponding type of character in his followers. A spineless Christ will develop a spineless people. A Christ that is merely a beautiful influence will produce a race that has no urge to fight against wrong. A Jesus that is too tender and loving to punish sin will foster a generation which will not fear his judgments. If we serve an effeminate God we are bound to trifle with his affection.

Dr. J. H. Jowett once said: "The popular God is not great and will not produce a great race. We have toyed with the light, but we have forgotten the lightning. We have rejoiced in the Fatherhood of God, but too frequently the Fatherhood we have proclaimed has been throneless and effeminate. If we banish the conceptions which inspire awe, we of necessity devitalize the very doctrines of grace; and if grace is emasculated, then faith becomes anæmic, and we take away the very tang and pang from the sense of sin."

What was the conception of Christ while on this earth? How did the people of his own day regard him? When he asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" this was their answer: "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

What made folks think that Jesus was John the Baptist? John, who preached about the axe, the fan, and the fire! John, who called the Pharisees a generation of vipers. Had they heard him say, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" There was something about Jesus that reminded the people of John.

What made them think of Elijah? Elijah, who faced Ahab and Jezebel with their sins! Elijah, who slew the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal! Or why did Jesus remind them of Jeremiah? Jeremiah, who was called the weeping prophet! But his was not a mere sentimental weeping. His was the weeping that shakes strong men. There must have been some rugged qualities about Jesus that made the people of his time think of these great stalwarts of the past.

How did Jesus manifest this quality of severity in his ministry? Listen to some of his sterner words: "I never knew you"; "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire"; "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness"; "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" "Ye blind guides!" "Ye whited sepulchres!" "Ye are of your father the devil."

When we read, "The government shall be upon his shoulder"; "King of kings"; "Governor among the nations"; "Prince of the kings of the earth"; "The Son of the Highest"; "Of his kingdom there shall be no end"—does anyone think that these are references to some sentimental weakling who will take no account of the conduct of men and of nations?

The apostle Paul puts it this way: "Behold the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, otherwise thou shalt be cut off."

Let us keep the Jesus with the little children in his arms, but let us not lose the Jesus who drives the money-changers out of the temple. We would not dim the picture of the good shepherd seeking his sheep, but we must not forget that there is the lion of the tribe of Judah. We would not miss a word of the Sermon on the Mount, but there is also a twenty-third chapter of Matthew.

A minister writes: "Men of knotted hearts are not attracted by easy things. Jesus has been thought of as "dear" and "precious" Jesus. And it has not appealed to men. Men did not follow a "dear" Lincoln, a "dear" Foch; but men will follow a rugged, granite, and majestic Christ."

When we lose our capacity of deep resentment; when we profess to love the right, but do not hate the wrong; when we rest ourselves in the mercy of God and have no fear of his justice, we have forgotten that "his eyes were as a flame of fire, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword."

—Christian Statesman—

Stubborn Men of Our Time

If I were asked to select a single verse of Scripture that might serve as a torch to light the eternal fires of a world-shaking, God-sent revival among us lukewarm Christians, I would not take time to blink an eye before answering, "John 11:35."

Why? Well, Jesus wept because He loved Lazarus, loved him with that heaven-born love which conquers all—even death and sin and cold hearts, yea, even the very old devil himself.

In this sin-sick world of super-emotional restraint, to expect a widespread outbreak of Christian leaders weeping for the lost would be about the same as expecting a farmer's turnip patch to become a blood bank for the Red Cross.

But getting blood out of a turnip is not impossible with God; therefore let us continue to pray that on one bright

and golden morning He shall renew within us a right spirit. Then shall we experience again that love of Christ which in the long ago surged in a hot torrent through our hearts and made us weep for joy. Then, too, we shall cringe and shake and fall prostrate at His feet and cry out for mercy, conscious of the terrible truth that through the long years most of us have not shed a single tear over those lost ones for whom He wept so bitterly.

Oh, yes, I know well enough that many of our best spiritual leaders are just about moving heaven and earth in their attempt to bring about a genuine awakening of those millions of believers whose snores of unconcern can never attract the unsaved, but merely serve instead to repel them with exceeding speed away from this form of "life." But how many of these preachers and teachers and professors and evangelists have tried the hot-tear method of waking up their sheep? Or is it true that the majority of our well-meaning undershepherds are still making ill use of the old and proverbial pitcher of cold water?

On that black night of His betrayal, there in the quiet place which was named Gethsemane, Jesus might well have used "cold water" to awaken Peter, James and John. Certainly, under far less trying circumstances, many of us would, at least, feel like throwing pitcher, water and all. But the Master had a better way. After coming back the third time and softly bidding them to sleep on, Jesus at last returned and roused them gently with a voice so filled with love and agony and tears, there could not possibly be a single trace of anger.

Yes, Jesus wept.

And many of His hot tears must have dropped into the very heart of that big, rough and quick-tempered Peter, because during that very same night, after following Jesus afar off, his cold heart thawed out at last, and thinking over how he had cursed and sworn and denied his Lord, the blunt and sea-toughened fisherman broke down and cried like a baby.

This man Peter was not unlike millions of stubborn men of our time, who can never be driven with a rod of iron, but can easily be led with a cord of love.

A heart that has never been broken isn't much good to anybody except a medical student and the devil. But not many hearts are broken by preachers that have no better method than beating the air with their fists and breathing out "righteous indignation."

Don't pay any attention to me, but go right on with your snorting and bellowing like a mad bull. If you make enough noise, that napping brother over there in the corner might be disturbed enough to straighten up his head for a minute or two. But you won't ever be able to really warm his heart or convert a sinner by such methods. You must love them, and if necessary become a fool for Christ and weep over them.

Along about now, I seem to hear a voice saying, "What's the matter with that fellow, haven't we got enough sad and sanctimonious Christians sitting in our pews, without having our ministers stand in the pulpit and cry?"

Well, I guess I had better hasten to explain to some that I'm really talking more about that feeling of love in the heart which produces tears, rather than the actual tears. In other words, I'm talking about that wonderful, Christ-like condition of a man's heart that is indicated when he casts aside every last vestige of cold-hearted self-restraint and yields himself completely to that God-given feeling of love.

It was this kind of love that caused John to lean on Jesus' bosom; Ruth to say to Naomi, "Where thou diest

will I die"; Jeremiah to weep all the day long; Abraham to offer up his son Isaac; Stephen to cry, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"; Livingstone to gladly forsake civilization and die a missionary in Africa; Martin Luther to turn from his wrathful exposure of Roman Catholic corruption and write with divine tenderness, "Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head"; the great Paul to demand, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts-21:13).

—R. A. Lamb in Moody Monthly.

This Old House of Clay

When I am through with this old clay house of mine,
When no more guide lights through the windows shine,
Just box it up and lay it away
With the other clay houses of yesterday.

And with it, my friends, do, if you can,
Bury the wrongs, since I first began
To live in this house; bury deep and forget,
I want to be square and out of your debt.

When I meet the grand Architect Supreme
Face to face, I want to be clean.
Of course I know, it's too late to mend
A badly built house, when you come to the end.

But you who are building, just look over mine,
And make your alterations while there is time.
Just study this house, no tears should be shed,
It's like any clay house, when the tenant has fled.

I have lived in this house many days all alone,
Just waiting, and oh, I long to go home.
Don't misunderstand me, this old world is fine,
With love, birds, flowers and glorious sunshine.

A wonderful place, a wonderful plan,
And a wonderful, wonderful gift to man.
Yet somehow we feel, when this cycle's complete
There are dear ones across we are anxious to meet.

So we open the books and check up the past,
And no more forced balances, this is the last,
Each item is checked, each page must be clean
It's the passport we carry to our Builder Supreme.

So when I am through with this old house of clay
Just box it up tight, and lay it away.
For the Builder has promised when this house is spent,
To have one all finished, with timber I've sent.

While I live here in this one, of course it will be
Exactly as I here have builded, you see,
It's the kind of material we each send across.
And if we build poorly, of course this is our loss.

You ask what material is best to select?
T'was told you long since, by the great Architect.
"A new commandment I give unto you,
That you love one another, as I have loved you",
So the finest material to send up above
Is clear, straight-grained timber of "brotherly love."

—Sent by J. D. Powers.

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A Strange Indifference

It seems strange that there are so many people all around us who are fully conscious of the fact that they are in an unsaved condition. They realize that, if death should come to them, as inevitably it must, they do not have a single thing upon which to base a hope of being acceptable to Him, when they meet Him in judgment.

Sometimes it seems to me that it is not so much unbelief or infidelity, as it is indifference or a general apathy, caused by an inordinate attention to the cares and pleasures of the world. They realize that the Bible is the Word of God and they nominally accept it as such. But here the matter ends. They rarely, if ever, read or study the Bible, or give serious thought to their destiny.

"For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" (Matt. 16:26.) At best life in this world is fleeting and transitory. Every setting of the sun, every tick of the clock, brings us nearer to the eternal world. If a man owned the earth, and owned it until he died, he would not own it long. When a few years have fled, when a few fleeting and transitory days have passed, all of us will go the way of all the earth, never to return. We come naked into the world and go out naked again, and our destiny in the world beyond does not depend upon how much of the properties, goods and chattels of earth we leave behind.

All reason and intelligence points to another life. There must be another life. No man of sense can think that things left incomplete in this world must go uncompleted forever. Such an idea is chaos, insanity, and would drive reason out of the universe. Unless there is another life to complete what is begun here, all the labors and cares of the uncounted millions of men and women who have labored and sacrificed here have come to naught; and not only that, but nature herself, who toils and labors in the operation of the stupendous machinery of the universe, labors and toils in vain. If there is not another life, nothing is gained. All nature, all the vast systems of the universe, ceaselessly labor and toil day and night to accomplish nothing, if the grave is the goal. It is absurd. It cannot be. There is a future life; and man's conduct here is what rightfully determines his destiny there.

The only safe course a man may pursue is to be guided by the Bible. If he does not stand upon "the Bible and the Bible alone," he is building on the sand. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."—(Eccles. 12:13, 14.)—In Apostolic Times. J. A. A.

Training Our Children

Solomon wrote, and he wrote it by inspiration: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it." Many people in our day are racking their brains for ways to get the child grown with as little responsibility and trouble as possible. He is left in the hands of a nurse when he is too little to be out late. The mother is doing the going out. When he gets big enough, he is turned over to the kindergarten to give him his manners and his ideas of life. Then when he is released from the kindergarten, he is sent to the grammar school. (These things are fine reinforcements for the training in the home, but they are not of much account as substitutes for home training.) After school hours and on Saturdays he spends his time in the parks or on the vacant lots playing ball. (Playing ball is good, healthful sport, but it is not a good substitute for work in the yard and helping at home.) The child who merely grows up doing as he pleases is not being fitted to live a useful life for God or men; he is being fitted to do and be whatever his appetite yearns for. He has not had the parental direction and discipline and example that it takes to make a public-spirited man among his fellows. It is true that he has had ample opportunity to develop his own individuality, but he may be to society like a bull in a china shop. Such growing up is not pleasing to the Lord. "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Fathers and mothers have a great and grave responsibility; they cannot shirk it without bringing disappointment and grief to both themselves and the children they have neglected. There is nothing that pays greater dividends in satisfaction and joy to parents and real satisfaction to neighbors and friends than a well-brought-up child. But the fellow who has been allowed to drift into manhood is a disappointment and grief to parents many times, and many times a problem to society. The blame is not all his.

THE DECEPTIVE LIE

In some things children are not easily deceived. They can readily see whether or not their parents practice what they preach. If a parent is dishonest, the children will surely find it out. If a parent is honest and loves his children and his fellows, the children will find that out without being told. But there are some things in which children are easily deceived. Children can be given the wrong kind of teaching, and will hold it tenaciously in after years. For instance, in some schools, beginning with even the kindergarten, children are taught that there is nothing that is right of itself; that all right or wrong is a matter of success or failure; that if a thing works, that makes it right; but if it fails to work, that makes it wrong. There is too much of that sort of thing in the world without its being taught our children. Then, too, children are being taught in some quarters that what is right or what is wrong depends upon the standards of the place in which one lives. For instance, if one should live among some Arab tribes, it would be right for him to have several wives, because that is the standard there. Such teaching is false. Of course there are some things that are matters of custom. In England it is right to drive on the left side of the road, but it is wrong in the United States. But such things are minor matters. In things where God has spoken, the matter of right or wrong is not changed by either custom or geography. It is wrong to steal, to lie, to commit

adultery, to kill, because God's law forbids these things. They are wrong in the United States; and no matter where on this earth one should take up his abode, these things would still be wrong. Where God has spoken, right and wrong are fixed and definite; where man has set the standard, time and place may have some power to change or abolish.

GOD AND MEN

Some people think of God as a servant. They feel that God exists to satisfy their wants and desires. They express themselves as having no place for God except as they can use him for their own selfish ends. This idea of God is not in the Bible. In fact, we owe our life and all of our blessings to the bounty and kind providence of a loving and merciful heavenly Father. Some people have the idea that we are necessary to God. They think, or seem to think, that we are profitable to God, as workmen are profitable to the man for whom they labor. But that is not true. We are not profitable to God. Jesus said: "When ye shall have done all," then say, "We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do." (Luke 17: 10.) Then we cannot do enough to merit a place in heaven. It is our duty to do all that is commanded. We cannot enter heaven unless we obey the commands of the Lord. In his letters to the seven churches in Revelation, our Lord repeats the admonition: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." But we cannot earn that crown. To our faithful obedience something must be added. That something is God's grace. We are saved by obedience; we are also saved by grace. (Eph. 2: 8, 9.) God is a companion. We walk with God. Enoch walked with God. But the walk with God must be in reverence. "We walk in the light, as he is in the light." (1 John 1: 7.) But we walk with our Creator. We walk humbly, or God does not walk with us. We must not think of ourselves as on equal footing with God. We are not. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5: 6.) We do not come into the presence of God with boisterous laughter, but with a happiness and satisfaction that finds its best expression in humble reverence and worship. Would it not be fine if we could always remember this when we come to church?—Batsell Baxter in Gospel Advocate.

APPLES ARE SOUREST NEAR THE FENCE

Charles Spurgeon used to tell the story of an American who had a great apple orchard. This apple fancier had insisted over and over that a friend of his should come by and sample his fine fruit.

Finally, the friend admitted that he had already tasted the apples and that he did not care for any more of them. Said he, "As I went along the fence, I picked up one that had fallen outside and I never tasted anything as sour in my life."

The gardner replied, "I thought it must be so. Those apples around the outside are for the special benefit of the boys. I went fifty miles to select the sourest sort to plant around the outside, so that the boys would give the rest up as not worth stealing." Then he went on, "But if you will come inside, you will find that we grow a very different quality there—sweet as honey."

There are thousands out in the world who, blindly, are judging the church life of today by the quality of those who are just on the fence—right near the edge—neither in nor out.—Western Recorder.

Things Work Out

Because it rains when we wish it wouldn't,
Because men do what they often shouldn't,
Because crops fail, and plans go wrong—
Some of us grumble the whole day long.
But, somehow, in spite of the care and doubt,
It seems at last that things work out.

Because we lose where we hope to gain,
Because we suffer a little pain,
Because we must work when we'd like to play—
Some of us whimper along life's way.
But, somehow, as day will follow the night,
Most of our troubles work out all right.

Because we cannot forever smile,
Because we must trudge in the dust awhile,
Because we think that the way is long—
Some complain that life's all wrong.
But somehow we live and our sky grows bright,
Everything seems to work out all right.

So bend to your trouble and meet your care,
For the clouds must break, and the sky grow fair,
Let the rain come down as it must and will,
But keep on working on, hoping still,
For in spite of the grumblers who stand about,
Somehow, it seems all things work out.

(Selected)

The Foundation of God

In Paul's letter to young Timothy, II Tim. 2:19, he says, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

In Isaiah 28:16 the prophet spoke of this foundation and of the precious material that was in it, and Paul writing to the brethren of Ephesus assured them that they were building, or had built on that foundation. And in I Cor. 3:10—"According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon; but let every man take heed how he buildeth there upon."

Men are claiming to be building on that foundation. Whose lips are full of lies and who are standing in the way preventing those who would come to Christ, and saying to those who are striving to build, "We are your authority"; teaching the young people, if the elders puts something in this foundation that will cause you to lose your soul, the elders will have to answer for it, and the elders standing as it were, with a club over the congregation, saying, "We will tell you who is loyal and who is not."

Paul never mentioned this great authority of the preacher or elder, but he mentioned love, and a congregation which expects to be called good and faithful must be built on love for each other and above all love for God.

—H. L. Ottwell, 327 Broadway, East Alton, Ill.

A LOT OF MY BRETHERN keep trying to tell me how to preach. They remind me of the following story:

Little Claude's mother had reluctantly allowed her precious child to attend public school. She gave the teacher a long list of instructions. "My Claude is so sensitive," she explained. "Don't ever punish him. Just slap the boy next to him; that will frighten Claude."

—Selected.

"The Spider and the Fly"

As one reads the saddening history of the Church through two thousand years, he sees that the troubles have come largely from the ambition of bishops for power and more power. That is the way the Papacy arose, which Protestants have protested against.

Some of us have seen the ambition of bishops, not only to rule with an iron hand—their own flocks but to reach out and try to regulate the preaching of the Word by faithful evangelists in other places. They have tried to put out of business faithful evangelists who did not fall at their feet, but who insisted on obeying God rather than men; and they have tried to keep every one from reading their writings on Truth and Righteousness.

In the local churches, a few elders (I am glad to say it is nearly altogether with large churches), try to enhance their authority by teaching and practising such things that when once you come into their congregation you are entirely under their sway or are doomed to persecution to the end. You can not correct them in any way, you can not bring charges against them, for such men have laid down principles of church government which give them the final say on everything which has to do with church government. No one can criticize their acts in casting people out of the church, as did Diotrophes of old, for "opposition to the authority of the elders is opposition to the Lord." And, "You cannot withdraw from a congregation, but the congregation can withdraw from you."

This all reminds one of the poem on the Spider and the Fly which was in school readers decades ago. The Spider wove his net to get the flies entangled in them that he might devour them. I think some of the words are appropriate today, and run something like this:

"Will you walk into my parlor,"
Said the spider to the fly,
"'Tis the prettiest little parlor
That ever you did spy.
The way into my parlor
Is up a winding stair,
And I have many curious things
To show when you are there."

"Oh, no, no," said the little fly.
"To ask me is in vain;
For who goes up your winding stair
'Can ne'er come down again."

SOME CHURCH NEWS

UNIONVILLE, MO.—We thirty are at peace and are working in harmony. Our meetings are very interesting and edifying. Only one of the male members but what will take any part when called on, and he is past 80 years old. Hope this finds you and sister Somer in reasonable health.—L. E. Hodges.

WOOD RIVER, ILL.—We had 87 out Sunday morning, June 26, and 51 at night, and that with the big show at _____! . . . We have had a lot of visitors at Wood River. I got my letter (from the state to marry) and am all set for a wedding, July 3, and 16, and Aug. 26. Jerseyville, Ill., a few miles away, had one addition last Wednesday night, and last Sunday their attendance was 52, and 20 Sunday night. Hope you both are feeling well and that we can see you again soon.—Harold Ottwell.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.—Several weeks ago the publisher and wife visited the little group in west end at Newark, Ohio. Bro. J. G. Kime is leader there. We had known Brother and Sister A. W. Adams, who are now living there, for many years, and enjoyed much our stay with them in their home; we feel for them in the loss of their only child a year or so ago, leaving them alone now without any children. Bro. Kime writes recently:

"Had a splendid service yesterday. Good attendance: nice lesson by Bro. Adams." Brother Kime recently sent us five dollars for 25 copies of "3 Greatest Questions," a 64-page booklet on "Mutual Edification." Mutual Edification does NOT mean that women should be pressed into the public service of the church, to the confusion and division of the church, as some elders and preachers are ignorantly doing. Why not YOU send for 25 copies and distribute—it gives some very important scriptural teaching on the worship of God. The group there has some good, important, neglected principles, and also has some room for improvement! May they all be found faithful when Jesus comes.—D.A.S.

THE CHURCH AT BROOKFIELD, MO.—The publisher spent eight nights with the faithful church at Brookfield, Mo., which has passed through the fire and been purified from some dross. They have remodeled their house, which needed it very badly, but they waited many years that they might not have to beg from others. A few small things remain unfinished, yet they have no debts, at least to speak of, and have a neat house which will seat about 100. The weather was sweltering, but a few nonmembers were present, and brethren took well our plain teaching on The Christian Life—Not Church Government and Discipline, as so many fanatics are now emphasizing, but Personal Discipline! Sunday we had three meetings and dinner on the ground; brethren Ora Robinson and L. E. Hodges, leaders at Unionville, Mo., were present and gave us a good account of the good work among the thirty there meeting in an "upper room" like the early disciples. Bro. J. A. Collins, a preacher brother who is postmaster at Worthington, Mo., came a distance of 80 miles one evening, and we talked of things pertaining to the Kingdom.—D.A.S.

WHAT SOME THINK.—We receive many commendations of our work, but jot down only a few now and then, such as following: Enjoy the paper very much.—Jameson, Mo. . . . I still stand for the principles of the S. C., and hope you will be able to publish it many more years.—Missouri . . . 10 Simplified Testaments to Brixey, Mo., and five to Texas . . . We are enclosing five dollars which I believe will cover the cost of the paper, and what is left over use to help in the Cause. We like the Call—wonderful reading, and I pass it on to others.—Kansas City . . . I have before me your little paper called Spiritual Call, and read it through, and like it very much; and if it continues as good as this one I believe it will do much good in the brotherhood, if there will be enough who will take it and read it. (Here is a chance for ALL our readers to "do much good," as this sister says—can we look for a list of subscribers from you?—TEN NEW names NOW for ONLY FIVE DOLLARS.) The 35 Rules on How to be Happy, is worth a lot if read and practised.—(A Sister, Portland, Oregon.) . . . Just read the last issue of the S. P., and am happy to see some new writers. Your article on "Lording it Over God's Heritage" is good. Keep this up and it will do good.—Illinois . . . We have a new supply of Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary, but the price has been raised to \$7.00. It covers the whole Bible by REAL scholars, not pretenders who wrestle the scriptures to save their own false doctrines and practices. I have many commentaries but do not think I have one who deliberately twists the Scriptures, for often they take positions directly against the practice of the denomination to which they belong. But when writers take positions directly against the connection of thought and against ALL the Bible scholars in the world with whom we are acquainted, and against hundreds of translators who have made the different versions, I do not know how to express my contempt for such sectarians, for "sectarians" are just what they are though they profess to be "disciples." Look up the scriptures this commentary gives on any hard passage, but do not receive it unless it proves the point. No wonder such men try to draw "An Iron Curtain" over their members and try to keep them from reading anything we put out. They are ambitious sectarians. Let us all be true disciples, learners, of truth, for "the truth shall make you free." . . . "I hope you and yours are all feeling fine, and encouraged in the word and work. You are possibly doing the greatest work of your life. I think of you often and pray you may continue the fight. Your writings and thoughts are condensed, and the best ever." Etc.—H. L. Carlton, (Evangelist).

The history of the Church of Christ from the days of the apostles has been a history of spiritual movements.

—H. P. Liddon.

It is much easier to settle a point than to act on it.

—Richard Cecil.

July 7, 1949

CLINTWOOD, VA., R. 2, Box 57.—Dear Bro. Sommer—Preached six nights recently at White Hall, Maryland. Had pleasure of baptizing my brother in the flesh; he is 65 years of age, also his wife, 64. We all rejoiced. Trust they continue faithful the few short days they are blest to remain here. I am back in Virginia. Here is a great Missionary field, and I trust the truth may have free course into the hearts of those who are deceived, and are not aware of it. Lord help us all to be faithful.—J. D. Powers.

WHO ARE GOD'S PEOPLE?

There is a common belief among members of the church, that if the elders of the congregation cast out a member that the one withdrawn from is then in the devil's territory.

This is false, for no one has any authority to make a person a member of the body of Christ, neither has any man authority to cut any one off from the body of Christ, which is the church. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47.) Man can only assist in their obedience to Christ, but Christ never gave the power, to add to the church, to any man.

The congregation may put them away from among themselves, but that does not make them not a member of the body of Christ. They are still children of God and have the right to call Him Father, and make supplications to Him and give thanks to Him for His many blessings.

Jesus, speaking to the church at Sardis, said: "I know thy works that thou hast a name that thou livest but art dead." (Rev. 3:1.) And in the fourth and fifth verses He said: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis (a dead church), which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white raiment; and I will not blot out His name from the book of life, but I will confess His name before My Father and before His angels."

From this we understand that Jesus reserves the power to cast out of His church; also that there is always a possibility, when a congregation withdraws from a member, for that one to repent and be restored to fellowship with the local congregation.

The elders in some congregations are usurping the authority of the congregation. Paul was writing to the congregation at Corinth, when he said: "Put away from among you that wicked person." (I Cor. 5:13.) He was not telling the elders to put him away from among themselves.

The elders of a church that put away some without consultation with the congregation, are doing things in the dark. And Jesus said: "Men love darkness . . . rather than light because their deeds are evil; for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest their deeds be reproved." (Jno. 3:19-20.)

Then who are God's people: Those who are faithful in HIS eyes and not those whom men may approve.

We shall be judged out of the things written in the books, according to our works.

If we shun not to declare all the counsel of God, yes reprove, rebuke and exhort as the need for such appears, we will meet the approval of God.

Some men will not accept reproof, but "he that hateth reproof shall die."

Men who have wrested the word of God to uphold their false teachings will be condemned.

We do not care if men condemn us so long as we have the approval of the word of God.

God's people are those who study God's word to learn HIS will, and follow its precepts, and seek, not to please men, but seek always to please the Lord and His Christ.—C. D. McCay.

COUNTERFEIT RELIGION

Man is incurably religious, as we are often reminded, and because that is true, it is also true that we are in grave danger when we are satisfied with a counterfeit religion. A man may be satisfied, but not sanctified. He may be content, but not converted. He may be happy, but not holy.

In South America there is a tree, so travelers say, the leaf of which starving men will chew, because it gives them the most enjoyable sensations of having been fed. Through its influence, all desire for food departs, and a starving person is thus saved from the painful knowing of hunger. Pain is taken away, but death is not defeated.

The leaf contains a drug, but no nourishment. It satisfies a man's craving, but it does not satisfy his need, for in one respect it is a counterfeit of food; it deceives the dying man by assuring him that he has had food, whereas he is dying for lack of it.

This is exactly the danger which attends a form of godliness. It meets and satisfies the inner craving of our religious natures, and yet it is a spiritual drug, plunging us into death when we think we have found life. It satisfies our craving, but it does not provide for our need. It fills, but it does not feed.

—Lionel B. Fletcher, in *Life Quest and Conquest*.

"Where Is There a Church That Lives That Way?"

The Spiritual Call has been going to a family which is mixed up in Babylon. Recently the woman asked the question we have given as our heading.—"Where is there a church that lives that way?"

That is an important question, and it makes us hang our heads in shame that we can not point to such churches. Perhaps we never could have done so, any time in the Christian era, for no church is perfect. Certainly we could not have pointed to a perfect church in the apostolic day, and we can not today. Neither can we point to a perfect individual. The Corinthian church was called a church of God, yet it was a long ways from perfection.

In this paper we have tried to portray the Church as Christ intended it to be, the ideal, toward which we are to strive. Neither as individuals nor as churches shall we ever attain to that perfection, but we can always TRY to attain it. The Christian does not consist in attaining that perfection *but in TRYING* to attain it; and when we cease to try *we cease to be Christians*.

Every day we should read and meditate on God's Word, and say to ourselves as we read, "Am I earnestly trying to do what God here tells me to do?" And then we should try to put into practice what we are reading and meditating on.

And then our neighbors will be able to see Christ in us, and see "a church that lives that way."

Weeping Saint

Hundreds of witnesses, trooping in and out of a non-descript frame house in Syracuse, N.Y., had watched 11-year-old Shirley Anne Martin kiss a plaster image of St. Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary, and bring tears to its eyes.

Other thousands last week jammed the sidewalks by the house, hoping to be near a miracle. But, as the week drew to a close, the weeping statue had been demoted from miracle to mere mystery. Shirley Anne's father had locked the image up, refusing detailed examination. Shirley Anne herself said "I don't know why it cries. . . I don't have any powers."

Tapwater Tears? For what they were worth, however, there were two facts which had gone generally unreported:

- • A photographer had watched Shirley Anne douse the figure under a kitchen faucet after one crying session.

- • The "tears" had dried up temporarily after Shirley and her statuette had spent some time under the sizzling lamps of a television studio.—Pathfinder.

My Grave and I

How will I feel when I return from glory
And stand beside the green-swarthed silent grave,
And see the bursting clods, the flowers uprooted,
Where once my sickened body had been laid?

To watch it spring from out the shattered coffin,
To see upon my face a pure delight
That welcomes back my spirit from its wanderings,
Clothed in fresh garments for eternal life.

To stand anticipating what our God had promised,
To feel again the living, throbbing heart;
To clasp it as a bride, long waiting for me,
Embrace exultingly, my long lost part—

To take it with me through uncounted ages,
To show it beauties of the starry way,
All that my spirit learned of God and heaven—
How shall I feel—that resurrection day?
—Susie Edgecomb, in Moody Monthly

Well, Well, at Last, Some Scientists Have Decided that God Knows Something

The Bible says that God spake and brought into existence the universe, including the earth, but so-called scientists have been teaching for several centuries that the sun was a whirling mass, and threw off at intervals the different planets, among them the earth, and these continue to rotate through ages, till at length they have come to be what they now are.

But now The American Physical Society is telling us that the heavens and earth were all created at the same time. They say that light is radiation, and that it was created first.

Several years ago I attended twenty hours of lectures on astronomy at the extension in Indianapolis of the State University. Many good things were said, yet it was interesting to hear the teacher talk about how the universe and solar system started; in fact, there are different theories, and it kept one guessing which was science and which was bosh! Now according to the new theories just presented in the daily papers, that professor is behind the times.

All of this reminds us of the "scientific" development of man from the lower orders, as expressed in the following burlesque:

Once I was a tadpole, a-beginning to be,
Then I was a toad frog with movements so free,
Then I was a monkey on a bamboo tree,
But now I'm a teacher with a Ph.D.

So I think we all should let these professors roam wherever they wish, but we ourselves will stand on that which has stood for ages,—the Bible. Its great Unity announces it was arranged by God not man, and the fact that its prophecies are being fulfilled shows that it came from God because it could not have come from man.

The thing that troubles me is—how few there are that believe who really meditate on the Word of God day and night, as David exhorts.

If WE profess that we know God but by works deny him—how much better than infidels are we! Such will be happy. Are we one of them? Send a stamp for leaflet on hundreds of devotional passages of Scripture, called "Nuggets of Gold", and read the references and mark in your Bibles and then write me, if you will, whether they have made you happier.

SUCH A TIME AS THIS

"Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14).

We are more and more amazed at God's wisdom. How perfectly He times all things for the good of His own! Esther was brought to the king, and found favor with him, and received her high position in order that God might use her to save the Jewish nation from extinction, thwarting another of Satan's attempts to get rid of the chosen people.

We make our little plans, and cannot even make things work out to our own satisfaction for a few years and with the few people of our own circle. Yet God holds the hearts of kings in His hands, and the whole universe revolves around His plans.

The challenge which came to Esther is also ours. "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" The days in which we live are days which need Christ. The people among whom we live are people whose eternal destiny depends on their relationship to Christ. We have been translated from the power of Satan into the kingdom of the Son of God for the purpose of bearing witness in the midst of darkness. We have the light. We have no right to withhold it.

—"Daily Meditations" in Revelation magazine.

CARELESS WORDS

When you say "the dickens" or "the deuce," you are saying "the devil."

When you say "darn," you are saying "damn."

When you say "gosh," you use a word the equivalent of "God," the same being true of "golly."

When you say "gee," you are in essence saying "Jesus." Lots of people "cuss" when they don't mean to do so, but "cuss" nevertheless.

Jesus said: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment."

—Selected.

A LIAR CONFESSES

"Almighty God, as I sit here by the fire on this lonely Sunday morning, surrounded by the Sunday papers and half listening to one of the big preachers over the radio, it has just come to me that I have lied unto thee and myself. I said that I was not well enough to go to church. That was not true. I would have gone to my office if it had been Monday morning. I would have played golf if it had been Wednesday afternoon. I would have been able to go to a picture if it had been Friday night. But it was Sunday morning, and Sunday sickness seems to cover a multitude of sins. I have lied to thee and myself. I am not sick, I am a liar."—Watch Examiner

BEST INVESTMENT

When John Wanamaker, the famous merchant, was eleven years old, he purchased a small red leather Bible for \$2.75, paying for it in small installments. Later he said of the purchase; "I have made large purchases of property in my time involving millions of dollars; but it was as a boy that I made my greatest purchase. That little red Book was the foundation on which my life has been built and has made possible all that has counted in my life. I know now that it was the greatest investment and the most important purchase I ever made."

—Wesleyan Methodist.