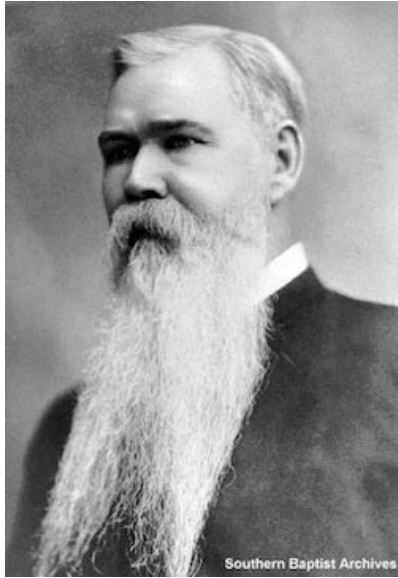


# AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE



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THE  
PASTORAL EPISTLES  
OF PAUL,  
1 & 2 PETER,  
JUDE,  
1, 2, & 3 JOHN

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# THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

## I. INTRODUCTION TO THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

The last group of Paul's letters consists of 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy, commonly called the "Pastoral Epistles," not because addressed to pastors, but because they relate to the flock. Though addressed to individuals, the letters are ecclesiastical. So far as New Testament records show, neither Timothy nor Titus was ever a pastor in the ordinary sense, but evangelists acting temporarily here and there as special apostolic delegates, according to the passing emergency. In this case, Titus was left in the Island of Crete and Timothy at Ephesus. The Anglican Church misinterprets the New Testament in deriving their modern bishopric cases from the cases of Timothy and Titus. Neither these nor any other apostolic delegates, and there were many, ever had a settled diocese. They might be counted the apostolic staff, sent here or there, in any part of the world, for a few days only or for a longer time, according to the necessity. Their fields of labor were shifted at the apostolic will, and wherever sent in the name of the apostle, they carried his apostolic authority. Even in the brief period covered by these letters, both of them are directed again to far distant fields.

It is absurd to call them bishops, in either the New Testament or modern sense. In the New Testament the bishop was the pastor of a single church. In our day a bishop of a hierarchial or prelatical denomination has a settled diocese – metropolis, county, province, or state. As Timothy and Titus (with others named in these letters: for example, Luke, Trophimus, Artemus, Tychicus, Zenas, Apollos, Erastus, Demas, Crescens, and Mark) were evangelists, we need at the threshold of this discussion to consider that office somewhat. For a more elaborate discussion, the reader is referred to the author's address on "The Office of Evangelist," delivered before the Southern Baptist Convention in May, 1907, and published by its Home Mission Board.

Our Lord himself originated the office when he appointed the seventy to go before his face, delegating to them his own power, and distinguished it from the office of pastor or bishop. The pastor had charge of a single flock; the evangelist was a kingdom officer, though like all others, set in the church, that every preacher of whatever kind might be subject to some definite jurisdiction.

We have already seen, in our study of Ephesians, that our Lord gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Apostles and prophets were necessarily inspired; pastors and evangelists might be only illumined. Inspiration qualified to speak or write for God. Illumination qualified to interpret the inspired teaching. Apostles and prophets spoke or wrote authoritatively for God; evangelists and pastors expounded and executed what apostles and prophets taught.

Authenticity. The next question concerning these letters is their authenticity. Are they veritable letters of the apostle Paul? The consensus of Christendom is that they are. There are a few infidels and some semi-infidels holding office as teachers or preachers in some state denominations, who argue that they were written in the second century and attributed to Paul in order to give them currency. There is not a particle of real evidence for any such assertion. Such contention results from radical higher criticism run mad.

If we go back to the earliest lists of Paul's books of which we have any account at all, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are in them. When we go back to the earliest New Testament Manuscripts, Timothy and Titus are in them. When we go back to the earliest versions, as the Peshito Version, we find these letters attributed to Paul. The external evidence that they are Paul's is overwhelming. It is really not worth while to take up any more time discussing the authenticity of these letters.

Date. The question of the date of these letters necessarily raises a prior question, namely, was there a second Roman imprisonment? If the imprisonment of Acts 28 resulted in his death, then we must put these letters, in order to make them Pauline letters, at a much earlier

date than if we assume that he escaped from that imprisonment. The fact that Paul did escape from that imprisonment rests upon two kinds of evidence.

The unbroken testimony of early history and the apostle's own testimony in these letters are alike convincing. We need not here enter into the church history problem as to whether Paul ever fulfilled the purpose expressed in the letter to the Romans to visit Spain, nor the more improbable conjecture that he visited Britain, but it is evident from Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Hebrews, that he confidently expected a speedy release from the Roman imprisonment recorded in Acts. And it is certain that the events recorded in 1 and 2 Timothy and in Titus never occurred in the period covered by the book of Acts. So that we may count it a settled result of fair biblical criticism that Paul was acquitted on the charges which first held him bound at Rome, and whether or not he ever visited Spain or Britain, we may be sure, on biblical evidence, that after his release he did make an extended tour over his old fields of labor in proconsular Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia.

His companions on this tour – some of them perhaps all of the time, all of them some of the time – were Luke, Titus, Timothy, Tychicus, Erastus, Demas, and perhaps others. While the order of his travels may not be dogmatically affirmed, the following may be accepted as approximately correct:

1. He stopped at the Island of Crete, leaving Titus as his delegate, to set in order certain irregularities and heresies there (Titus 1:5), and later ordered him to rejoin him at Nicopolis, where Paul expected to winter (Titus 3:12), and still later to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10).

2. Then he went to Ephesus, where he found Timothy, who had been sent from Italy with the letter to the Hebrews, and where he exercised his apostolic authority on two heretics (1 Tim. 1:20), and there left Timothy as apostolic delegate (1 Tim. 1:3).

3. Thence to Macedonia (1 Tim. 1:3), where probably he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus, and sends Artemas or Tychicus to Crete with the letter to Titus directing him to join Paul at Nicopolis for the winter (Titus 3:12).

4. He returns to Ephesus (1 Tim. 3:14), where he has a stormy time (2 Tim. 1:15, 18:4:14). He found heresy rampant and all the tide against him, caused largely, perhaps, so far as the Jewish and Gnostic elements are concerned, by his recent letter to the Hebrews. From the storm against him he was sheltered in the house of Onesiphorus (2 Tim. 1:16). Perhaps his very life was imperiled, and so he hurried to Miletus.

5. At Miletus he left Trophimus sick (2 Tim. 4:6).

6. Thence to Troas, where, perhaps in the hurry of flight, he leaves with Carpus his cloak and books (2 Tim. 4:13).

7. Thence to Corinth, where he left Erastus (2 Tim. 4:20).

8. Thence to Nicopolis, where he intended to winter (Titus 3:12). Here, or somewhere in that section, the Neronian persecution reaches him. Nero had set fire to Rome, causing the most awful conflagration known in the annals of time. It caused such indignation that it was necessary for him to put the blame on somebody else, so he accused the Christians of setting fire to Rome. That brought about the bloodiest persecution of Christians known to history, if, perhaps, we except the persecution of Phillip II of Holland. In some of its horrors it has never been equaled.

Most diligent search was made for anybody that would take the name of Christ. From Rome the persecution spread, and about this time it struck Paul over there in Achaia or in Nicopolis. When Paul was arrested, Demas, one of his lieutenants, got snared and left. him. as he writes to Timothy: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and hath gone to Thessalonica." Paul had sent Titus to Dalmatia and Crescens to Galatia; Trophimus had been left



sick at Miletus, so Luke is his only companion. They are arrested and carried to Rome.

When he is brought before Roman judges, he says that nobody stood by him. It was very different when he was there the first time; two great church delegations came out and met him before he reached the city. But now, with the Christians under the ban, when to acknowledge the name of Christ meant the most awful death, matters were different. Afterward he says that only Luke stood with him at the examining trial. This is not the final trial, but the trial for commitment. He was committed and taken to prison to await the final trial, and he never escaped. Under such conditions, winter coming on, having left Troas in a hurry without his cloak and books, he is imprisoned. He has nothing to read. He sends Tychicus to Ephesus to take Timothy's place and urges Timothy to join him at Rome; to come by Troas and get his cloak and books. The Romans made few provisions for the comfort of prisoners under serious charges. They were shut up in a bare cell. Paul wants his manuscripts, and he tells Timothy to bring Mark back with him, that he needs him. Whether or not they reached him before his martyrdom we do not know.

Before we take up the letters to Timothy, I will give a connected biblical history of Timothy, as follows:

1. His early training. 2 Timothy 3:15: "And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ." As his mother was a Jewess, he was from infancy instructed in the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. His conversion to Christianity. He was converted under Paul's preaching. In 1 Timothy 1:2 Paul says, "Unto Timothy my true child in the faith"; again in 2 Timothy 1:2 he calls him his "beloved child." His conversion followed that of his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5). This conversion occurred on Paul's first missionary tour (Acts 14: 6-7). The relating of Timothy's

Christian experience before the church made a profound impression, as Paul referring to it says, "Thou didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:12).

3. His ordination to the office of evangelist, to be Paul's companion as Barnabas had been. The scriptures bearing on this are Acts 16:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6; 4:5. From which it appears that as the Spirit signified to prophets that Paul and Barnabas be set apart to the foreign mission work (Acts 13:1-2), so now the same Spirit, through some prophet, Paul himself or Silas, directed the ordination of Timothy to the same work. And as all the neighboring churches highly recommended Timothy for the work, he was solemnly and impressively ordained by the laying on of hands of the presbytery, one of whom was Paul himself. And that through Paul's laying on of hands there came the same remarkable gifts noted in Acts 8:17; 19:5.

4. His labors with Paul. In general terms 2 Timothy 3:10-11. More particularly Timothy was with Paul in all the history set forth in Acts 16:1 to 17:14 at Philippi and Thessalonica and Berea. Here Timothy was left (Acts 17:14), but rejoined Paul at Athens, and from that point was sent back to Thessalonica (Acts 17:15-16 and 1 Thess. 3:2). He rejoined Paul at Corinth, bringing the news that occasioned the first letter to the Thessalonians (Acts 18:5; 1 Thess. 1:1). So both with Silas were associated in that letter, as well as in the second letter written also from Corinth (2 Thess. 1:1).

The record is silent as to Timothy's accompanying Paul to Syria, Jerusalem, and Antioch (Acts 18:18-22). But we certainly find him with Paul on the third missionary tour at Ephesus, from which place he is sent into Macedonia (Acts 19: 22). and from thence to Corinth (1 Cor. 16:10). Joining Paul in Macedonia, he is associated with him in the second letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 1:1).

He certainly accompanied Paul to Greece (Acts 20:2-3), and goes with Paul back to Macedonia. In Paul's last visit to Syria he sent Timothy with others ahead of him to Troas (Acts 20:3-5), and

Timothy was left there in Asia. There is no further account of Timothy in Acts. But when Paul, arrested at Jerusalem, imprisoned two years at Caesarea, finally reaches Rome, Timothy joins him there, for he is associated with Paul in the letters from Rome (Phil. I: I; Philem. I; Col. 1:1). His temporary imprisonment, perhaps, accounts for the absence of his name in the address of the letters to the Ephesians, but soon after he is released and bears the letter to the Hebrews (Heb. 13:23) where Paul later finds and leaves him (1 Tim. 1:3). Here again at Ephesus Paul finds him (1 Tim. 3:14), and he is a witness of the stormy time Paul had there (2 Tim. 1:15, 18; 4:14).

After Paul's arrest in Nicopolis of Epirus, or somewhere in Achaia, and his being carried to Rome, and his commitment trial, he writes a second letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:1), and urges him to come to Rome speedily, before winter, bringing his cloak and books left at Troas, and also Mark. Paul sent Tychicus to take Timothy's place at Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:9, 11-13, 21). We do not know positively whether Timothy reached Rome before Paul was executed.

That gives a connected biblical history of Timothy, and if one will go over it carefully he will have impressed upon his mind, in regard to Timothy, two things: One is that by the direction of the Holy Spirit, Timothy was elected to be Paul's companion in the place of Barnabas, and associated with him in his letters and labors, and also that he, as an apostolic delegate, was the most faithful and useful of all of Paul's corps of evangelists.

So that the order of the scriptures touching Timothy's life, in summary, is:

1. Early training: 2 Timothy 3:15.
2. Conversion: 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2, 5; 6:12.
3. Ordination: Acts 16:1-3; 1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6; 4:5.

4. Labors with Paul: 2 Timothy 3:10-11; Acts 16:1-17; 17:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Acts 18:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Acts 19:22; 1 Corinthians 16:10; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Acts 20:2-3 with Romans 16:21; Acts 20:3-5; Philippians 1:1; Philemon 1; Colossians 1:1; Philippians 2:19; Hebrews 13:23; 1 Timothy 1:3; 3:14; 2 Timothy 1:15, 18; 4:14; 4:9, 11-13, 21.

In these letters we bid farewell to Paul. In his first group of letters, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, we have studied eschatology; in his second group, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, we have seen in 1 Corinthians the disorders of a New Testament church, learned the place and significance of miraculous spiritual gifts, and studied the great argument on the resurrection of the dead. In 2 Corinthians we have heard the vindication of his apostolic claims. In Galatians and Romans we have had the doctrine of justification by faith. In the third group, Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Hebrews: we have found in Philemon Christianity's attitude to the then worldwide institution of slavery; in Philippians, Colossians, and Ephesians, we found a great advance in the plan of salvation and in the meaning of the word "church," and have learned the finalities on the nature, person, offices, and relations of our Lord. In Hebrews we have learned the superiorities of the new covenant.

Now in this last group, 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy, we find the Christian's vade-mecum on church order and officers, and take our last look at earth's greatest man in his exodus, through martyrdom, from the battlefield of time to the victor's crown of glory in eternity.

As the storm of imperial persecution bursts on him, we hear him, in his weakness, call for Zenas, the lawyer, Luke, the physician, and Timothy, his son in the gospel, his cloak to warm him in his cold cell, his books and parchments to cheer him; then we heard him in his strength, shout his battle cry of triumph for himself and every other saint: "For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the

crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

## QUESTIONS

1. What is the last group of Paul's letters and why called "Pastoral Epistles"?
2. How does the Anglican church misinterpret Timothy and Titus?
3. What other evangelists mentioned in these letters?
4. Where do you find an elaborate discussion of the office of evangelist?
5. Give brief account of the office as distinguished from others.
6. What can you say of the authenticity of these letters?
7. Their probable dates?
8. Give briefly the proof that Paul was acquitted and released from the first Roman imprisonment.
9. What old fields did he revisit?
10. Give probable order of the itinerary of this last tour.
11. Who his companions on this tour for the whole or part of the
12. What the origin of the Neronian persecution which led to Paul's arrest, second imprisonment and martyrdom?
13. What the different conditions this time at Rome?
14. Give connected biblical history of Timothy.

15. What the value of the Pastoral Epistles and what the contrast of the great topics of this group of Paul's letters with those of preceding ones?

# 1 TIMOTHY

## II. ANALYSIS, PULPIT THEMES, AND EXPOSITION

1 Timothy 1:1-17

### ANALYSIS

Chapter One:

1. The salutation (1:1-2).
2. Timothy reminded that he was left at Ephesus to correct certain errorists (1:3-4).
3. These errorists, assuming to be teachers of the Law while ignorant of its end and application, were so teaching as to subvert both Law and gospel (1:5-11).
4. Paul's own case an illustration of gospel grace and power (1:12-17).
5. Consequent charge to Timothy (1:18-19).
6. The case of Hymenaeus and Alexander, making shipwreck concerning the faith, illustrate the evil of turning away from the gospel (1:19-20).

Chapter Two:

7. Directions for public prayer worship, distinguishing between the spheres of men and women.

Chapter Three:

8. Directions concerning church officers and their qualifications (3:1-12).

9. Reasons for Paul's writing (3:14-15).

10. The church and its mission concerning the truth (3:15).

11. The elements of truth concerning the mystery of godliness (3:16).

Chapter Four:

12. The Spirit's prophecy concerning heretics in later times {4:1-5}.

13. What constitutes a good minister of Jesus Christ:

(1) As touching heresy (4:6)

(2) As touching himself, in example (4:6-12)

(3) As touching himself, in consecration, to study, exhortation, and teaching (4:13-16)

Chapter Five:

14. How to administer internal church affairs:

(1) In relation to old men, young men, and widows (5: 1-16)

(2) And to preachers (5:17-25)

Chapter Six:

15. What to teach on social problems (6:1-10).

16. Solemn charge to Timothy:

(1) Concerning his own life (6:11-16)

(2) Concerning the rich (6:17-19)



(3) Concerning the deposit of faith committed to his trust (6:20-21)

(4) Benediction (6:21)

## **GREAT PULPIT THEMES OF THIS LETTER**

1:5 – The end of the commandment. 1:5, with 1 Corinthians 13:13 and 2 Peter 1:5-7 – The Christian Pyramids. 1:11 – The gospel of the glory of the happy God. 1:12 – Christ puts men into the ministry and enables them. 1:13 – From blasphemer to preacher. 1:13, 16 – The two poles of salvation:

(1) Who are salvable (1:13)

(2) The salvation of the outside man among the salvable (1:16) 1:15 – Wherein Paul was the chief of sinners 1:15; 3:1; 4:9 with Titus 3:8 and 2 Timothy 2:11-13. The five faithful sayings of the Pastoral Epistles. 2:4 – God's desire for the salvation of all men. 2:8-15 – The distinct spheres of men and women in public worship. 3:1 – The pastorate a good work. 3:6, 10, with 5:22 – The proving of preachers and deacons before ordination. 3:6 – The cause of the devil's condemnation. 3:7 – The testimony of outsiders concerning fitness for the ministry. 3:11, with Romans 16:1 – The deaconess of the New Testament church. 3:13 – What a faithful deacon gains. 3:15 – How the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. 3:16 – The mystery of godliness and the elements of its truth. 4:1 – The great apostasy of post-apostolic days:

(1) The cause, seducing spirits, or demons, and the doctrines taught by them (4:1)

(2) Their human agents, lying hypocrites with seared consciences (4:2)

(3) What the demon doctrines (4:3) 4:6 – Who a good minister of Jesus Christ. 4:8 – The promise of godliness in this life and the next. 4:10 – God, the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe.

4:12-14 – The preacher as an example – his reading, exhortation, teaching, and the gift that is in him. 4:14 – The laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 4:16 – How the preacher saves himself and his hearers. 5:5 – "A widow indeed." 5:6 – She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth, and "Little Women" (Greek: *gunaikaria*, 2 Tim. 3:6). 5:8 – He that provideth not for his own hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. 5:10 – The "washing of feet" a good work, not a church ordinance ; Christ's washing of the feet of the disciples as a preparation for the Old Testament Passover, and not connected with the New Testament Lord's Supper. 5:21 – The elect angels. 5:24 – Sins that go before and sins that follow after. 6:9 – They that are minded to be rich. 6:11 – The love of money a root of all evil. 6:17-19 – Charge to the rich. 6:20 – The deposit of faith.

### **EXPOSITION (1:1-17)**

I have called the Pastoral Epistles the preacher's vade-mecum, i. e., "traveling companion," because of their incalculable importance. They contain the Bible's best teaching on church polity and order and constitute a richer mine for sermon texts than can be found elsewhere in the same space of biblical literature. The author has preached, in his long pastorate at Waco, more than an equal number of sermons from the thirty-six texts cited above from only one of these letters, and an almost equal proportion from Titus and 2 Timothy.

I cannot now refrain from calling your attention to Paul's new phrase: "Faithful is the saying." Its use five times in these Pastoral Epistles makes it proverbial, let us now look at them:

1. 1:15: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

2. 3:1: "Faithful is the saying, if a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." It is sometimes alleged that New

Testament churches had no definite organization. But it was already a current proverb concerning this ruling officer of the church.

3. 4:8-9 or 9-10: "Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation." Here it is somewhat difficult to determine whether verse 8 or 10 expresses the proverb, so we give both. Verse 8: "Godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come." Verse 10: "The living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." The context favors verse 8.

4. Titus 3:8: "Faithful is the saying . . . that they who have believed God may be careful to maintain good works." Attention is specially called to this, because some seem to desire to stop at believing. Not only was this a current proverb, but Titus is exhorted to affirm it constantly. Paul's doctrine of justification never rested on a barren faith.

5. 2 Timothy 2:11-13. This one is fourfold:

"Faithful is the saying:

(1) If we died with him, we shall also live with him;

(2) If we endure, we shall reign with him;

(3) If we shall deny him, he also will deny us;

(4) If we are faithless, he abideth faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

These sayings may be treated briefly in one sermon, or more particularly in eight sermons. The author has done both. The Greek student will find in the Pastoral Epistles quite an increase of new words in Paul's vocabulary. But special words in each group of letters is characteristic of Paul's adaptation of new terms to new lines of thought.

## THE SALUTATION

We need to note only these points:

1. God, the Father, is called "Saviour," which is new for Paul, but repeated in Titus 1:3. In both cases he attributes his office to the command of the Father. Mary, in her magnificat, had already used the phrase.

2. Christ is called "our hope." Paul generally puts Christ as the object of faith, but in Colossians he had already said, "Christ in you the hope of glory." In all his later letters he is turning to the future, the realm of hope.

3. Timothy is called his "true child in the faith," meaning that Timothy was converted under his ministry, as was Titus also (Titus 1:4). So in Philemon he says the same of Onesimus: "My child begotten in my bonds." I suggest to preachers the preparation of a sermon clearly distinguishing the several thoughts in these expressions:

(1) Christ our righteousness.

(2) Christ our hope.

(3) Christ our wisdom.

(4) Christ our sanctification.

(5) Christ our redemption.

(6) Christ our life.

On this last, Angus wrote his prize volume, *Christ Our Life*, for translation into heathen languages.

Clearness of thought in the general departments of our Lord's work will greatly confirm our faith, and as special reading in preparing

such a sermon, I commend two old-time Puritan books: Owen on *Justification* and Flavel on *The Methods of Grace*.

Now let us take up Timothy and the errorists at Ephesus, 1:3-11. Here we come upon a new word which became, and is, world-famous: Greek, *hetero-didaskalein*. Certain ones are commanded not to teach "heterodoxy." There we have it: Orthodoxy versus Heterodoxy. It is quite popular in certain liberal (meaning loose) circles to sneer at one's insistence on orthodoxy and to denounce him as being a "heresy hunter." Paul had no such spirit, but holding heresy as a deadly evil, hit it hard and hit it to kill as he would any other venomous snake.

It is easy to say: "Orthodoxy is my doxy and heterodoxy is your doxy," but there is no argument in the catch phrase.

Orthodoxy is conformity to New Testament teaching.

Heterodoxy is departure from New Testament teaching.

Paul was ready to write "anathema" in letters of fire on the brow of even an angel from heaven who preached a different gospel from the one delivered by our Lord. It is to teach instead, as these Ephesian heretics did, "the doctrines of demons." And we are partakers of their sins if we fellowship with them, or bid them Godspeed.

What the heterodox teaching here denounced? Assuming to be teachers of the Law, while ignorant of both its scope and application, they so taught as to subvert both Law and gospel. Leaving out the saving dispensation of God in faith, they confined their teaching to myths and endless genealogies which ministered questionings and disputes about matters either insoluble or of no value when solved. Later these fables grew into the Talmud, which may be likened to "a continent of mud," or, on account of the dryness of the matter, to the Sahara Desert minus its oases. It is as unpalatable as sawdust bread. Its diet is as void of nutritive properties as the sick soldier's soup, according to his own

hyperbolic description: "A piece of blue beef held up between the sun and a pot of boiling water, so as to boil its shadow."

The Old Testament genealogies had an intelligent purpose till Christ came, for they located him. After that they were of no value, and when they were arbitrarily spiritualized they became vicious.

In a political race in McLennan County one of the candidates devoted an hour to tracing his honorable descent from illustrious families. The other won the race by a reply in one sentence: "I would rather be a horse without a pedigree than a pedigree without a horse."

So Paul, in one great sentence, disposes of the Law: "Now the end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart, out of a good conscience, out of faith unfeigned." Mark well the order:

- (1) Unfeigned faith in our Lord, leading to
- (2) A good conscience, leading to
- (3) A pure heart, culminating in
- (4) Love.

Not some sentimental gush miscalled love, but love bottomed on faith and emerging from a good conscience, cleansed by the blood of Christ, and from a purified heart. This brings us not to the hollow Egyptian Pyramids, but to the Christian pyramids.

Let us mentally construct them so we can diagram them on paper. Take these passages: 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Timothy 1:5; 2 Peter 1:5-7, and construct three pyramids, arising in ever-narrowing terraces, always with faith the foundation and love the capstone:

1. Faith – Hope – Love.

2. Faith unfeigned – A good conscience –

A pure heart – Love.

3. Faith – Courage – Knowledge – Self-control – Patience

Godliness – Brotherly Kindness – Love.

These heterodox teachers never understood this supreme end of the Law. Moses himself had compressed his Ten Commandments into two – Love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself, and our Lord, quoting him, said, "On these two hang all the Law and, the prophets." Paul compressed them into one: "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." He would have them understand that the Law was not a way of life, but to discover sin – making sin appear to be sin and exceedingly sinful. Then he adds: "But we know that the Law is good, if a man use it lawfully, as knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for menstealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine."

And over against this he solemnly declares that what is "sound doctrine" must be "according to the gospel of the glory of the happy God," which was committed to his trust. All doctrine contrary to that gospel is unsound, whether preached by demon or man. Paul's sound doctrine here accords with his sound doctrine in Titus 2:1. We hear much of sound doctrine, but let us not make a mistake. It is not the doctrine of grace theoretically held, resting on a barren faith, but on a faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and makes the man a better man in all the relations of life – parent, child, brother, husband, neighbor, and citizen.

On my first visit to St. Louis, Dr. Pope Yeaman asked me: "Are Texas Baptists sound?" I replied: "Some of them are nothing but sound: *Vox et preterea nihil.*"

Before the Southern Baptist Convention I preached on this passage, 1 Timothy 1:11: "The gospel of the glory of the happy God," rendering the Greek word, *Makariou* by "happy" instead of "blessed," because this is not the usual word for "blessed" and because "happy" expresses the precise thought. The success of the gospel makes God happy. As in Luke 15, it is the shepherd who rejoices when he finds the lost sheep; and it is the woman who rejoices when she finds the lost coin; and it is the father who rejoices when he recovers his lost son. And that this rendering accorded with Christ's being anointed with the oil of gladness, and of his being satisfied when he saw of the travail of his soul.

My rendering was criticized by one captious hearer, but I was gratified to find afterward in one of his books that Dr. Harwood Patterson of Rochester Seminary gave the same rendering and for similar reasons.

There are two kinds of heretics, both abominable to God for their "unsound doctrine." The one who claims the power of godliness and decries its form; the other who magnifies the form and despises the power. In one community I found striking examples of both kinds. One of them was ever saying, "I care nothing for your dogmas and ordinances and churches and preachers. I go in for keeping the heart all right, and stand for good morals." The other was the most contentious, disputatious man I ever knew. As a good old deacon described him: "He pulled all the buttons off your coat trying to hold you while he set forth his infallible propositions, and developed corns on his fingers in repeating his points." All his followers carried chips on their shoulders, and like a wild Irishman at a fair, were daring people to step on their coattails.



One of the converts of such (an old Negro, as I have heard), as soon as he rose from his baptism, spat the water out of his mouth, and said, "Now I's ready fur a 'spute."

The first was blind to God's methods in grace, i.e., enveloping the life germ in a form for its protection until maturity. I asked him once what would become of the corn and wheat and nuts if they attempted to mature without the protecting forms of husks and chaff and shells, and showed him a nubbin that grew on the top of a cornstalk where the tassel ought to be. It had no shuck to protect it, no tassel to fertilize it, no silk to catch the shedding from the tassel. Birds had pecked it, worms had bitten it, "smut" had discolored it and infested it, cold had smitten it, heat had scorched it until there was not a sound grain on it. Not even a hog would eat it.

My young readers, let no "broad-gauged" fool beguile you into despising forms and ordinances established by the wisdom of our Lord, and follow no brass band and tinkling cymbal crowd in resting on a barren faith and wordy orthodoxy.

Paul's case an illustration of gospel power. The paragraph, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, is one of the deepest, broadest, richest, and sweetest in the Holy Scriptures. It has as many sermons in it as there are eggs in a guinea's nest – and I once found a guinea's nest with sixty eggs in it.

The first thought that rushes into my own mind as I read it is: What a wonderful use Paul makes of his own Christian experience. Eight times, at least, it is used, and each time for a different purpose. Once Luke tells it (Acts 9:1-18) ; once Barnabas tells it (Acts 9:26-27); six times Paul tells it himself (Acts 22:1-16; Acts 26:1-18; Rom. 7:9-25; Phil. 3:4-14; 1 Tim. 1:12-17; 2 Tim. 1:12).

I am reminded of the fighting Methodist preacher's advice, as given in one of Edward Eggleston's romances. On the way to an appointment two wicked men met him and told him he must go back or take a whipping. He concluded to do neither, but got down off his

horse and whipped both of them till they "hollered," prayed for them, and then made them go with him to church! But when he got there his own bruised jaw was so swollen he couldn't preach. Whereupon he peremptorily ordered a young convert to get up and preach. The timid boy protested that he had no sermon and did not know how to make one. "Get up at once and preach," said the stern circuit rider, "and if you can't preach, tell your Christian experience." The boy obeyed. His heart was overflowing with gratitude to his Lord for saving him, a wicked, ignorant, country lad. He attempted no sermon, scraped down no star-dust of rhetoric, indulged in no sophomore flights of fancy, shot off no glittering fireworks, scattered no bouquets of compliments, but went right on in sobs and tears and rejoicings to tell how he was convicted of sin, how the Lord graciously met him, how God, for Christ's sake, pardoned his many sins, how gloriously happy he was, how Jesus was ready to welcome any other poor country boy, and how the one desire of his soul was to lead others to Christ, and there he stood, himself a monument of grace, and exhorted till Heaven came down their souls to greet, And glory crowned the mercy seat – And the woods were afire like the burning bush. That broken-jawed circuit rider bugged him on the spot and told him it was the greatest sermon he ever heard, instantly called for his ordination, and put him at once into a life-saving work that ended only when his voice was hushed in death.

If a man has a genuine experience, and keeps right on experiencing new manifestations of grace, it is a big part of his preaching stock. In our next chapter this glorious paragraph of Paul's experience will be unfolded and illustrated.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the analysis of 1 Timothy?
2. What its great pulpit themes?

3. Why the Pastoral Epistles the preacher's vade-mecum and what do they contain?
4. What new phrase in these epistles?
5. Give in order the five "Faithful Sayings."
6. Why does Paul use new terms in each group of letters?
7. What three points of note in the salutation?
8. The preparation of what sermon was suggested, and why, and what old books commended for help in the preparation?
9. What new term in 1:3?
10. Give both a false and a true statement of heterodoxy and orthodoxy.
11. Wherein do many moderns differ from Paul on heterodoxy?
12. What the heterodox teaching here condemned?
13. In what Jewish book are most these legends contained and how would you illustrate its value?
14. What the original purpose of the biblical genealogies and when did they become valueless?
15. Illustrate their present worthlessness by a certain political race.
16. How does Paul in one sentence dispose of the law?
17. Using 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Timothy 1:5; 2 Peter 1:5-7 construct a diagram of three Christian pyramids, the foundation in each being "Faith" and the capstone "Love."

18. How did Moses himself condense his Ten Commandments and what our Lord's comment thereon? How does Paul condense them even more?

19. Instead of being a way of life for the righteous what classes was it designed to restrain and convict?

20. According to what is all "sound doctrine"? Illustrate.

21. What the defense of the rendering "happy" instead of "blessed" in 1 Timothy 1:11?

22. What the two kinds of heretics?

23. How many times and where in New Testament is use made of Paul's Christian experience?

24. Cite Edward Eggleston's instance of the value of one's Christian experience as a pulpit theme.

### III. PAUL'S CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

#### 1 Timothy 1:18 to 2:7

At the close of the last chapter we were considering Paul's use of his Christian experience, and eight instances of its use were cited. In that connection a promise was made to begin this chapter with a bit of history illustrating the last two instances of its use, namely, 1 Timothy 1:12-13 and 2 Timothy 1:12. The history is this:

The Southern Baptist Convention held its first Texas session at Jefferson. On Sunday two remarkable sermons were preached. Rev. W. W. Landrum, a licensed preacher, was pastor-elect of the First Church, Shreveport, Louisiana. The church called for his ordination to take place Sunday at 11:00 A.M. at Jefferson during the Convention session there, in order that Dr. Broadus and Dr. S. Landrum, the father of the candidate, might serve on the presbytery. The Convention, of course, did not ordain him, but some thought it would have a misleading effect to have the ordination away from the home church and at an important Convention hour. Dr. Broadus preached the ordination sermon from the common version of 1 Timothy 1:12-13, the very passage we are now considering. It was a great and very impressive sermon.

From memory I give you his outline:

1. Christ puts men into the ministry: "Putting me into this ministry."
2. Christ confers ability on his ministers: "Enabling me."
3. This should be a matter of thankfulness to the minister: "I thank Christ Jesus my Lord."
4. Especially when the preacher was formerly Christ's enemy: "Putting me into this ministry who was before a blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious."

Sunday night the Convention sermon was preached by Dr. Taylor, newly-elected pastor of the Colosseum Place Church, New Orleans, Louisiana. His text was another relating of Paul's experience: 2 Timothy 1:12: "For which cause I suffer all these things; yet I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day."

I have italicized the words stressed in the sermon. Again from memory I give the outline:

1. Paul called to be a great sufferer: "I suffer all these things," citing in illustration Acts 9:16; 1 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Corinthians 4:10-11; 6:4-5; 11:23-29. This point was exceedingly pathetic.

2. The cause of his willingness to suffer: "For this cause I suffer"; he found in the preceding verse: "Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

3. Called to suffering but not to shame: "Yet I am not ashamed."

4. Reasons for not being ashamed:

(1) "I know him whom I have believed." Here the preacher, evincing great classical research, contrasted the vague guesses of the wisest heathen in their philosophies, with the certitude of Christian knowledge.

(2) "Whom I have believed." Here, with great power, the preacher showed that the object of faith was a person and not a proposition, contrasting the difference between a burdened sinner resting his weary head on a sympathetic heart, and resting it on the cold marble of an abstract proposition.

(3) "I know whom I have believed," Here he made plain that faith is not blind credulity, but based on assured knowledge and therefore reasonable.

(4) "And I am persuaded that he is able to guard." Here the assurance of faith.

(5) "To guard that which I have committed unto him." Here faith, having believed a well-known person, commits a treasure to his keeping, being assured of his ability to guard it. The thought is clear and impressive that faith is not only believing, but a committal – the making of deposit – even one's own assaulted body and soul – the life of the man himself – to be hid with Christ in God.

(6) "Against that day." The great judgment day – not only guarded in all of life's trials, sorrows, and sufferings, and in death's dread hour, but even in the last great assize, where before the great white throne final assignment is made to one's eternal state, home, and companionship.

The two sermons were much discussed as to their relative greatness. The general verdict was that Dr. Broadus' was the greater to the hearer, and Dr. Taylor's was the greater to the reader, the one being much more impressive in delivery than the other.

I have given this bit of history not only to illustrate the force of the closing point in my last discussion on the uses made of Paul's Christian experience, but because the sermons were masterpieces of homiletics.

In resuming the exposition of our great paragraph, attention is called to two distinct reasons assigned for Paul's conversion.

The Two Poles of Salvation. The first reason assigned – latter clause of verse 13: "Howbeit I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." A blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious man may obtain mercy if these things are done in spiritual ignorance and unbelief.

This answers the question: "Who are salvable?" to wit: all sinners on earth who have not committed the unpardonable sin – eternal sin – pardonable because not wilfully against the light, knowledge, and conviction of the Holy Spirit. Let the reader consult the teacher's exposition of Hebrews 10:26-31, and compare Matthew 12:32; Mark 3:28-30; 1 John 5:16-18. Paul was conscientious in all his blasphemies and persecution. He verily thought he was doing God's service. Conscience is that inward monitor, divinely implanted, which pronounces verdict on good and evil. It is a mistake to say that it is the creature of education. Education itself being only development and training of what is already potentially present, can have no creative power. Conscience, unenlightened, may become the servant of education and environment. Its light may be darkened; it may become callous and even seared as with a hot iron, but it never vacates its witness box or judicial seat in either Christian, Jew, or heathen (Rom. 2:14-15; 9:1; Acts 26:9).

The second reason assigned is in 1:16: "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an example of them that should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life." This is the other pole of salvation. The chief of sinners, the outside man of the salvable, was saved to show the utmost extent of longsuffering mercy as an example of encouragement to despairing men less guilty than the chief, to believe on Christ unto eternal life.

Now, the use that we make of that last reason is this: We may take that case of Paul as the outside man, the chief of sinners, and holding it up as a model, as an example, go to any sinner this side of hell – even if his feet be on the quivering, crumbling brink of the abyss – and preach salvation to him, and if he despairs and says, "I am too great a sinner," then we may say, "Behold, God saves the outside man, nearer to hell than you are."

In order to get the full benefit of that thought we must conceive of all sinners that are salvable put in a row, single file, and graded



according to the heinousness of their guilt – here the least guilty, there the next most guilty, and the next and the next, and away yonder at the end of the line is that outside man, Paul, right next to hell. Now Christ comes and reaches out a long arm of grace over that extended line and snatches the outside man from the very jaws of hell, and holds him up and says, "Is not this brand plucked from the burning?"

I have used that example just the way God intended it to be used in preaching in jails and penitentiaries and city slums, and in coming in contact with the toughest and roughest and most criminal sinners in the world.

The next question is: Wherein is Paul the chief of sinners? Quite a number of men have disputed my contention that Paul was really the greatest sinner, leaving out of course the unpardonable sin. He was a blasphemer) but that did not make him the chief of sinners, for others have been more blasphemous. He was a persecutor, but that did not make him the chief of sinners, for other men have been greater persecutors : Nero, Louis XIV of France, and especially that spiritual monster, Philip II of Spain. Any one of these men persecuted beyond anything that Paul ever did. He was an injurious man, but other men have been more injurious than he. What, then, constituted him the chief of sinners, the outside man? My answer is: He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees in his self-righteousness – the extremest Pharisee that ever lived – and self-righteousness stands more opposed to the righteousness of Christ than does either persecution or blasphemy. To illustrate: The Pharisee who came into the Temple to pray, and with uplifted eyes, faces God and says, "God, I thank thee that I am not like other men – especially this poor publican. I fast twice every week; I pay tithes of all I possess." No praying in that. It is the feigned prayer of the selfrighteous man, denying that he is a sinner. He denies any need of regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. He denies any need of the cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ: "I need no Saviour; I stand on my own record, and answer for myself at the bar of God." The

self-righteous man would come to the very portals of heaven over which is written: "No unclean thing shall enter here," march right in and stand unabashed in the presence of the Cherubim who sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty," and brazenly say to God's face: "I am as holy as thou art. I am as white as snow. I was never in bondage. I have no need to be forgiven." That made Paul the chief of sinners; nobody ever came up to him on self-righteousness. Now, if this chief of sinners, this outside man, be saved, that gives us the other pole of salvation.

Proceeding with the discussion, we note what verse 17 says: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." How is God more immortal, more eternal than the soul of man? If the soul of man is deathless, then how is he more immortal? There was a beginning to that soul, but there was no beginning to the being of God. How is God invisible? The Scriptures declare that no man hath seen God at any time, or can see him. The only way in which he has ever been seen has been in his image, Jesus Christ. Jesus has revealed him; so when we look at Jesus we see the Father, and in the teachings of Jesus we hear the Father. But there will come a time, when we are completely saved, when the affairs of the world are wound up, then we shall see God; "God himself shall tabernacle with men, and they shall see his face." That was the glorious thought in Job's declaration: "Oh, that my words were now written, that they were graven with iron and lead in a rock forever, for I know that my Redeemer liveth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold." In quoting this passage, I stand upon the King James Version: "In my body" – not "apart from my body." We do not see God in our disembodied soul, but when our soul and body are redeemed, then God himself becomes visible. The context and all the scriptures in other connections oppose the Revised Version on this passage. See Revelation 22:4.

Verse 18 gives a consequential charge to Timothy. It reads: "This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way unto thee, that by them thou mayest war a good warfare." What is the meaning of the prophecy that led the way to Timothy? In Acts 13 in the church of Antioch there were certain prophets, and it was revealed unto these prophets that Saul and Barnabas should be set apart, or ordained, to the foreign mission work. Later Barnabas drops out, and Paul needs another and better Barnabas and some prophet, either Paul himself or Silas, receives & revelation that that boy, Timothy, who was led to Christ in Lystra or in Derbe, should be ordained to go with Paul to the foreign mission work.

The second part of the charge is, "holding faith and a good conscience." Do not turn faith loose; don't say, "I once believed in Jesus Christ, now I do not." Hold on to a good conscience. Conscience is never good until it is purified with the application of the blood of Jesus Christ in regeneration. The lamp of the Lord shines with a clear light upon every action, right or wrong, as long as it remains good. But when we begin to trifle with the conscience – when we do things we are conscientiously opposed to, our conscience will become callous. Therefore, let us hold to our faith, and hold to a good conscience.

In the next verse: "Which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith, of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme." Now here we have a shipwreck – not of faith – but concerning the faith. These men turned loose the faith, blinding their consciences. Now the question comes up: On what specific point did these two men turn loose the faith? 2 Timothy 2:16ff answers: "But shun profane babblings, for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doeth a gangrene (or cancer), of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus (here we get one of them with another added); men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith

of some." Men in Ephesus denied that there was any such thing as the resurrection of the body – that it was scientifically impossible – and taught that the resurrection was the conversion of the soul. They have followers today. Some who claim to be teachers of preachers virtually deny the resurrection of the body. A preacher of the annual sermon before the Southern Baptist Convention, taught that Christ assumed his resurrection body simply for identification, and that after he was identified it was eliminated, and it did not concern us to know what became of it.

Now, what does Paul say about the denial of the resurrection? He calls it profane babbling that will progress to greater ungodliness: "And their word will eat as doth a gangrene." We know how a cancer eats while we are sleeping, commencing perhaps in the corner of the eye, and after a while it will eat the eye out, then the side of the face, then it will eat the nose off, and then the lips, and keep on eating. That was the shipwreck concerning the faith made by Hymenaeus, Alexander, and Philetus.

The next question is: What chance did Paul give these men to be saved? The text says that he turned them over to Satan that they should be taught not to blaspheme. In other words, the true Christian in the fold is hedged against Satan – he cannot get to him – he cannot put the weight of his little finger on him without asking permission; he asked permission to worry Job and Peter. Whenever a sheep on the inside gets too unruly and he is put on the outside and hears the wolves howl a while, he will bleat around to come back in. But if one turns an unruly hog out of the pen, he will strike for the woods and never come back. Peter, in the exercise of his apostolic power, could strike Ananias dead. Paul, in the same power, struck Elymas blind, but where the object of this power is to save, offenders were temporarily turned over to the buffeting of Satan as in the case of the offending Corinthian. This man had taken his father's wife, but the discipline led him to repentance and he was glad to get back in.

Chapter 2 gives direction concerning public prayer worship. The first injunction is that prayers, supplications, and intercessions be made for all men – not only for our Baptist brethren, but our Methodist brethren; not only for the Christians, but for those on the outside. Pray for all rulers, all people in authority – presidents, governors, senators, city councils, and police – ah, but some of them do need it! Now, he gives the reasons – it is important to see what the reasons are: (1) Pray for these rulers that we may live a quiet and orderly life. If they are bad, we won't have an easy time. If the administrators of law be themselves lawless in their speech, every bad man construes it into permission to do what he pleases. When the wicked are in power the righteous suffer. (2) It is good and acceptable in the sight of God that we should do it. God wants us to pray for all people. (3) And the third reason is the great reason: That God would have all men to be saved. Let us not squirm at that, but for a little while let us forget about election and predestination, and just look this scripture squarely in the face: God desires the salvation of all men. In this connection I commend that sermon in my first book of sermons on "God and the Sinner." Note in order its several proof texts.

God asks, Ezekiel 18: "Have I any pleasure at all in the death of the wicked that they should die and not live?" Ezekiel 33, God takes an oath: "As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he will turn from his evil way and live. Then why will you die? saith the Lord." Then we come to the passage here: "God would have all men to be saved." "And God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In Luke 15 the accusation made against him was: "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them"; and he answered: "I came to seek and to save that which was lost." And the text here says that he gave his life a ransom for all. That all is as big here as elsewhere. He would have all men to be saved; pray for all men because he would have all men to be saved, and because Christ gave his life as a ransom for all. Then this scripture: "Jesus Christ tasted death for every man." If

there is still doubt, look at the Lord's Commission: "Go ye, and make disciples of all nations"; " Go ye, and preach the gospel to every creature." Finally, consider the teaching of Peter: "We must account that the long suffering of God in delaying the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is that all men should have space to repent and come to the knowledge of truth." That's the construction he puts upon the apparent tardiness of the final advent of our Lord. However, when we study election and predestination, we should study and preach them just as they are taught. Let us not say, "I don't know just how to harmonize them with these other teachings."

God did not appoint us harmonizers of his word.

As Dr. Broadus used to say, let the word of God mean just what it wants to mean, every time. Preach both of them. These lines are apparently parallel, but they may come together. If on a map parallels of longitude come together at the poles, why not trust God to bring together in himself and in eternity his apparent parallels of doctrine? Up yonder beyond the clouds they will come together. That is my own method of preaching.

Now, we come to a very important part of this prayer, verse 5: "For there is one God, one mediator between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus." Oh, if we could but learn thoroughly the relation of this passage to the doctrine of prayer: The Old Testament gives us the type of it: The victim is sacrificed; the high priest takes the blood and starts into the holy of holies to sprinkle it upon the mercy seat. Then he takes a coal of fire from the altar of that sacrifice and kindles the frankincense, which represents the prayers of the people. The high priest alone takes the prayers of the people there into the holy of holies: "Father, behold the atoning blood. On account of that blood, hear these petitions of the people and answer them."

The thought is that in offering up prayers to God, there is only one mediator. Let us not kneel down and say, "Oh, virgin Mary, intercede for me with Jesus, that he may hear my prayers." Or, "Oh, Peter, John, Paul, James, ye saints, help me in getting my prayers up

to heaven." There is just one mediator between God and man, and one of the most blasphemous doctrines of the papacy is prayer to saints. Saints may pray for sinners, but saints are not allowed to mediate prayers nor themselves be prayed unto. We are not mediators with Jesus. There is just one case in the Bible where a prayer was made to a saint, and that prayer was not answered. The rich man lifted up his eyes and seeing Abraham afar off, said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me."

## QUESTIONS

1. What bit of history illustrates the uses of Paul's Christian experience and furnishes two models in homiletics?
2. What two reasons are assigned in the text for Paul's conversion and show how they constitute the poles of salvation?
3. What use in preaching may be made the second reason?
4. Wherein was Paul the chief of sinners?
5. How alone is God now visible?
6. When and to whom will he be directly visible?
7. Explain the prophecy that led the way unto Timothy?
8. Wherein did Hymenaeus and Alexander make shipwreck concerning the faith & what the difference between "shipwreck of faith" & "concerning faith"?
9. Show in two respects how this heresy worked evil.
10. What was the power given to apostles and what cases of its use: (1) To destruction. (2) In order to save. (3) And what illustration of the test of "turning over to Satan." (4) What notable examples of "turning over to Satan" where it worked for good to its subject?

11. What the topic of chapter 2?
12. For whom should we pray and what the general reasons given?
13. Cite other passages in line with 2:4.
14. Can you satisfactorily harmonize these passages with the doctrines of election and predestination?
15. What will you do with doctrines you can't harmonize?
16. What the bearing of "One Mediator" on the doctrine of prayer?
17. What the Old Testament typical illustration?
18. What errors of the papacy at this point?
19. What one case in the Bible of praying to a saint?
20. What the result and what the inference?



#### **IV. THE SPHERES OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE CHURCH; CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS**

1 Timothy 2:8 to 3:13

There must be no question that this letter is about church affairs – affairs of the particular church at Ephesus. This appears both from explicit statements (1:3; 3:14-15) and from the subject matter. It relates to present heterodox teachings (1:3), public worship (2), church officers, pastors, deacons, and deaconesses, the truth to be upheld by the church (3), its danger through future heresies (4), its discipline and pension list (5), its social duties (6).

Indeed, its express object is to show how its members should conduct themselves in the church assemblies, worship, and services. If we do not keep this ruling thought in our minds, we will widely miss the mark in our interpretation. Particularly must we bear this in mind when we attempt to expound the last paragraph in 2:8-15. And, as Dr. Broadus says, "We must let the Scripture mean what it wants to mean."

This paragraph, by any fair rule of interpretation, does distinguish sharply between the spheres of the man and the woman in these public, mixed assemblies. Nothing can be more explicit than the way the apostle commences: "I desire that the men pray everywhere . . . in like manner [I desire] that women"; note the article before "men." Carefully note three other things:

1. These injunctions on the woman in these church assemblies.
2. The reasons therefore.
3. The encouraging and compensating promise to women in their different and restricted sphere.

1. Injunctions:

(1) Not to appear in the church assemblies in gorgeous, costly, worldly, immodest, flaunting, fashionable attire. That mind is blind indeed that cannot both understand and appreciate the spiritual value of this injunction.

The church assembly is not for dress parade. It is not a meeting at the opera, or theater, or ballroom, or bridge party, or some worldly, social function, where décolleté dress, marvelous head attire, and blazing jewels are fashionable. These worldly assemblies have their own standards and reasons for their fashions, and it is not for us to judge them that are without. It is the standard for the church assemblies, gathered to worship God and to save the lost, under consideration. Jesus Christ, and not Lord Chesterfield, established the church. Our dress at church, if nowhere else, should be simple, modest, in no way ministering to vanity, display, or tending to keep away the poor, or sad, or sin-burdened. I appeal to any cultivated, real lady, who has a sense of proprieties, to answer the question: Is the church assembly the place for gorgeous and costly dress? Positively, women are enjoined to seek the adornment of good works.

(2) They are enjoined to learn in quietness with all subjection, not to teach or have dominion over the man, or as expressed in 1 Corinthians 14:33-35. Evidently from all the context, this passage in Timothy refers to official teaching, as a pastor ruling a church, and to prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. The custom in some congregations of having a woman as pastor is in flat contradiction to this apostolic teaching and is open rebellion against Christ our King, and high treason against his sovereignty, and against nature as well as grace. It unsexes both the woman who usurps this authority and the men who submit to it. Under no circumstances conceivable is it justifiable.

## 2. Reasons:

(1) Adam was first formed, then Eve. Here the allusion is obvious to the beginning of the human race. The whole race was created in

Adam potentially. His companion, later named Eve for a grace reason, was called "woman," which simply means derived from the man. The man, by nature, is the head of the family.

(2) In addition to this natural reason is the explicit divine part in the fall of the race. Compare Genesis 3:16 with this authority subjecting her to the man because of her tempting passage (2:14).

3. The encouraging and compensatory promise:

"But she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety." Whatever this 'difficult passage means, it is intended as compensation to the woman for her restriction in sphere and subjection of position. Two words constitute the difficulty of interpretation: (1) The import of "saved", "she shall be saved through her childbearing"; (2) what the antecedent of the pronoun "they", "if they shall continue, etc." One obvious meaning of saved lies in the evident allusion to the gospel promise in Genesis 3:15. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," and to Adam's evident understanding of the grace in the promise, since he at once changes her name from "woman" (Issha), i. e., derived from the man, to "Eve" (Chavvah), because she was thus made the mother of all living (Chay). As for grace reasons Abram's name was changed to Abraham, Sari to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, Simon to Cephas, so she is no longer named "derived from the man," but "the mother of all life," and this came through the bearing of a child – her seed, not the man's – who shall be the Saviour of the world. What a marvelous change of names! Though herself derived from the man, yet from her is derived salvation through her Son. See the explanation of the angel at the annunciation to the virgin Mary in Luke 1:31-35. She shall be saved in bearing a child who is God manifest in the flesh.

But the true antecedent of the pronoun "they" – "if they continue, etc." – suggests a more appropriate thought, at least one in better harmony with the context. Let us get at this thought by a paraphrase: The man shall have his life directly in authority and public

leadership. The woman shall live, indirectly, in the children she bears if they (the children) prove to be worthy. The man lives or dies according to his rule and leadership in public affairs; the woman lives or dies in her children. His sphere is the public arena. Her sphere, the home. Washington's mother lived in him; Lois and Eunice lived in Timothy. The Roman matron, Cornelia, pointed to her boys, the Gracchi, and said, "These are my jewels."

The world is better and brighter when women sanctify and beautify home, proudly saying, "My husband is my glory, my children are my jewels and I am content to live in them. Why should I desire to be a man and fill his place: who then will fill mine?" See the ideal woman in Proverbs 31:10-31. It would be unnatural and ungrammatical to start a sentence with "she," singular, and arbitrarily change it to "they," both referring to the same antecedent. That nation perishes which has no homes, no family sanctity, no good mothers.

Under my construction of this paragraph, I never call on a woman to lead the prayers of a church assembly, nor yield any kind of encouragement to a woman pastor. This is very far from denying any place to woman in kingdom activities. I have just suggested to a woman the great theme for an essay: "Woman's Sphere in Kingdom Activities." The Scriptures blaze with light on the subject and teem with illustrations and inspiring examples. Understand that the injunction against woman's teaching does not at all apply to teaching in the schoolroom nor at home, but only to teaching involving church rule that would put man in subjection. Nor is prayer inhibited, but the leading in prayers in the church assemblies.

The third chapter, except the last paragraph, relates to church officers, their qualifications and duties, and the last paragraph relates to the church mission. Let us now take up the first part. The first officer of the church is the bishop (3:1-7), and we find here that this title episcopos ("bishop") is derived from a function of his work, to wit: overseeing, or superintending, the work of the church. An

episcopos is an overseer. Considering the church as a flock that must be guided, fed, and guarded, he is called "pastor," that is, a shepherd. He is also called "presbytery," i. e., elder, a church ruler. In view of his duty to proclaim the messages of God, he is called a kerux, that is, "preacher." In view of his duty to expound the word and instruct, he is didaskalos, a "teacher." But bishop, pastor, elder, preacher, and teacher do not signify so many offices, but departments of work in the one office. Here is a working force – there is an overseer for that working force; here is a flock – there is a shepherd for that flock; here is an assembly – there is a ruler of that assembly, a president; here is an audience – there is a preacher to that audience; here is a school – and there is a teacher for that school, an expounder of the word of God. This office, from its importance, may be learned from the fact that "no man taketh the office unto himself"; God calls him to it, as Paul said to the elders at Ephesus, "The Holy Spirit hath made you bishops," and the church sets him apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. In the Northern section of this country some say, "What is ordination? It is nothing."

We had better let God's ordinances stand as he instituted them.

The duties of the pastor may be inferred from the terms above.

We now come to consider the question of his qualifications, and the qualifications in this passage are put before us, first negatively and then positively, or rather, the two intermingle, now a positive, now a negative.

Let us look at the negative qualifications: "Without reproach." Do not make a man the pastor of a congregation whose record is all spotted, reproaches coming up against him here, there, and everywhere. Second, he must be no brawlers I once heard a pastor boast on a train that he had just knocked a man down. I said, "I am going to pray for you either to repent of that sin, or resign as a pastor." I will admit there was some provocation, but a pastor must not be a brawler, he is not a swash buckler, he is no striker. In the case of the two wicked men who headed off the Methodist circuit

rider and told him he must turn back I believe I would myself have fought under the circumstances, and as the Methodist preacher did fight, and I am glad he whipped the other fellows. But the idea here is that the preacher must not have the reputation of "throwing his hat into the ring": "Now, there's my hat, and I'll follow it", "don't you kick my dawg around." Not contentious. I saw within the last ten days the account of a man's death, and I thought as soon as I saw it: "O Lord, I hope thy grace has saved him and put him in a place where he will see that it is not right to be an eternal disputer." We should not be like Shakespeare's Hotspur, ready "to cavil on the ninth part of a hair."

"No lover of money." Any man that loves money is guilty of the sin of idolatry; covetousness is idolatry, and the fellow that holds the dollar till the eagle squeals, or holds it so close to his eye that he cannot see a lost world, or that dreams about it and just loves to pour it through his fingers or to hear the bank notes rustle – he should not preach.

"Not a novice." What is a novice? A novice is one just starting out. Now that does not mean that a novice must not be a preacher. He must learn to preach some time, but do not make him the bishop of a church. "Not a novice" – why? "Lest being lifted up with pride, he falls into the condemnation that came on the devil." That is where the devil got his fall. Being lifted up with pride, too proud to be under another creature at first made lower than himself, afterward to be exalted above him.

These are the negatives. Now, let's look at the positives. First, "the husband of one wife." Does that mean that he must be the husband of a wife – is that what it means? In other words, that an unmarried man ought not to be a pastor? I will say this for the unmarried pastor: If he is not wiser than Solomon, more prudent than Augustus and more patient than Job, he certainly has rocks ahead of him. I had an old deacon once that put his foot right on it that that was what it meant: "I am willing to give that young preacher a place, I

am willing to recognize him and even ordain him to special mission stations to preach, but no unmarried man can be pastor of this church."

Second, does it mean that as a large part of these people were heathen, just converted, and tangled up with their polygamous associations even when they were converted, having more than one wife, the question being: "What are you going to do with them and the children?" Now does the apostle mean that even if we patiently bear for a time with the bigamist or polygamist cases, yet we must not make bishops of them? Some commentaries suggest that meaning. I will put it in a third form: Does it mean that he must have but one wife according to scriptural law? Some have been legally divorced under human law, but not under the Scriptures, and have married again. Now, shall we have a man as a pastor who may not under human law, but who under Christ's law, may have more than one wife – is that what it means?

We find the same requirement in the case of the deacon. But to proceed with qualifications: "temperate" – and I think that not merely means temperance in drink, but includes temperance in eating. A man may be a glutton as well as a tippler; and without raising the question as to whether the pastor should be a total abstainer, one thing is certain; no man should be made the pastor of a church who drinks intoxicating liquors as a beverage.

"Sober minded" – in the sense of grave, the opposite of which is levity. Do not put a man in the office of bishop who is a clown. I knew a man who occupied the pastoral position in a prominent place in this state; a very brilliant man. But it was impossible to have a reverent feeling toward him, for he was the funniest man I ever saw; he could imitate birds, dogs, and cattle, and hearing him imitate a stutterer would make a dog laugh. It was exceedingly funny, but after you laughed at him and listened to him, somehow or other you did not have reverence for him, for he was not sober-minded.

The next word is "orderly." I said once to a young preacher, "You have mind enough to be a preacher, and I really believe you are a converted man, but you have a disorderly and lawless spirit. You will more likely succeed as an anarchist than as pastor of a church."

The next phrase is "given to hospitality." Here most preachers stand the test. As a rule they and their wives are very open hearted and open handed. God bless them! They have not only given themselves to hospitality, but they have given to it everything they have, as a rule. I have known my father to entertain a whole association of seventy messengers. The highest I ever entertained was forty, and they crowded me, too, but they were a lot of mighty good fellows.

"Gentle": he ought not to be a rough fellow. "Ruling well his own house": that's the rock that some of us fall on. I am sure that when I was a pastor I did not measure up on that. "Having a good testimony from them that are on the outside." If we go out over a town or community and inquire about the preachers, we find that for some preachers everybody has a good word, and for some other preachers no one speaks well and some even sneer when his name is mentioned. The obvious reason of this requirement is that the preacher, in order to fulfil his mission to the lost, must be in position to reach them. If they have no confidence in him as a man – if they can even plausibly question his personal integrity as to honesty, veracity, and purity, he can do them no good.

But though we have all the characteristics so far named, the lack of two of them knocks us out: "aptness to teach" and "ability to rule." The first does not mean that we must be learned; that our range of information must be extensive; that we must have gathered a great storehouse of varied knowledge. We may have all of these and yet be a dead failure in the teacher's office. Indeed, we may lack these – our ignorance be as vast as another man's learning – and yet possess that essential qualification: "aptness to teach." Ignorance can be cured, but the natural incapacity to teach is irremediable so far as this office is concerned. The power to arrest and hold attention, the



power to awaken the dormant and alarm the careless, the great faculty of being able to impart what we do know or may acquire, the being able, not only to say things but, to so say them that they will stick, yea, the power not of pouring into empty vessels from our fulness nor of cramming a receptacle with many things, but of suggesting so that the other mind will do the thinking and working out – that is the teacher.

Once only, though inclined thereto more than once, I put my arms in tenderness around a ministerial student and said, "My boy, may you and God forgive me if I make a mistake, but after patient trial and much observation, I am impressed that you never can be a preacher. You are a Christian all right, your moral character is blameless) but so far as I am capable of judging with the lights before me, you are wholly devoid of any aptness to teach."

The deacon. So far as moral qualifications go, there is little difference between the qualifications of preacher and deacon. And they are like in the requirement of "soundness in the faith." It is not fitting that any officer of a church should hold loose views on the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. Yea, there are strong and obvious reasons why the collector and disburser of church funds should be as free as the preacher from "the love of money," or "covetousness," lest in making estimates on recommending expenditures he should make his own miserly spirit the standard of church liberality.

But, also, because of his official relation to church finances, even more than in the preacher's case, he should have business sense and judgment. Without going into details of the exposition of words and phrases, we need to impress our minds with some general reflections on this office:

1. In what idea did the office originate? In the necessity of the division of labor. One man cannot do everything. Old Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a wise man in his generation. He observed Moses trying to do everything in the administration of the affairs of a nation, and fortunately for succeeding administrations

freed his mind, saying in substance: "This is not a wise thing you do. You weary yourself and the people who have to wait for attention. You attend to things Godward, and appoint others to attend to secular matters." The good advice for a division of labor resulted in the appointment of graded judges, to the great dispatch of business and the relief of the overburdened Moses and the weary people. (See full account, Exodus 18:13-26.)

Certainly the judicious division of labor is one of the greatest elements of success in the administration of the world's affairs. From the account in Acts 6:1-6, it is evident that this was the ruling idea in the institution of the deacon's office. The ministerial office was overtaxed in giving attention to the distribution of the charity fund, to the detriment of its spiritual work. This was bad policy in economics and unreasonable. It left unemployed competent talent. People to be interested in any enterprise must have something to do.

2. The next idea underlying this office was, that in applying the economic principle of the division of labor, this office should be supplemental to the preaching office. It was designed to free the preacher's mind and heart from unnecessary cares with a view to the concentration of his powers in spiritual matters. "It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God and serve tables. Look ye out among yourselves suitable men to attend to this business. But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word." Evidently, therefore, the deacon's office is supplemental to the pastor's office. A deacon therefore whose services are not helpful in this direction fails in the fundamental purposes of his appointment. He is not to be a long-horned ox to gore the pastor, but a help to him. Some deacons so act as to become the enemy and dread of every incoming pastor.

3. The third idea of his office delimits his duties – the charge of the temporalities of the church, over against the pastor's charge of the spiritualities. Of course, this includes the finances of the church, the care of its property and the provision for comfortable service and

worship, and for the proper observances of its ordinances. I heard an old-time Baptist preacher, at the ordination of some deacons, expound this text, "to serve tables."

His outline was:

1. To serve the table of the Lord – arrange for the Lord's Supper.
2. To serve the table of the poor – administer the charities of the church.
3. To serve the table of the pastor – make the estimates and recommendations of appropriations for pastoral support and other current expenses, collect and disburse the fund. But we go outside the record and introduce vicious innovations on New Testament simplicity if we regard, or allow the deacons themselves to regard a board of deacons as

1. The grand jury of a church. To bring in all bills of indictments in cases of discipline. They are not even, *ex officio*, a committee on discipline, though not barred, as individuals, from serving on such committees. Discipline is an intensely spiritual matter, whether in regard to morals or doctrines, and is the most delicate of all the affairs of a church. It does not at all follow that one competent as a businessman to attend to temporal and financial matters is the best man to handle such a delicate, spiritual matter as discipline. The preacher, charged with the spiritualities of the church is, *ex officio*, the leader and manager here, as every case of discipline in the New Testament shows. In not one of them does a deacon, as such, appear. Indeed, any member of a church may bring a case of discipline to its attention, and every member of the church is required under proper conditions to do this very thing. (See Matthew 18:15-17.)

In reading this paragraph omit the "against thee" in the second line as unsupported by the best manuscripts. Read it this way: "If thy brother sin, go right along, and convict him of his fault, between thee and him alone." No matter against whom the sin, nor whether it

be a personal or general offense, as soon as you know it, go right along and take the steps required first of you alone, then of you and others. If you and the others fail, even then it does not say: "Tell it to the deacons." Officially they have nothing in the world to do with it. "Tell it to the church." When the deacons are made a grand jury, God's law of responsibility resting on each brother is superseded by a most vicious human innovation.

2. A board of deacons is not a board of ruling elders having official charge of all church affairs. Baptists are not Presbyterians in church polity. It is not the name, but the thing, that is objectionable. We do not dodge the offense of having a ruling board by calling them deacons. The New Testament elders who ruled were preachers. There is not even a remote hint in the New Testament that the deacon's office was a ruling office.

The reader must observe that proving precedes appointment to pastoral or deacon's office. Unknown, untried men should not be put in either office. One of the greatest needs in the Baptist denomination today is a corps of good deacons in every church, attending to the New Testament functions of their office and no other. One of the greatest evils in our denomination is making, or allowing the corps of deacons to become a grand jury or a board of rulers. All along the shores of history are the debris of churches wrecked on these sunken, keel-splitting rocks.

One other great need of our people is that a great sentence of this section should be lifted up and glorified as a good deacon's objective and incentive: "For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 3:13). It ought to become so exalted that it would become every deacon's inspiration and guiding star. As a meritorious distinction, it should outrank the badge of the Legion of Honor, the Collar of the Golden Fleece, or the degree of Ph.D. conferred by earth's greatest university.

We need now to consider only one other sentence: "Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all - things." As this verse is sandwiched between two paragraphs on the deacon's office, and is a part of the section on church officers, it would be out of all connection to interpret it of women in general. And as there is no similar requirement concerning the pastor's higher office, we should not render it "wives" meaning the wives of deacons. The context requires the rendering: "women deacons." This rendering not only has the support of Romans 16:1, commending Phoebe as a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea and as doing work supplemental to the preacher and the administrator of charity help, but meets a need as obvious as the need of a male deacon. In every large church there is deacon's work that cannot be well done except by a female deacon. In the administration of charity in some cases of women – in the preparation of female candidates for baptism) and in other matters of delicacy there is need for a woman church official. The Waco church of which I was pastor for so many years, had, by my suggestion and approval, a corps of spiritually minded, judicious female deacons who were very helpful, and in some delicate cases indispensable. In churches on heathen mission fields the need is even greater than in our country Many an embarrassment did the worthy deaconess save me from, even on the subject of visitation. In some cases appealing for charity, only these women could make the necessary investigation.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. To what matters is 1 Timothy confined, what the evidence thereof and how does the fact bear on the interpretation of the book?
2. What distinction does the paragraph 2:8-15 sharply make?
3. What the first injunction on women in the church assemblies and why?
4. What the second and the reasons?

5. What the result of having a woman pastor?
6. What the compensating promise for these restrictions?
7. What words constitute the difficulties of interpreting this promise?
8. What the antecedent of the pronoun, "they"?
9. What the possible explanation of "She shall be saved through her childbearing"?
10. In this context what the more probable explanation? Convey it by a paraphrase.
11. Illustrate this by a scriptural, a classical, and a modern case.
12. What Old Testament passage is in line with the thought and pictures the ideal woman?
13. What the limitations on woman's praying and teaching?
14. What the twofold lesson of chapter 3?
15. In the paragraph 3:1-7 what the name of highest church officer and its meaning?
16. Give other names for this officer and their meanings.
17. Give the qualifications for this officer negatively and positively.
18. What the meaning of "husband of one wife"?
19. Meaning of "novice"?
20. Why should a pastor have good testimony of them that are without?

21. Most of these qualifications relate to his character, but what two bear on his work?
22. Show what "aptness to teach" does not mean and then show in what it consists.
23. Cite other passages to show that the bishop is a ruler.
24. What the second office?
25. Wherein do his qualifications coincide with the pastor's?
26. Wherein superior?
27. Why should not a deacon be "a lover of money"?
28. In what idea did the office originate?
29. Cite an Old Testament example.
30. What the second idea underlying the office and what the passage showing it?
31. What the third?
32. Give the text and outline of a notable sermon at the ordination of deacons.
33. Show why a corps of deacons should not be considered a grand jury.
34. Why not a ruling board?
35. What officer of a church has charge of discipline and why? Of ruling?

36. What is a long-horned deacon? Ans.: One who gores the pastor instead of helping him and in love of ruling runs roughshod over the church.

37. Why from the context must verse II be construed to teach that there should be "female deacons" and what other scripture in support and what the need of having them?



## V. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

### 1 Timothy 3:14-16

Our last discussion closed with 1 Timothy 3:13, on the officers of the church, their qualifications and duties. The closing paragraph of the chapter is devoted to setting forth the mission of the church in relation to the truth and what the elements of the truth. Since the contention that there is now existing a universal church is based upon the broad statement applied to the church in the letter to the Ephesians, I am glad that in the passage now to be considered, and in the address of Paul at Miletus to the elders of the church at Ephesus (see Acts 20), we see the broadest of these terms applied to the particular church at Ephesus.

Now, let us read: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly, but if I tarry long thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." Here "the house of God," "the church of the living God," "the pillar and ground of the truth," "the flock," "the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood," are statements just as broad as we can find in the letter to the Ephesians, and yet all these broad terms are expressly applied to the one particular church at Ephesus, for he is discussing the heresies in that church, the prayer services in that church, and the officers of that church.

The reader will notice that when Paul wrote the first letter to Timothy, it shows that on this last tour of his, after his escape from the first Roman imprisonment, he had been in Asia and at Ephesus, and now expresses the hope to speedily return. In 2 Timothy, we find evidence that he did return to Ephesus, and had a very stormy time.

The word "behave" in verse 15 refers to more than mere proprieties. It includes worship and service – how church members should conduct themselves in the church assemblies. Right behavior on the

part of both men and women in the worship and service of the public assembly is based on three great reasons:

1. The assembly is the church of the living God. The institution is not of human origin. It is not a Greek ecclesia humanly devised for the transaction of municipal or state business. It is not a political gathering.

2. It is a house for divine habitation. The letter to the Ephesians expresses the thought. (See Ephesians 2:21-22.)

3. Because of its mission, being "The pillar and ground of the truth." The ground of a thing is the foundation upon which the superstructure rests. A pillar is a column upholding a superstructure. The attitude of the church toward the truth is that' it supports and upholds the truth which teaches these doctrines. The Bible alone would not save the world. There must be an organization back of the Book, an organization that has in it the elements of perpetuity, otherwise the truth would go to pieces. If there was no competent body to exercise discipline, to insist upon the gospel elements of the truth in preaching, and to exercise jurisdiction over the preachers of that doctrine, then there would be all sorts of preaching, all sorts of doctrines, and there would be no conservation of the truth.

I now answer the question: How does the church, as a pillar and foundation, uphold the truth?

1. By proclaiming it through its ministry. They carry that truth to the end of the world.

2. By exhibiting it pictorially) through the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Wherever water flows) wherever it stagnates in pools, wherever it masses in lakes, bays, or oceans, there in the yielding waves of baptism the church pictorially represents the central truths of the gospel.

3. They uphold the truth by vindicating it in their discipline. If a man comes teaching for the gospel that which is not the gospel, if a man lie and contradict the gospel, the church upholds the truth by refusing to hear, receive or in any way give him countenance. Yea, the church must expose his heresy.

4. It upholds the truth by illustrating it in all its practical life. Every Christian father and mother, brother and sister, boy and girl, every Christian citizen, is upholding the truth by illustrating it in the life.

I would not have you forget these four points by which the church upholds the truth:

1 – Proclaiming it through its ministry.

2 – Pictorially representing it in its two ordinances.

3 – Vindicating it in discipline.

4 – Illustrating it in life.

The next matter we have under consideration: What is the truth which the church is to uphold? Here we have a summary of the truth so far as it relates to the mystery of godliness. It, of course, is not a summary of all the truth, but it is a summary of the truth as it relates to the mystery of godliness and these are its six elements:

1. "God was manifested in the flesh." It is immaterial to the sense whether we read "God was" or "who was." Both teach the incarnation of Deity. The incarnation of the Word that was with God and that was God. Incarnation includes all that he did in that incarnation, his personal obedience to the Law, his teaching of the fulness of the New Testament law, his expiation for sin on the cross, and his resurrection from the dead. A church that does not uphold that, ought to be discountenanced and disfellowshipped as a church. That is the purport of John's testimony. (See 1 John 4:1-3.)

2. "Justified in the Spirit." Does the Spirit here mean Christ's own human spirit, or the Holy Spirit? The revisers evidently understood it to mean Christ's human spirit as contrasted with his flesh – manifested in the flesh and justified in his spirit. Their contention is based upon the absence of the article before "Spirit" and the apparent parallels between "flesh and spirit." The "Cambridge Bible" thus paraphrases to bring out the rhythmical effects of the several pairs in the verse: Who in flesh was manifested, Pure in spirit was attested; By angels' vision witnessed, Among the nations heralded; By faith accepted here, Received in glory there.

This presentation is grammatical, plausible, and strong. If it be the right interpretation, the sense of "justified in spirit" would be that because sinless in his inner man, and because none were able to convict him of sin, he was justified or acquitted on his own personal life.

But the author prefers, as more in consonance with the line of thought and far more feasible, to understand it to refer to the Holy Spirit. The line of thought would then be:

1. God assumed human nature in his incarnation for the salvation of men.
2. In this incarnation the Holy Spirit justified or vindicated his Deity and its claims.
3. The angels recognized the Deity in the flesh.
4. As God in the flesh he was proclaimed to all nations.
5. Wherever thus proclaimed and attested he was accepted by faith, i.e., the truth so proclaimed and attested was credible.
6. The Father's reception of him into glory after his resurrection was a demonstration of his Deity in the flesh and a vindication of all his claims while in the flesh.

Here we have one great proposition embodying a mystery, God was incarnated, supported by five successive evidences: The attestation of the Holy Spirit; the recognition by angels who had known him before his incarnation; the fact of its publication to all nations; the credibility of the publication, evidenced by the fact that men all over the world believed it, and the Father endorsed it all by receiving him into original glory and crowning him Lord of all.

There mere rhythm of the parallel, proverb style can never be equal in force to this line of thought. The insistence on making "spirit" mean "his human spirit" – not only is redundant and tautological, since a human spirit is already stated in his being made flesh – flesh meaning full human nature – but in a similar construction, 1 Peter 3:18-19, such interpretation teaches most awful heresy and indefensible foolishness. Therefore, I totally dissent from the thought of the revisers. It means that when God was manifested in the flesh, he, so manifested, was vindicated – justified by the Holy Spirit. If the reader asks when did the Holy Spirit justify the Deity in his incarnation, my answer is:

(1) At his baptism. Nobody could otherwise know that he was the Christ. John the Baptist could not, except by certain action of the Holy Spirit. "I knew him not," said John, "but he that sent me to baptize gave me this sign: Upon whom thou shall see the Spirit of God descend, he is the Messiah." And so at the baptism of Jesus Christ, as he came up out of the water, he prayed that this demonstration might take place – and in the form of a dove the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon him. Unenlightened men who looked at him in his humanity would say, "This is no God. This is Joseph's son; we know his brothers and sisters." But the Holy Spirit vindicated him in that manifestation; justified him, as did also the Father's voice: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

(2) If the reader again asks me how next the Holy Spirit justified him, I will say that all his teachings and miracles were by the Spirit resting on him without measure.

(3) The sacrifice he made in his body for the sin of the world was through the Holy Spirit. When he made that sacrifice, according to the letter to the Hebrews, that offering was through the eternal Spirit. If man counts not that a sacrifice, the Holy Spirit did.

(4) In raising his body from the dead. They had denied his messiahship and his divinity, and demanded a sign to prove it. The sign was that God would raise him from the dead on the third day, and according to this apostle in another connection: "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, even Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 1:4).

(5) Now, the fifth way that he was justified by the Holy Spirit was in the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost to accredit and give power to the church whose mission was to proclaim this truth. This was the promise and the sign without whose fulfilment the church dare not preach that mystery. The coming of another Paraclete to abide with them till the return of the absent Lord, was the supreme justification of their preaching that God was manifested in the flesh. See John 14:16-18; 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-10, 13-15; Acts 1:4-5, 8.

And so on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down and the church was baptized in that Spirit, that was his vindication.

Let's restate the five points in which the Spirit justified him:

First, in his baptism.

Second, through whom all his teachings and miracles were wrought.

Third, in offering himself for sin.

Fourth, in raising him from the dead.

Fifth, in his coming on the day of Pentecost to abide with the church until his final advent.

That is the second element of the truth the church must ever uphold. Let us see the third element.

He was seen by angels. Men heard with indifference that a babe was born at Bethlehem. Nobody would pay any attention to such an incident as that. That babe surely was not God. But the angels who knew him up yonder in heaven recognized him in his incarnation. The flesh could not veil him from their sight. But when did the angels so recognize him? When did he have their attestation of the Godhead in his humanity?

Go back to that announcement to the shepherds, where they told the shepherds that unto the world was born a Prince and Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, and that this would be the sign: they would find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. They recognized him there.

When else did they recognize him? Just after his baptism, when he was tempted of the devil. As the first Adam was tempted, so the Second Adam was now tempted, and after triumphing in that temptation the angels recognized him, and came and ministered unto him.

The third time was when he was in the garden of Gethsemane, going there in anticipation of the awful horrors of death, as a malefactor at the hands of man; death, as a sinner at the hands of God; death, in passing into the power of Satan. When he triumphed in that temptation the angels came and ministered unto him.

And the angels will further bear witness to him when he comes to judge the world. They will come in execution of the divine will in gathering his elect, and in gathering up the tares to be burned. Man

may see no divinity in that Babe of Bethlehem, but the angels recognized him, and I may add that the devil recognized him, and all the evil angels. Whatever infidelity may have existed in the minds of Pharisee or Sadducee, the evil angels made no mistake. On one occasion. they said to him: "We know thee, who thou art, thou Holy One of God." The next element of this truth is a universal gospel, to be preached among all nations. This appears from the Great Commission – Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:22-23; Colossians 1:23.

This commission was not limited to Jews: "Go ye unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." "Make disciples of all nations." That preaching was done in Paul's time. He said the gospel was preached unto every creature under heaven, and it has been done since, generation by generation. We are doing it now. We do not limit our missionary work to America. We go to Mexicans. Brazilians, Italians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Russians, the Germans, and the Swedes, telling them how God was manifested in the flesh, was justified by the Holy Spirit, and so manifested he was recognized by angels. That is the theme of universal preaching. That this truth was believed appears from the history of its preaching.

Three thousand Jews were converted at Pentecost, and before the close of that big meeting near unto 144,000 Jews were converted. Some of the Jerusalem sinners believed on him. His great persecutor, Saul of Tarsus, believed on him. Then his gospel was carried to heathen Antioch, Asia Minor, Greece, Rome, the ends of the earth, and wherever this gospel has been faithfully preached it has been accepted and believed. It is not a gospel of empty sound. That is an element of the truth that the church is to uphold. That Jesus was received up into glory appears from this vision of him there by Stephen, Paul, and John.

But we need not go back to Pentecost and apostolic times for proof. Nor need we rely on persistent monumental evidences – baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Day. Fresh evidences abound now, and we



are his witnesses. If Jesus be now alive in glory he can now manifest that life. The continued work of the Holy Spirit in the call of preachers, in regenerating and sanctifying sinners, attests it. Every new convert has the witness in himself. Every prayer heard, every sad heart comforted, attests it. It is just as credible now as when first preached, and its saving power as evident.

My old-time teacher in Latin and Greek became an infidel. Our personal friendship continued till his death. He said to me once: "I like to hear you. You always interest me, but what you preach about the incarnation, its miracles, its vicarious expiation, cannot be believed. It is unscientific and therefore incredible." I replied, "Doctor, I oppose your dogmatic affirmation, not by argument, but by the fact that it is believed, and has been believed wheresoever in the world it has been preached. Earth's noblest, best, and wisest have believed it. Washington, Gladstone, Lee, Jackson, Chief Justice Marshall believed it. Your own mother believed it. Greenleaf, the greatest international authority on the Law of Evidence, declares it legally provable and proved. Whenever it is hid, it is hidden to those who are spiritually blind. The difficulty in its acceptance is not intellectual, but an alienation of heart from God."

That is one of the things the church ought to uphold, one of the truths concerning godliness; that when he is preached to the world he will be believed, he will be accepted.

It has been said, if this mystery of godliness be so credible, why do not Jews, his own people, accept it? The answer is (1) Many of them did accept it. (2) Some of them now accept it. (3) In later days all of them will accept it.

Paul explains why some of them rejected it then, and most of them now reject it (2 Cor. 3:15-16; Rom. 11:7, 10, 25).

He foretells when and how the whole nation will one day accept it (Rom. 11:11-12, 26). In this he agrees with their ancient prophets (Isa. 66:7-8; Ezek. 36-37; Zech. 12:8 to 13:1).

Let us look at the sixth-element: "Received up in glory." If God had not received him, all of his claims would have been set aside; but the record tells us that the last time the disciples saw him he was going up into the clouds. A prophetic psalm tells us what happened as he approached heaven, shouting: "Lift up your heads, oh ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory will come in. Who is this King of glory? I, the Lord, mighty to save." And when he was received up into glory, the test he gave them that he would be received was the descending of the Holy Spirit. The point is just this: If Jesus was raised from the dead and ascended up into heaven, he is alive now. That is what he says: "I am he that was dead but am alive." If Jesus is alive he can right now manifest that life just as well as when he was alive and walking the streets of Jerusalem. Arguments on a monument are very poor things when compared with arguments based upon present evidences that Christ, the living God, is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Paul, elsewhere, gives summaries of the truths that the church is to uphold, some of them very much like this. For instance, in Romans, "It is Christ that died, he is risen again, he is exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, he ever liveth to make intercession for us," or as he puts it in another passage: "I delivered unto you that which I also received; how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he is risen, and that he was recognized when raised." But these six elements here are limited to the mystery of godliness.

## QUESTIONS

1. Upon what is based the contention that there now exists a universal church?
2. How does this passage written concerning the church at Ephesus and Paul's previous address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts 20) disprove it?
3. What the meaning of "behave themselves" in verse 15?

4. On what three reasons is the exhortation to "behave" in the church assembly based and what the force of the first?
5. Prove the second from the letter to the Ephesians.
6. Explain "pillar and ground" in the third.
7. What would be the result if there were no church to uphold the truth?
8. In what four ways does the church uphold it?
9. What the one great truth the church must uphold?
10. What the six elements of the mystery of godliness?
11. How much is included in the first element, "God was manifested in the flesh"?
12. What the testimony of John on this point?
13. What should be our attitude toward a man or a so-called church denying this truth?
14. In the second element "justified in Spirit" what the controversy?
15. Give the argument and paraphrase supporting the view that it means Christ's human spirit and 'then the meaning of the phrase.
16. Give the author's line of thought in support of the contention that it means the Holy Spirit.
17. Where do we find a similar construction and what heresy and foolishness result from making "spirit" in that connection mean "Christ's human spirit"?
18. If the author's contention be right when did the Holy Spirit justify God incarnate?

19. Explain "seen of angels" and its bearing on the line of thought.
20. When this recognition by angels?
21. Cite proof that the devil and his demons recognized God in the flesh.
22. On what three occasions did Satan himself assail God in the flesh and what the result in each case?
23. What proof in the next chapter that the demons fight this truth?
24. Where do we find embodied the next element – a universal gospel?
25. What the historic evidence of the next element, "believed on in the world"?
26. What the monumental proof?
27. What the proof of today?
28. Relate the incident in this connection concerning the author's infidel friend.
29. Where the only difficulty in its universal acceptance?
30. If it be incredible to any what the cause? Quote Paul.
31. Why do not Jews believe it? Quote Paul.
32. When will they believe it? Quote Paul and cite the prophets.

## **VI. THE MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS. A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST**

1 Timothy 4:1-16

Our last discussion considered the church of the living God, upholding the mystery of godliness. This chapter commences with a view of the synagogue of Satan, upholding the mystery of lawlessness. God's intervention was a mystery. Satan's intervention was a mystery. Both a mystery because super" natural. The two mysteries are in opposition – the one working to man's salvation – the other to man's damnation. Both propagated by human agency; both, a fulfilment of prophecy 4:1 "But": This conjunction teaches that what follows is not in line with the foregoing, but in opposition.

4:1 – "The Spirit saith" may mean either "hath said" in a former revelation, or "now saith" by inspiration of the apostle writing. In this case it is both. That constant inspiration rested on the apostle appears from Acts 20:23:"The Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." So we are not necessitated to find that what the Spirit here said is a quotation from a previous record. In fact, however, the substance of it, and more besides, appears in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12.

Here we find that a great apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin must precede the final advent of our Lord; that this apostasy is a "mystery of lawlessness" already commencing to work; that Satan is back of it; that just before the final advent he will incarnate himself in the man of sin, accrediting him with miracles, "power, signs, and wonders," intended to create a lying impression, working a delusion with all deceit in unrighteousness in them that perish; that God permits this subjection to Satan because they received not the love of the truth. All of which is in accord with our lesson and the later testimony of Peter (2 Peter 3:1-4) and of John (1 John 4:1-3).

4:1 – "Some shall fall away from the faith." This is apostasy, not from personal faith, but from "the faith" – the truth embodied in the mystery of godliness.

4:1 – "Giving heed to seducing spirits." These spirits are demons, Satan's evil angels.

4:1 – "Doctrines of demons." As the mystery of godliness was embodied in doctrines considered in last chapter, so the mystery of lawlessness is embodied in doctrines, some of which are to be named here, and others elsewhere.

4:2 – "Through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own consciences as with a hot iron." On this sentence note:

(1) As the mystery of godliness is propagated through human agents under the influence of the Holy Spirit, so the mystery of lawlessness is propagated through human agents under the influence of Satan.

(2) Over against the "good minister of Jesus Christ" (4:6-16), we have here the character of the evil minister of Satan:

- (a) They received not the love of the truth;
- (b) They are hypocrites;
- (c) They have Satan's brand on their consciences, as Paul bore the mark or brand of Jesus;
- (d) They teach lies;
- (e) They are God-abandoned to a delusion of Satan that they may perish.

What then are the "doctrines of demons" that embody this mystery of lawlessness?

4:3 – "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." So far as this scripture testifies, these doctrines consist of one prohibition: "Forbidding to marry," and of one command; "To abstain from meats." Both are tenets of the Gnostic philosophy condemned in all the later New Testament books, and to which so much attention is devoted in John's Gospel and in the letters of the first Roman imprisonment, and which abound in the letters of Peter and Jude and Revelation.

The theory of both the prohibition and the command is based on the heresy that sin is limited to matter, residing in the body alone, and so by ignoring sexual relations, and restricting food to a vegetable diet, the body may be kept in subjection and sin avoided. It is the doctrine of celibacy and asceticism, and is responsible for all hermits, whether heathen or Christian, that seek escape from sin in isolation from one's fellows, and is the father of monasteries and the mother of nunneries. It is the doctrine of Buddha and the Papacy. It opposes the gospel teaching that sin is of the inner man – "apart from the body" – and consists of spirit alienation of mind and heart from God. Envy, malice, jealousy, lying, stealing, blasphemy, pride, vanity, slander, idleness, selfishness, and the like, are sins. These proceed from the inner man. To eat meat on Friday is not a sin. To marry, multiply and populate the earth and subdue it was the original commission of man in innocence. The very depths of Satan are disclosed in making that to be sin which is not sin, and in making that to be righteousness which is sin. And especially is this doctrine deadly in the assault on the gospel teaching that marriage is honorable in all. In the beginning of time the Father instituted it, in the fulness of time the Son honored it with his presence, in the end of time the Holy Spirit sanctifies it by bestowing its name on the relation eternally subsisting between Christ and his church. No idle hermit in his cave, no ascetic monk in his cell, no nun in her convent can bar out sin which resides in the spirit.

The prayer of Jesus was: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one." External barriers do not keep out the evil one. He can enter wherever atmosphere enters. Experiment may show what diet in particular cases promotes physical health. Let each one eat the food, whether vegetable or animal, which in his own case is promotive of a sound body. Says this section: "Meats which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believed and knew the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer." The temporary, symbolic distinction of the Mosaic law between "clean and unclean meats" was nailed to the cross of Christ. Therefore says our apostle elsewhere: "Let no man judge you in meats and drinks," and particularly pertinent are his words: "If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do ye subject yourselves to ordinances: handle not, nor taste, nor touch – all things are to perish with the using – after the precepts and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will, worship, and humility, and severity to the body, but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh."

### **A GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST (4:6-16)**

We have just considered on 4:2 the evil minister of Satan, and now sketch on opposite canvass, in salient strokes, the outline of a good minister of our Lord.

#### 1. The matter of his preaching.

(1) Positively, having been himself nourished in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine, of the mystery of godliness, he puts the brethren in mind of them.

(2) Negatively, he refuses to teach profane and old wives' fables. Here we have "fables" opposed to revelations from God. These fables are the lies spoken by the hypocritical, conscience-seared



ministers of evil; they are doctrines inspired by seducing demons, and hence profane, irreverent, godless. From Titus 1:14 it appears that these fables were of Jewish origin, "commandments of men" that make void the word of God. They are further characterized as the fables of old wives. This alludes to the fact that there are certain women among the ministry of Satan, and suggests another form of Gnosticism – unbridled license – equally derived with asceticism from the one root heresy that sin resides only in the body and as the body perishes without a resurrection, it made no difference of what uses it was made an instrument. In the next letter to Timothy these teachers are thus described: "Holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof: from these also turn away. For of these are they that creep into houses and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith" (2 Tim. 3:5-8).

The phrase "old wives," however, does not refer to corrupt women who are willing victims of these evil ministers of Satan, but to godless old women themselves teachers of fables. They are of the class who deal in palmistry, magic, or other methods of fortune telling, gathering their herbs for love philters, or other materials for working charms, and brewing their potions with incantations, somewhat after the method of the three hags in Macbeth.

Edward Eggleston, in *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, gives a fitting description of one of these old "grannies" that filled a neighborhood with evil superstitions. I myself knew one who wrought serious evil in several families by persuading the wives that marriage was an evil institution, thus bringing about separations that wrecked homes and scattered children.

2. His athletics in teaching and practice. While not underestimating physical athletics, he stresses rather spiritual athletics. He concedes some profit in physical training. "Bodily exercise is profitable for a

little in this life." But his ideal man is not a winner in the Olympic Games, in the Ephesian Amphitheatre, in prize rings, ball games, or foot races, or boat races. His heroes are not gladiators. As elsewhere in many of his letters he uses the exploits and activities of the outer man athlete as images of a spiritual race course or gymnasium, because exercise in godliness has the promise of both this life and the life to come.

The saying which gives the greater glory to spiritual exercise is not only a "faithful one," but "worthy of all acceptance." He is indeed a good minister of Jesus who can develop among Christian people an enthusiasm for spiritual culture that will equal the world's enthusiasm for physical athletics. John Bunyan on this line, in his *Heavenly Footman* and *Pilgrim's Progress*, not only won a tablet in Westminster Abbey but is heard today in all the languages of the world, and welcomed in all its homes. Without endorsement of some of their teachings, the author rejoices to honor John Wesley and Savonarola in their great reformations toward "exercising unto godliness." Nor does he hesitate to say that John Wesley's class in spiritual athletics has not only conferred more honor upon Oxford University than all its boat clubs and ball teams, but its enthusiasm has fired the Western continent and awakened myriads to "strive unto holiness." A good minister "labors and strives to this end, because he has his hope set on the living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." That preacher's doctrine is defective and his ministry narrow and barren who stops at election, predestination, and justification, and ignores the salvation in us – sanctification developing the life given in regeneration – and has no heart and hopefulness in preaching a universal gospel.

### 3. His own example:

(1) In himself heartily believing, without wavering, the vital doctrines of the faith. Loose views on any fundamental doctrine should forever bar a man from the ministry. That presbytery is itself disreputable and disloyal that lays the hands of ordination on a man

who has loose views on the incarnation, the vicarious expiation, the resurrection, the exaltation, and intercession of our Lord, and upon the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and upon the necessity of regeneration and sanctification.

(2) In character and life: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).

(3) In diligent study and practice: "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (1 Tim. 4:13). "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy progress may be manifest to all" (1 Tim. 4:15).

(4) In stirring up by exercise any spiritual gift: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Tim. 4:14).

In Timothy's own case a prophecy went before – by Paul, Silas, or some other prophet – that a great gift of the Spirit would rest on him, and it did come on him as the hands of ordination touched his head. Indeed, the laying on of hands symbolizes the imparting of Spirit power as appears from Acts 8:17; 19:6. On these two passages in Acts, with Hebrews 6:2, the Six Principles Baptists always followed baptism with a laying on of hands, and strangely enough Episcopalians, founded on the same passages the rite of Confirmation by the laying on of the hands of their bishop.

As illustration of (2) above, I may allude to a warning I once gave to a spoiled boy preacher: "My boy, you are in great danger. You have been complimented so much for the fire of your offhand, maiden sermons you have quit studying. You have no library and do not read. You have already contracted the habit of relying on preaching over your first dozen revival sermons. Such a habit calls for a wide range of ever-changing pasturage. The first time such a sermon is a juicy roast, next time it is only warmed over, next time it is hash, next time it is soup out of the bones. Soon these sermons that once

warmed your heart will no longer taste well, not even in your own mouth, and then you may be sure they do not taste well to the congregation. The spiritual stomach, as well as the physical, calls for freshness, variety, and change in the food served. When this stage of nonappreciation in your hearers arrives, you have to move on to another field; you soon will acquire the reputation of not being able to hold any field long. When your family increases you will find that 'three moves are equal to a burn.' Then will you become sore and soured in spirit, and doomed to join the murmurers, complainers, and kickers – you will be avoided as 'the man with a grievance.' "

I am sorry to say my foreboding in his case came to pass. I solemnly warn young preachers against mental and spiritual laziness. The unused gift or faculty, whether natural or spiritual, goes into paralysis and bankruptcy. When a stream ceases to flow it stagnates. Even the waters of Ezekiel's River of Life that became sidetracked into basins of stillness became only salt marshes. When a tree ceases to grow, it begins to die. When a farmer does not take in new ground and put out his fences, the bushes and briars in his fence corners require him to move in his fences. We must give attention to study to enlarge our stock of preaching material. We can't always preach on the first principles. Besides, it is robbing the churches.

I believe it was Booker T. Washington who tells the story of his rebuke of a Negro church for violation of contract in not paying their pastor, and how completely he was silenced by a remark of one of the sturdy members: "We done paid for them sermons last year."

Moreover, I warn again that to secure novelty and freshness, we do not need to turn to that crassest and most unprofitable of sensationalism – hat goes out of the record for pulpit themes. Leave that to worldly lecturers. The Bible is an inexhaustible mine to the student delver and all the student preachers of the world, generation by generation, may let down their little buckets into the wells of salvation without fear of lowering the waterline. "Save thyself and thy hearers."

## QUESTIONS

1. How is the last paragraph of 1 Timothy 3 contrasted with the first paragraph of chapter 4?
2. Why in both cases a mystery and through whom each propagated and was each foretold?
3. What conjunction suggests the oppositions between, the two mysteries?
4. "The Spirit saith." Does that mean "now saith" or "hath said" or both?
5. Show how 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 contains the substance of the present saying of the Spirit and with what subsequent writings it accords.
6. The meaning of "falling away from the faith"?
7. Who the "seducing spirits" of 4:1 and how their seductions embodied?
8. On 4:2 answer: (1) What agents propagate the "doctrines of demons"? (2) Their characteristics? (3) With whom in this chapter contrasted?
9. So far as this context extends what the doctrines of demons?
10. What philosophy inculcated both and what books of New Testament discuss the philosophy and where did it originate?
11. On what heresy is the theory of these doctrines based and what evils resulted from it and in what two religions are they embodied?
12. Show how an attack on the honor and sanctity of marriage and a teaching that isolates one from his kind controverts the mission of man as a race and the teaching of both Testaments.

13. What regimen of diet should each individual follow?
14. Show how the gospel abrogates the temporary and symbolic distinction between "clean" and "unclean" animals for food and characterizes present prohibitions thereon.
15. With whom is the "good minister of Jesus Christ" in 4:6-16 contrasted?
16. Gather up from the paragraph what should be the matter, negative and positive, of the "good minister's preaching."
17. What one word characterizes the negative matter of preaching – to what is it opposed – and why the descriptive "profane," and what means the other descriptive "old wives"?
18. Show from Titus the natural origin of the "fables" in question.
19. How does the one heresy, sin resident only in matter – in body – teach two opposing evils – asceticism and isolation from one's fellows on the part of some and unbridled license ill association with one's kind on the part of others?
20. Where the heresy tends to unbridled license give the apostle's description of its subjects in the second letter to Timothy.
21. Give in description and illustration the "old wives" who teach vicious superstitions adverse to gospel revelation.
22. What the second element of a good minister of Jesus Christ and what his attitude toward physical athletics?
23. Is it possible to develop an enthusiasm for spiritual athletics equal to the world's enthusiasm for physical athletics?
24. On this point what said the author concerning John Bunyan and John Wesley?

25. What may you say of a preacher's doctrine and ministry whose preaching and life stops at election, predestination, and justification ignoring the salvation in us through sanctification's development of the life in regeneration and ignoring a universal gospel?
26. What the third element in a good minister and what the particulars in which this element is exhibited?
27. What the incident given by the author bearing on the third particular, i.e., the necessity of study? Cite the Booker T. Washington incident.
28. According to what and through what was a special spiritual gift conferred on Timothy?
29. What does "the laying on of hands" symbolize?
30. Show what use the Six Principles Baptists and the Episcopalians make of 1 Timothy 4:14 in conjunction with Acts 8:17; 19:6; and Hebrews 6:2.
31. What follows the neglect to stir up by exercise a natural or spiritual gift and how did the author illustrate it?
32. To what should a preacher not turn to satisfy the natural craving for freshness, variety, and progress and why is this resort not necessary?

## **VII. THE ADMINISTRATION OF INTERNAL CHURCH AFFAIRS**

### 1 Timothy 5:1-25

In this chapter and the next we consider the administration of internal church affairs:

1. How to deal with the different classes of unofficial offending members (5:1-2).
2. How to administer church pensions to widows (5:3-16) and to aged ministers (5:17-18).
3. How to treat offending elders – that is preachers (5:19-21).
4. Why there should be care in ordaining preachers (5:22, 24-25).
5. Slaves and masters (6:1-2).
6. Heterodox teachers in practical religion (6:3-8).
7. The rich (6:9-10, 17-19).
8. Quadruple charge to Timothy or the Law of Administration (5:21,23; 6:11-16; 6:20-21).

5:1: "Do not reprimand an elderly man, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the youngest as sisters, in all purity."

Whoever has charge of a church will sometimes see in the conduct of old men, old women, young men, and young women things that are not exactly right, and will wonder how to deal in judicious discrimination with these cases, especially if he is a young man, as Timothy was. This direction solves the problem: "Do not reprimand, but appeal to the elderly man as a father, to the elder women as mothers, deal with the young men as brothers, with the young women as sisters." This is capital advice to young pastors.



The young preacher, perhaps not much more than a boy, who gets up into the pulpit with the air of a lord and hurls Jupiter's thunderbolts, knocking down an old man here, an old woman there, a young man here, and a young woman yonder, had as well quit. This does not mean that we are to be silent when wrong exists. There is a way to get at it judiciously, and the text enjoins the right way. We should not let people get the idea that we are "pulpit tyrants" or "bosses."

Pensioning of widows by the church. This matter extends from the third verse down to the sixteenth verse inclusive, and refers to a list of widow pensioners to be supported by the church. The Anglican Church and the Romanists try to make this out an order of women devoted to celibacy, but there is nothing in the text to indicate such a thing. It is simply a list of those "widows indeed" dependent on the church for support. The Mosaic law, in Deuteronomy, is very broad concerning the caring for widows and orphans, and in the New Testament special emphasis is laid on it.

In Acts 6 we have our first church history on the subject. When they had things in common, selling their possessions and turning the proceeds into a common fund, which was distributed daily, a complaint arose among the Hellenist Jews that their widows were being neglected. Let us keep that passage in mind as we study this.

We are now to consider the important question: What women are entitled to be supported by the church? "Honor widows that are widows indeed." But who are widows indeed, must be very carefully determined. The apostle defines negatively and positively:

1. Not one who has children or grandchildren able to take care of her. They are lacking in piety if they allow the older people of their family to suffer or to become a burden on the church. In a community like Ephesus, where the number of Christians was so vast, and where there was such a large proportion of the poorer class of people, the list of pensioners on a church would be large in any event. It was necessary in order not to overburden the church, not to

allow on this list any widow who has a child or grandchild living able to support her. Again in verse 16 we find an enlargement of the restriction: "If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed."

So, if there be relatives of even a remoter degree who are able to take care of their older kindred, then the church ought not to be burdened, and they ought to be made, if members of the church, to do their duty, because "whosoever will not provide for his own has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." It is to the lasting credit of some men that just as long as they live they exercised deference, patience, and love toward their parents.

There is a further restriction in age. How old must this widow be? She must be sixty years old in order to be received as a regular pensioner of the church. Of course, this does not mean that some widows younger than that may not be in need of ordinary charity. But when we make out our pension list of those who are to be regularly supported by the church, we are as a rule to suppose that women under that age can probably take care of themselves. Again, of course, this would not exclude special cases of ordinary charity; say a crippled or a blind woman, however young. The apostle is discussing the general rule of charity which has no regard to age or worthiness. The age restriction for pensions is thus expressed negatively: "But the younger widows refuse, for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they desire to marry." That implies marrying out of the faith, because soon he exhorts them to marry. If these younger widows are supported they will be idle when able to work, and will likely go about from house to house, and having no employment become busybodies and gossipers.

If, as a rule, every widow is to be supported by the church, we may have, as pensioners, young women with nothing to do, whose very youth, with its vitality and restlessness may make them busy in wrong things. Paul was a wise old man, and he was an inspired old

man. He says, "I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household." When a woman is sixty years old she is not apt to marry again either in or out of the faith.

He now defines positively: "She must be desolate." Like a single tree left of a grove, all its comrades cut down by the unsparing ax and this lone survivor scarred and riven with lightning bolts, stripped of boughs and foliage by passing storms.

The definition is yet more restrictive: She must have a good record, "having been the wife of one man," that is, not having two husbands at one time. "Well reported of for her good works; if she has brought up children, if she has used hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet [mentioned among the good works, showing that it is a good individual work and not a church ordinance], if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work."

He does not mean that every woman on the list shall have every one of these qualifications, but these rules define the requisite record. If a woman be received as a pensioner whose life has been a reproach, somebody in the church will be sure to question the justice of her title to support. Paul is directing here a sane, safe way to guard the church from reproach, and yet allow no neglect of duty.

There is even yet something to be considered: What are her spiritual habits? "She that is a widow indeed and desolate, and hath her hopes set on God, and continueth in supplications and prayers day and night." A genuine Christian, an old woman by herself, no relatives, no property, but with her hope in God, and devoting the remnant of her earthly life to prayer and supplications. Nobody will object to helping her because she has merited the pension, but she must be really desolate and needy and worthy.

And again, negatively: "But she who giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth." There are many old women, who, though

old, devote their lives to pleasure and not to God's service. Paul says that sort of a woman is dead while she lives.

If we were in the French Capital today, we might see old women affecting to be young women, and acting as if they were about twenty-five years old, and so made up as to appear to be girls, face painted or enameled, hair fluffed and curled, outline supplied by the milliner, altogether devoting their lives to social pleasures, going from one soiree to another, from one reception to another, living without God, or without a thought of God. So, in Shakespeare, Hamlet regards his mother. Holding up the ghastly skull of the jester, Yorick, he says to his friend Horatio: "Go and tell my lady that though she paint an inch thick, yet to this favor will she come at last."

While this fund of the church must be administered judiciously, so as not to encourage idleness, not to include in its list one likely to bring reproach on the cause, yet it is a shame to a church to neglect its truly desolate, helpless, and worthy members. This pension list of the church, whether relating as we have just seen to widows, or as we shall next see to preachers, must be distinguished from ordinary charity. This is compensation for service rendered and hence must regard worthiness, while ordinary charity only regards human need no matter what the reason. This is like a government caring for worn out or crippled sailors and soldiers.

Pensioning superannuated preachers. Verse 17: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in the teaching." The "double honor" referred to here is more than the respect to be accorded to these venerable, worn-out preachers. The Greek word *time* here rendered "honor" is the word used to express the wages of soldiers. That it has that meaning here is evident, not only from the matter under consideration, awarding a pension support, but also from the pertinent quotations which follow: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," and "the laborer is worthy of his hire."

Our Presbyterian brethren are mistaken in supposing that this passage teaches a distinction between two different offices in the church, to wit: teaching elders who are preachers. and ruling elders not preachers who have the general administration of church affairs. It is true there might be many elders – preachers – in one church, all of them teachers, but only one of them the pastor, a ruler. The distinction between the amount of the pension accorded by a particular church, would be based on the degree of the service rendered. Many of them might have done their teaching elsewhere. They may indeed have been rulers over the smaller churches they served as pastors. But their membership in this particular church puts them within its care. If they have been distinguished as rulers and have taught that particular church, their pension should be larger.

Churches, if honest, will fairly compensate their preachers who labor in word and in doctrine, devoting their lives to the service of God. Timothy is there as Paul's delegate, standing in the place of Paul, as Paul stood in the place of Jesus Christ. How reproachful to churches when faithful superannuated men of God are not only shelved with disrespect, but robbed of their wages. The cases are shamefully numerous of men who, without thought of themselves, devote their lives unselfishly to the work of God, and then in old age are laid on the shelf even when they want to work and are still capable of working. Many churches are guilty, just here, to their shame. A preacher of that kind has earned a living and it must be accorded to him, not as charity, but as wages for his labor. A church that will grind its pastor down to fine powder, and force him to live under conditions that will keep him from rendering his best service, sins against God and will be held to account. There are some "freeze-out churches" among the Baptists, which takes a man in and uses up his life, and when their debt to him for salary is large they begin to find fault with him and finally rudely send him off to get another to be treated the same way. It is a dishonorable method of paying debts.

I knew one preacher who positively refused to take charge of a church in debt to its former pastor. One of his questions when called was this: "Do you owe your former pastor anything?" "Well, you see, our former pastor had faults." "But do you owe him anything?" "Yes." "Pay him, and I will talk to you." This preacher was John S. Alien.

The next thing is: "Receive not an accusation against an elder, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." If that rule were followed strictly, many needless scandals and troubles in churches would be avoided. It is such an easy thing to call a man off and whisper, "Don't say anything about this, but I want to tell you something about our pastor." We should stop the whisperer at once: "Are you about to tell me something against the pastor? If so, do you know it to be true, or are you proposing to circulate a hearsay? If you know it to be true, can you furnish the corroborative testimony of other witnesses? And will you and the other witnesses go with me now and tell what you know to the pastor himself, face to face, giving him an opportunity to meet the accusation?" The whisperer will be apt to reply: "Oh, no! I don't know anything myself. I have heard so and so." Thus we not only silence the whisperer, but we save ourselves from becoming a partaker of his sin. The necessity for this rule, in all cases, is more emphasized in the case of a preacher, whose reputation is a large part of his capital.

I had a remarkable experience on this line. I went to a certain church to help in a meeting, and noticed one man who kept praising my preaching ad nauseam, while others looked sad when they heard him. After a while he came to me and wanted to put me up against some members of the church, and especially against the pastor. I said, "Look here; you don't know whom you are talking to. I came here to help, not to harm this pastor. I won't hold a meeting to hurt a pastor. If you have any accusations or complaints to make, and if you can bring two or three witnesses, let us go before the pastor himself and then if necessary before the church and fairly

investigate this matter before we go on with the meeting." That sawed him off and he never praised my preaching any more.

It is shameful the way good, God-fearing men are slandered by irresponsible reports against them. Bring the accuser to task and make him come out in the open and give his corroborative evidence, and allow the accused a chance to answer.

Timothy is there in Ephesus, a great city with many thousands of church members, and many preachers. He is there in an apostle's stead, and from all over the country some people, if encouraged, will be bringing him private word about some of the preachers. Paul says, "Don't receive an accusation against an elder except at the mouth of two or three witnesses." The Mosaic law went further: If a charge was made and not sustained, the perjurer received the punishment that the accused would have received if found guilty. Such a restriction puts a brake on the slanderer's tongue. When we thus hold a man responsible for what he says he is not so ready to talk about people.

The next thing about the elder: "Them that sin, reprove in the sight of all, that the rest may also be in fear." I must call attention to the original word here, which means, sin continually, habitually. Some preachers do sin, and keep on sinning, and do not try to stop. This is not like the case in the beginning of the chapter where an elderly man must be reprimanded. In this case, reprove him in the sight of all. We should not denounce him privately, but make our reproof in the open church, as Paul did Peter at Antioch. We should speak right out: "Here is a man in the ministry who sins and keeps on sinning, and there is no indication that he is going to stop." Let the rebuke be sharp and definite. If the public reprimand does not stop him, withdraw fellowship from him and take away his credentials.

The last item about the elder is found in verse 22: "Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partakers of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." The last clause needs exposition. I heard one of the most noted Baptist preachers in Texas preach on that text, "keep thyself

pure," and he never touched the real meaning, though all he said was good.

"Pure" here does not refer to chastity. "Sincere" comes nearer the meaning. It must be construed strictly with its connection. The main injunction is: "Be not hasty in ordaining men to the ministry." The subordinate thought: "By hasty ordination you may become a partaker of the candidate's disqualifying sin." Be sincere in such matters; that is, be without reproach in ordaining men.

The reasons against haste are set forth in verses 23-24. Some men's sins, particularly impulsive men, are evident. It takes no long time to know them. They advertise themselves. These impulsive sins precede the candidate. But all men are not alike. Some are very secretive in their sins. The man passes before we see his sins. We must particularly watch out for what follows him. It takes time to find out whether such men are worthy of ordination. We should not look ahead to their promises, nor to the present, but examine the back track. What follows him? Does his past leave a good taste in the mouth? What impression prevails after the sober second thought?

In like manner also there are good works that are evident. In the case of some men we see them at their best when we first see them. Others do not make a good impression at first. They grow on us. Their good works follow them. The longer they stay at a place, and the more they are known, the better they are liked. Because of these distinguishing characteristics, do not lay hands on a novice. License him and prove him; allow time for character to develop itself. Mere brilliancy or flashiness may be accompanied by instability, lack of self control. Wait a while!

In ordaining men we are to remember that some sins advertise themselves, and we can very easily know when not to ordain certain men. Suppose he is known to be intemperate, quick to fly off the handle, boastful in speech; let that man alone for a while, do not ordain him offhand. Remember, also, that some sins do not go



before. It takes time to show what they are; they follow after. Wait until there is a chance for the proper development of a man's character before ordaining him. He may be, so far as anybody knows, very exemplary in his life, and yet in his heart he may cherish deadly sins. "Such sins," says the apostle, "will work out and show themselves after a while." Therefore, do not be in a hurry about ordaining any man. When we first meet a man he may seem to be all right, but we must wait to see what follows after. This does not mean to wait always. Character expresses itself; there is nothing covered but shall be revealed. There is nothing hid but shall be brought to light. If a man imagines that he can continue indefinitely to sin secretly, he is mistaken. We may rest assured that our sin will find us out. It is as certain as that the sun shines. I have been out in the woods and have seen charcoal burners trying to smother their fire by covering it up, but the flames would break out if not constantly watched. It is an inexorable law of God that what we are inside will crop out after a while. Moreover, human secretiveness can-not avail against God's overruling providence. On this point are to be found in Lilley's very able *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* some judicious observations and quotations:

The great principle announced is the constant drift of all human action to the light of God's throne. Here Paul's teaching coincides with that of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 10:26). It is essentially the same view of life and providence. though contemplated more from the human standpoint, that the Evangelist John also takes, when he says: "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be convicted: but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they have been wrought in God" (3:20-21). In either case there is no possibility of concealment. The discovery of human conduct is automatic and irresistible.

The law of retribution given in the former part of Paul's statement (v. 24) is the standing theme illustrated in tragedy. The Greek tragedians, especially Aeschylus, excelled in the skill with which

they exhibited this aspect of providence. It is also constantly reproduced in modern literature in the most varied forms. "My Lord Cardinal," said Anne of Austria to Richelieu, "God does not pay at the end of every week, but at the last he pays." The German poet, Von Logau, said,

"The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all."

As Dora Greenwell pointed out, however, the same principle holds true for mercy equally with judgment: "Some of the good seed sown in tears is now shedding a heavenly fragrance within our lives, and some of it will blossom, perhaps bear fruit over our graves" (Patience of Hope).

The aim of the whole utterance is to quicken in men a keener sense of individual responsibility to God. They shall not be able to hide from his eye in the multitude at last: they should not attempt to do so now.

Man lumps his kind i' the mass: God singles thence

Unit by unit. Thou and God exist –

So think! – for certain: think the mass – mankind –

Disparts, disperses, leaves thyself alone!

Ask thy lone soul what laws are plain to thee –

Thee and no other – stand or fall by them!

That is the part for thee: regard all else

For what it may be – Time's illusion.

– BROWNING, *Ferishtah's Fancies*.

Lilley's *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* is, in the main, a very scholarly and sound exposition of the letters to Timothy and Titus, and is hereby heartily recommended.

I add one other from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Mark Anthony, in delivering the funeral oration over Caesar, uses this expression: The evil that men do lives after them; The good is oft interred with their bones.

All these bear upon the caution to Timothy about ordaining men to the ministry. While we cannot wait forever, we should not lay hands on any man hastily. Churches today are committing sins fore and aft in hasty ordinations. It is not so likely that there will be a sin committed in licensing men; we should give them an opportunity to prove themselves.

## QUESTIONS

1. To what one general theme are chapters 5-6 devoted?
2. State in order the particulars of this discussion.
3. What the discriminating direction when unofficial church members of different age or sex offend?
4. How may the preacher in charge defeat the ends of discipline by his methods of administration?
5. In the paragraph 5:3-18 that the author has entitled "Pensioning Widows and Superannuated Preachers," is the pensioning regarded as an ordinary charity or compensation for past fidelity?
6. What mistake do Romanists and some Anglicans make as to these pensioned widows?

7. Where do we find the first New Testament history on this point?
8. Give first the negatives, i.e., what widows are not to be put on this list.
9. Give the positive requisites.
10. On the law for pensioning old and broken down preachers, 4:17-18, what mistake do the Presbyterians and some Baptists make?
11. What the Greek word here rendered "honor," what its meaning and what contextual proof?
12. How do some "freeze-out" Baptist churches pay their pastors?
13. What noted Baptist preacher in Texas refused to consider a call from a church in debt to a former pastor?
14. What other wrong is often done to a preacher's reputation and what the law here to prevent it?
15. As the Mosaic covenant was both civil and religious how did it afford even greater protection against this evil?
16. State one experience of the author on this line.
17. But this passage (v. 20) supposes that a preacher may sin, what the meaning of the word "sin" in this connection?
18. As private accusation is forbidden in such case, what is the remedy enjoined and why, and on what notable occasion did Paul himself carry out the injunction?
19. What fault of the churches is largely responsible for so many of these preacher troubles, and stands most in the way of pensioning preachers and what the remedy here enjoined?

20. Why, on account of distinctions in sin and in merits should churches avoid haste in ordination?

21. In the injunction (v. 22) what the meaning of -"Keep thyself pure," and why the necessity of this particular caution in this connection.

22. Develop the thought in verses 24-25 and show its pertinence against hasty ordination,

23. How does Lilley, in his masterly Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, sum up the thought and what each one of his great quotations?

24. What other quotation does the author add?

## VIII. ADMINISTRATION OF INTERNAL CHURCH AFFAIRS – (CONCLUDED)

### 1 Timothy 6:1-21

The former discussion on these chapters covered all of chapter 5 except verses 21 and 23, which will be grouped with other matters in chapter 6, and made the last item of discussion on the book.

Our last chapter closed with the proof that hasty ordination by churches, ignoring the fact that the sins of secretive men are not evident on first acquaintance but crop out later, and other disqualifications, is one ground of difficulty in securing a pension sufficient for the worthier class of aged and worn-out ministers. Not every preacher deserves a pension when old. If he has been lazy, unstudious, of doubtful moral character, not devoted, there is no reason that the church should pension him. Pension rests on desert and meritorious service. If he be in want and suffering, then it is a case for charity which rightly has no regard to worthiness. Charity, like sunshine and rain, outflows alike to the just and the unjust.

Slaves and masters (6:1-2). In the chapter on Philemon we have already considered at length Christianity's attitude to the then worldwide institution of slavery, so it is unnecessary here to go over the ground again. The remark applies here as well as there that rabid fanatics on the slavery question never did endorse, and were incapable of appreciating the heavenly wisdom of the New Testament attitude toward any method of dealing with this vast and complicated problem.

The severest tests to which Christianity has ever been subjected have been in healing the wounds and rectifying the blunders of their rash handling of this matter. Indeed, their misdirected zeal and injudicious remedies have created problems more insoluble than slavery itself. The shining of stars affords a steadier light and more healthful influence than firebrands followed by ashes and darkness.

Heterodox teachers (6:3-8). Heresy in theory is bad enough, but it becomes frightful when reduced to practice. Unquestionably from the context the words of this scathing paragraph (6:3-8) apply primarily to the fanatics dissenting from the teaching of the preceding paragraph on Christian slaves and masters. Let us consider the words: "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that godliness is a way of gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into the world, neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content" (1 Tim. 6:3-8).

Understand that the fanatical teaching here condemned is not limited to one side of the question of slavery. The proslavery fanatic who ignores that in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free, and the boundless mercy of the gospel to all slaves, its regenerating and uplifting power, and who takes his position for the gain in it, is on a par with the antislavery fanatic who, for political ends, takes the other side. The incentive is gain in the case of both. Each in his section takes the position that gives him the biggest audience, the popular favor, the most votes, the quickest promotion, and the biggest salaries. When preachers, for a like motive on this or any other subject, depart from New Testament teachings or spirit, the result is unspeakably deplorable. For his own selfish ends he projects not Christ, but himself in the limelight of publicity and unhealthy sensationalism.

Thus "supposing that godliness is a way of gain," "he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth." Ah, me! if we could only remember that the "kingdom of heaven cometh

not with observation." The brass band is louder than "the still small voice." We need to hear again the lesson of Elijah at Sinai: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" There came a mighty wind, "but Jehovah was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but Jehovah was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but Jehovah was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." When Elijah heard that he wrapped his face in his mantle. The mightiest forces in nature and grace are noiseless and unobtrusive. We hear thunder, but not gravitation. Intangible moonbeams lift the ocean seventy feet high in the Bay of Fundy, but we never hear the groaning of the machinery. There is gain, of a kind, in godliness with contentment, but it is seldom financial.

The man minded to be rich (6:9-10). Hear the words: "But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil; which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

These are terrible words, and true as terrible. "Minded" means the dominant desire and will. Riches is the goal, the chief concern. All other things are subordinated. Love of home, wife, and children; love of country; and health, happiness, purity, honor, righteousness, humanity, justice, mercy; and thoughts of God and heaven and hell are trampled under foot.

No voyage was ever made over more treacherous seas; no trail was ever more thickset with dangers. The chances of ultimate escape are almost nil. Temptations assail him, snares entrap him; lusts, foolish and hurtful, burn him. It is the case of a swimmer in the rapids above the falls, or skirting the suction of a whirlpool – how can he escape drowning? The case is even more desperate because the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. From it may come lying, murder, lust, embezzlement, theft, robbery, or any other evil against humanity and blasphemy or any other sacrilege against God.



See the malice of the syndicate that invested money in the soothsaying damsel at Philippi when Paul cast out the demon that made her profitable and "her masters saw that the hope of their gain was gone" (Acts 16:16-20) ; and the malice of the craftsman's ring at Ephesus when Paul's preaching against idols broke up the business by which they had their wealth and "brought it into disrepute" (Acts 19:23-34). There is no hate more intolerant and murderous than the hate of an interrupted evil business. In truth the lowest, meanest, basest, cruelest, beastliest, ghastliest, deadliest form of idolatry is the worship of mammon. Pirates and highwaymen have been gallant, brave, chivalrous, plying their business openly and risking their lives. The lover of money skulks in his methods, which are timid, treacherous, secretive, underhand, relentless. There is neither chivalry, mercy, friendship, honor nor fairness in his method when it comes to a crucial test. He is a web-spinning spider, preying on the weak and unwary. His course is most hurtful to himself; the foundation logs of his character succumb to dry rot. The milk of human kindness dries up; the soul is starved; he pierces himself with many sorrows. And when his shrunken soul, rattling like a dry pea in the pod, is forcibly evicted from his crumbling body, it is buried naked, hungry, thirsty, bankrupt, into an eternity of torment, where memory plays dirges, remorse is an unlying worm, apprehension a gatherer of eternal storms to beat mercilessly on his helpless head and dried-up heart.

Them that are rich (6:17-19). This is different from "minded to be rich." There may be no fault in possessing riches. Wealth may come by inheritance, by honest industry and economy, by judicious investments, or by diligent attention to business. Indeed, God, in love, has bestowed riches on many good men. Yea, he has set but one limit to the amount of lawful wealth one may possess, to wit: that his financial prosperity shall never exceed the prosperity of his soul (3 John 2) : "Even as thy soul prospereth." He is all right when riches increase if he set not his heart upon them.

But our present inquiry is: What the duty of the pastor to rich church members? Here it is: "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold of the life which is life indeed." But it is worthy of detailed consideration.

6:17: "Charge them that are rich in this present world that they be not highminded"; in other words, proud or haughty. It is almost impossible for weak persons to be rich and not be proud over it; they look down on people who are not rich. Particularly is this the case with what we call the "new rich," people who have suddenly sprung into wealth, say a man who has discovered an oil field, or patented an invention, or made a "corner" on wheat, cattle, hogs, or cotton, and suddenly becomes a millionaire. The self-sufficiency of that class is almost indescribable; they look down with contempt upon people who have not a great deal of money. One who has been a gentleman through several generations – Oliver Wendell Holmes says it takes three generations to make a gentleman – ignores that kind of rich people. The hardest struggle for the new rich is to get recognition from the old families.

"Nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches." It is difficult for one of the new rich to put his hope on anything else. If in one night we could strip him of his wealth, it would appear what a coarse, common mortal he is. He has nothing to recommend him except his money. "The uncertainty of riches:" uncertainty is a characteristic of wealth. It takes wings and flies away; it is subject to fire, earthquake, pestilence, panic, and a multitude of other contingencies. It is a pitiable thing to see an immortal creature setting his hope upon such an uncertain thing as wealth. "But on God." If his hope is set on God, there is certainty.

Whosoever has God is rich indeed, if he has nothing else in the world. Whosoever hath not God is poor indeed, if he has everything else in the world.

Let our hope "be set on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."

Now we come to the positive part: "That they do good; that they be rich in good works." If one wants to be rich, here is the way: be rich in good works. "That they be ready to distribute." I have preached on this charge to the rich a number of times, and have always told them that every agent out after money is solemnly impressed with the fact that the rich man is not ready: he tells us about certain investments not yet profitable, or others so pending that he does not know how he stands yet, And is not ready to distribute, nor willing to communicate. We don't often find them ready.

A rich man ought to have his affairs in hand, so that he is ready all the time to do good with his money, laying up in store for himself treasures against the time to come. The rich man will lecture the poor man on account of his lack of provision: "Why don't you save up something for a rainy day?" When perhaps of all men in the world he has laid up the least for a "rainy day."

"That they may lay hold of the life which is life indeed." This life they are living is not life; it is a miserable existence. The thought here is the same presented in Luke 16, where the rich man, dressed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day, makes no provision for the future. When death came and stripped him of everything he had, he went over into another country and found nothing there which he had transferred. He had not made friends by the use of Mammon. He had not used his money so as to secure any heavenly reward. A man who invests his money in preachers, churches, schools, colleges, humanity, charity, it goes on working for him, laying up stores to his credit on the other side of the river.

Suppose a man had to leave the United States and go to a foreign country. His object would be to convert his property here into the property of that country. If his American money did not pass over there, to exchange it for money of that country; to exchange his realty here for realty there. The only thing we can do in the way of exchanging is by good deeds, transferring what we have to the other side. I am not discussing salvation; that is determined by other things entirely. I am discussing the question of rewards in the world to come.

In delivering an oration on the death of Spurgeon in the city of Nashville, I drew this picture: "Mr. Phillips said of Napoleon, when he died: 'He is fallen.' I say of Spurgeon: 'He is risen.'" I described in fancy the abundant entrance of Spurgeon into the heavenly home, the friends he had made by his unselfish use of means here on earth. Up there he met the orphan children whom he had cared for and sheltered, the aged widows whom he had comforted and cheered in their dying hours, the young preachers he had taken care of in college and supplied with libraries, and who had gone out on the fields as missionaries and died before Spurgeon died, who were all waiting and watching for him to come, and were ready to meet him. That is the thought Paul is trying to impress upon Timothy with reference to the rich.

### **THE FOUR CHARGES OF TIMOTHY 5:21; 5:23; 6:11-16; 6:20-21**

First charge to Timothy: "I charge thee in the sight of God and Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that in conducting the internal affairs of the church, thou observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality." Paul could make a young man intensely solemn when he impressed on him that he stood in God's sight, with the eye of Jesus upon him, as a spectacle to the angels. "When you are conducting the affairs of the church do nothing through prejudice or partiality."

Once let it appear that the pastor is a partisan in the affairs of the church; that he favors certain members of the church, then he is stripped of his power with the congregation. "Prejudice" in its etymological meaning, is to judge before hand. Say there is a division in the church: The pastor listens while A and B tell their side of the case; C and D he had not heard. Then he occupies the seat of moderator with a prejudgment in his mind; for some, against some, and he greatly damages himself.

The second charge. "Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." .From this charge we learn two important lessons:

1. That alcoholic stimulants may be prescribed, in small quantities, for sick people. Timothy was a total-abstinence man. Paul shows him a distinction between a beverage and a medicine. But it is not fair to Paul to stretch "a little wine" as a medicine to make it cover a barrel of whiskey as a beverage.

2. The fact that Paul did not miraculously heal himself and Timothy, nor resort to a faith cure, but did keep near him Luke, the physician, and did prescribe a medicine to Timothy, is proof positive that we, as a rule, must rely on ordinary human means for health and healing.

Third charge, 6:11: "Flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness." Certain things we must flee from; all we can do is to run from them, e.g., love of money, which we have just discussed. We should run from that as we would run from a rattlesnake. It is not cowardice, but we had better get out of his way as quick as possible. Flee from the love of money, covetousness, anger. When we see them coming, we can gain nothing by meeting them; so we had better run. But there are certain other things we must chase: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, meekness. Whenever we see their tracks, let us follow.

The next item of the charge: "Fight the good fight of faith." If the reader will compare this exhortation with what Paul says of himself in the second letter to Timothy (4:7) : "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith," and then with what he says in the letter to the Philippians, third chapter: "Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before; I press onward to the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ," he will see that Paul has exemplified the very things he tells Timothy to do. What Paul has exemplified in his life, that he charges on Timothy: "The teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is a warfare, and the preacher must make a fight for all of it, illustrating the truth in his life, preaching the truth with great earnestness to his people, and resisting every temptation to substitute some other thing for the doctrines. Stand for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Then, we must work out our sanctification; work out what God works in, pressing on to lay hold of the things for which Jesus laid hold of us, and then keep the faith.

Fourth charge. "Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee." The deposit of faith which God placed with the church, and in the preacher through the church, is the most sacred deposit of either time or eternity, and whoever trifles with it, whoever thinks he can surrender a part of it with impunity, makes the mistake of his life.

It is as if a father should call his son to him, open a leather case and say, "My son, in this case is the history of the family, and the precious jewels of the family that have been accumulated from 400 years back. Your mother, your grandmother, and your great grandmother wore these jewels. They are connected with all the festivities of the family history. I deposit these precious heirlooms with you. Guard them, my son, and see that the one who comes after you finds not one of the jewels missing, not one substituted for taste." A boy receiving such a charge as that from a father, who would forget his stewardship, and think that it was his to dispose of

these jewels for his own pleasure, swap them off for others to suit his taste, would be an unworthy son of a noble family.

How incomparably greater is this charge to Timothy I This deposit of the truth all the wealth of the world could not buy. This truth all the wisdom of the world could never have discovered. God revealed it to Paul, and he delivered it to Timothy. It is delivered with a view of transmission to those who come after. Keep it inviolate, and transmit it in its entirety. How seldom do we find a preacher with that sense of honor and responsibility for the divine truth deposited with him. He is not at liberty to preach whatever he pleases. He is speaking for God.

Let me illustrate the thought in another way: The United States Government sends an ambassador to a foreign country with special instructions, tells him what the issue is between the two countries, and says, "Now when you get over there and come up against those sharp diplomats of other nations, you are to say what we tell you to say; you are not to vary from the instructions one hair's breadth." That man cannot there make a treaty according to his idea of it. An ambassador cannot move a step beyond his instructions. If in the negotiations some of the things which his country demands are found to be impracticable, he must adjourn the meeting, write home for instructions, and when he gets the new instructions he can step forward again.

"Do thou speak the words that I put in thy mouth" is what God always said to the prophets. "Deliver my message. You need not apologize for it; it will take care of itself. What you are to do is to deliver the message, just as it comes to you, and you may rest assured that it will accomplish more than if you try to fix it up palatably." God did not send us out as apothecaries to put sugar in his medicine, nor to coat his pills. Our business is to put forth the words of the Almighty.

In one of Scott's novels, the thought is brilliantly brought out: The brave Knight of Crevecour goes from the Duke of Burgundy with

certain messages to Louis of France. When he steps into the presence of the King of France he is not ashamed, because he stands there not for himself but for the Duke of Burgundy. When he has been approached to change certain things in his message, he takes off his mailed gauntlet, and throwing it down on the floor says, "That is what I am commissioned to do, as a defiance to this court, if you do not accept the terms of my message. I cannot change a letter of it."

That is the attitude of the preacher. It is in Paul's thought when he calls Timothy's attention to the relation of his Christian experience: "Lay hold of life eternal whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess a good confession in the sight of many witnesses." In other words, "Go back to your conversation; what did you do when you came before the church? There were many witnesses present, and you came out openly with the statement that you were a lost sinner, saved by the grace of God by simple faith in Jesus Christ, and that your sins were remitted through the shedding of his blood on the cross. That was your confession. Stand up to it now. Don't go back on it."

In order to impress the more the idea of a public committal, he quotes Christ's confession when brought before Pilate, the stern Roman procurator, who said to Christ, "Do you know that I have power to set you at liberty, or to take your life?" Christ said, "You have no power except what is given you. I am a king, but my kingdom is not of this world." There Christ witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate.

Whatever may be the fate or circumstances of life, let the ambassador keep this thought always in mind: That he stands for the Saviour; in the parlor, on the streets, behind the counter, on the farm, in amusements, and with whomsoever, in the presence of whatsoever enemies, he is the witness to a good confession. That is the charge to Timothy. I have read the lives of many men. One of my favorite classes of reading is biography. I have never read a



biography of another man that impressed me like Paul's as set forth by himself. I have never found anywhere a man so conscientious, whose life was so consecrated, whose eye was so single, whose ideal of duty was so high. Always he stands like an everlasting rock upon the truth of Jesus Christ.

## QUESTIONS

1. On what earlier letter have we considered at length Christianity's attitude toward the institution of slavery?
2. What class of people never endorsed nor appreciated New Testament teaching on this point?
3. What heavy burden has their misdirected zeal imposed on both Christianity and the state?
4. Show how a vicious incentive discounted the labors of these fanatics whether anti or pro-slavery men, and how the same motive in a preacher or any other matter brings deplorable results to him and the community.
5. What lesson from our Lord and from the life of Elijah opposes this loud method?
6. Illustrate the fact that the mightiest forces are not noisy,
7. What the meaning of "minded to be rich"?
8. Show how the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.
9. Illustrate the danger to the man himself.
10. Cite two cases from Acts to show that there is no hate more intolerant and murderous than an interrupted evil business.
11. In whose favor and why is the contrast between the pirate and the miser?

12. Give the outcome of the lover of money.
13. Why the great difference between "minded to be rich" and "them that are rich"?
14. What passage the only limit to the amount of wealth that may be lawfully acquired?
15. Give the elements negative and positive of the charge to the rich,
16. What the importance of the charge to Timothy at 5:21?
17. What two important lessons may be learned from the charge at 5:23?
18. In the charge at 6:11 what must the preacher run from and what must he chase?
19. Cite proof texts to show that Paul himself exemplified the charge: "Fight the good fight of the faith."
20. In the last charge (6:20-21) what was committed to Timothy and with what contrasted?
21. When did Timothy make the "good confession" and when did our Lord?
22. Illustrate from one of Scott's romances, telling which one, he necessity for an ambassador to be faithful to the message entrusted to him.

# TITUS

## IX. THE INTRODUCTION, ANALYSIS, AND GREETING OF THE LETTER TO TITUS

Titus 1:1-4

We now take up the letter to Titus and commence with a historical introduction. The first thing we deal with is the island of Crete. Its modern name is Candia. It is about 140 miles long, but very narrow. It closes up what is called the "Grecian Archipelago" (a sea full of islands). The island is lifted up high out of the sea and has some very high mountains on it. The valleys are small, but very rich. It has always been a thickly peopled island as far back as history goes.

Now, the inhabitants of the island: The original inhabitants – that is, if we go no further back than the times of the Greek supremacy – were Greeks, mingled with, perhaps earlier elements, as, Phoenicians, Philistines, Cherethites. There is a passage in Virgil's Aeneid about the hundred cities of Crete. For an island of that size to have a hundred cities, or even small towns, implies a great population. When I studied Virgil I looked up this island and wondered where they found space for a hundred cities.

There is a passage in Tacitus that makes the Jews descendants of the Cretans. What plausible argument could Tacitus have had for such a notion? The Philistines and Phoenicians, in Palestine, were naval powers and early connected with Crete, and the Cherethites, who were associated with the Philistines. In the history of David we find that one of his body guards was made up of Cherethites, and in the Septuagint, in two Old Testament passages, the Cherethites are called Cretans.

It may have been these facts that suggested to Tacitus that the Jews were derived from the Cretans. Tacitus was a good historian on Roman affairs, but he is wrong here. This much is certain: While the

base of the inhabitants was Greeks, Phoenicians, and Cherethites, in very early days many Jews settled there. We find an account of them in the apocryphal books, in Maccabees, and extensive reference to them in Josephus, and in Philo the Alexandrian Jew, showing how in the period of the beginning of the Greek Empire the Jews, who were great traders, had established themselves in the Island of Crete.

Now we come to the New Testament bearings upon the subject. We want to ascertain how, possibly, the gospel was planted in this island. In Acts 2 where so many Jews of the dispersion and Jewish proselytes came from all parts of the earth to be in Jerusalem at the great feast, among the number there (v. 11) we find the Cretans especially mentioned. These Jews of the dispersion assembled in the city of Jerusalem, heard Peter preach that day, and it is possible that some of them were converted, and in that way the gospel originally came to Crete.

The next New Testament reference is in Acts 27. Paul is a prisoner on his way to Rome, and he touches on the coast of Asia Minor, is transferred to a new ship bound for Italy, which stops at Fair Havens, a harbor on the southern coast of the Island of Crete. The record implies a somewhat lengthy stay. We do not know whether they were allowed to go ashore or not. Paul warned them to spend the winter there, but they, beguiled by a favorable breeze, left Crete and a typhoon struck them, blowing them out of their course and wrecking them on the Island of Malta. These are two New Testament references which occur before we come to the reference here in Titus.

The next thing is to determine the character of the Greek inhabitants. Paul quotes a poem in which the poet, himself a native of the island, describes them as liars, beasts, and gluttons. At Athens Paul quotes poets, and so in this letter he quotes a poet. He was raised at Tarsus, in Asia Minor, a great university city, probably the greatest in the world. Alexandria was great, but it is held by some that Tarsus was

greater. So Paul's being raised there gave him an acquaintance with the current literature of his time.

Just a few words on the position of Crete in previous mythology. Mythology has a great deal to do with Crete. When I was a schoolboy, about 13 years old, we were reading Ovid. One of the lengthiest and best written pieces in the book of Ovid connects Jupiter and Europa with the Island of Crete. That is a special part of old Grecian Mythology.

It is not proper here to go into the details about the history of Crete before Paul's time; so will pass over that part. But I will say this: when the Romans came to the island, 67 B.C., Metellus, a Roman general, captured Crete and thence obtained his surname "Creticus," as one Scipio, after his victory over Hannibal in Africa, was surnamed "Africanus," and another one surnamed "Asiaticus." The Romans were accustomed to giving a surname to their generals who accomplished anything great.

In establishing the province (Rome always put what she captured into a province) Crete was united with Cyrenaica, in the northern part of Africa. It is called Cyrene in the New Testament. They were put together and governed by one proconsul.

Just a word about the impress left by Titus on the subsequent history of Crete: Archaeologists tell of a church whose ruins are yet standing, named for Titus. It is certain that in later days the Venetians, who became a great sea power, captured this island. As St. Mark is patron of Venice, Titus is regarded as the patron saint of Crete. They would pray thus: "Oh, St. Mark, do thou help us." "Oh, St. Titus, do thou help us."

We now want to consider Titus himself before we go into the letter. Here are the scriptures that present the earlier statements about Titus in the New Testament:

Titus 1:4 teaches that he was converted by Paul. Just where we do not know, possibly at Antioch. We know that Titus was a Greek on both sides. Timothy's father was a Greek, but his mother was a Jewess. Somewhere in Paul's work Titus was led to Christ.

Galatians 2:1-3, construed with Acts 15: In the passage in Galatians Paul is referring to the great council at Jerusalem, and says that he designedly took Titus, an uncircumcised man, with him; that there might be a test case. The Jerusalem Jews demanded that one must be a Jew to be saved. A delegation from Antioch went down, including Paul and Barnabas, the church bearing the expenses of the expedition, and in order to make a test case Paul took Titus along with him. "Here is a Gentile converted to God under my ministry. Dare you say he is not saved?"

Canon Farrar, who is cranky on Old Testament criticism, and sometimes on the New Testament, takes the position that Paul did have Titus circumcised. He stands alone on that, however. But standing alone does not bother him at all because he is so conscious of being infallibly right that he does not mind being by himself. Inasmuch as Timothy had a Jewish mother, was reared in the Jewish faith of the Holy Scriptures from a child, Paul circumcised him, lest his lack of circumcision would discount his influence with the Jews, but he would not do that in Titus' case.

2 Corinthians 2:13, also 7:6-7, 13-15. From these scriptures we learn that when Paul was at Ephesus the Corinthians were urging him to come over there, but he tarried at Ephesus until Pentecost. On information from the household of Chloe he wrote the first letter to the Corinthians, and sent Titus to carry it and to set these people straight on their immortalities, particularly that man who took his father's wife, and to work them up on that big collection for the poor saints in Judea. Leaving Ephesus, Paul went to Troas, expecting to meet Titus there bringing the report of the effect of his first letter to the Corinthians. Titus did not meet him, and he was greatly

distressed; although he was having a great meeting he quit and went over into Macedonia.

The next scriptures are 2 Corinthians 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18. These scriptures show that Titus joined him in Macedonia, and brought a report from Corinth, and that Paul sent Titus back to complete the work he had so magnificently begun, sending with him Trophimus and Tychicus (Acts 20:4).

Titus 1:5: On the missionary tour after Paul's escape from the Roman imprisonment, he came to this Island of Crete, stops a while, and finding great disorder in the churches here, leaves Titus to set things in order.

Titus 3:12: In this passage Paul writes to Titus to join him in Nicopolis, where he expects to winter. He tells him to join him there when a successor comes; that he will send Artemas or Tychicus to take his place.

Titus 3:13: Titus is still in Crete. Paul sends the letter by Zenas and Apollos, and charges Titus to take charge of these two brethren and help them forward on their way.

2 Timothy 4:10: Paul is now a prisoner a second time in Rome, and is writing to Timothy. He says that Titus had gone to Dalmatia, which is not very far from Nicopolis, where he was to winter with Paul.

The last scriptures to consider as bringing out the character of Titus are 2 Corinthians 7:7, 13, 15; 8:23. Let us picture in our minds the kind of a man Titus was. We know that he succeeded magnificently in his work, but this passage shows the character of the man:

"God comforted us by the coming of Titus; and not by his coming only, but also by the comfort wherewith he was comforted in you, while he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, that I rejoice yet more. Therefore, we have been comforted, and in

our comfort we joyed the more exceedingly for the joy of Titus, because his spirit hath been refreshed by you all." That indicates his appreciative nature; when he brought them comfort and saw how glad they were, he became glad.

"But this affection is more abundantly toward you while he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him." That brings out his love for these people among whom he labored.

"Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow-worker to you-ward." From these scriptures we get an idea of the inside man; the tenderness, sympathy, and love of his nature. Titus is not mentioned in the book of Acts at all.

## **ANALYSIS**

We now come to the outline of the book; I am giving a very critical outline, chapter by chapter: Chapter One:

1. Elaborate greeting (1:1-4)
2. Occasion of the letter (1:5)
3. Qualifications of elders to be ordained (1:6-10)
4. Reasons for such high qualifications (1:11-16) Chapter Two:
5. Directions concerning practical piety in social life (2:1-10)
6. High doctrinal reasons therefore in the teaching of grace (2:11-14)
7. How Titus must carry out the directions (2:15) Chapter Three:
8. Directions concerning civil life and character (3:1-2)
9. High doctrinal reasons therefore in the example of the salvation of the saints (3:3-7)



10. A faithful saying in point, and the value of good works (3:8,14)
11. What to shun (3:9)
12. How to treat the factious (3:10-11)
13. Directions to Titus when a successor arrives (3:12)
14. Directions to forward with help, Zenas and Apollos (3:13)
15. Farewell salutation and benediction (3:15)

That is strictly a critical outline. It leaves out nothing in the letter, is orderly arranged chapter by chapter, and brings out each thought. With that the reader will more understandingly study Titus.

I will consider the first item of the analysis, the elaborate greeting (1:1-4). In the first place Paul desires to have the men to whom he writes to understand that he is writing with the fulness of authority, representing God, representing Jesus Christ, representing the faith of God's elect, and that he is writing concerning the true knowledge of the faith, which is according to godliness.

He makes the keynote of the letter, practical religion, or godliness in life: "According to godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before time eternal; but in his own seasons manifested his word in the message, wherewith I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour." Marking himself out as the one who is to speak, in every direction he buttresses his authority to speak, and especially on the topic to be discussed in this letter, practical holiness, practical religion according to the truth, the divine truth.

He will demonstrate in the letter how doctrine is the basis of morality. He will use great doctrines to enforce morality. He inculcates every one of these thoughts as special and precious. When he writes to Titus he makes the following points: "I led you to

Christ; you are my true child, but it is in a common faith." Just as Jude says, "a common salvation," or as Luke says, "the things which are commonly believed among us."

Conversion is always according to the common faith. Certain impressions of men may be different, but one was not converted to one kind of faith and another to another kind. From the days of the first converts under the gospel to the present time, every conversion is unto truth which is common. Whether manifested in some cases as in others or not, the normal conversion has these elements in it'. Under the preaching of the gospel a man sees himself to be a sinner in the sight of God. He is sorry for his sins and changes his mind toward God on account of sin. There was a burden resting on him because of sin. He turned by faith to the Saviour for salvation from that sin.

These are the normal elements of conversion. Some people may not experience these things so as to be able to separate them item by item. I once received a letter from a man who heard some great teacher in a Bible rally. He wrote: "Great teachers here are saying that there is no time element between repentance and faith; that they are simultaneous. Is this true?" I wrote back that the two were distinct, repentance one thing and faith another thing; that they have different objects – repentance is toward God, and faith is toward our Lord Jesus Christ; that they are represented always in a certain order: "repentance and faith"; that while in some cases a conversion takes place in so short a time that a man is not able to separate them, the steps were there just the same; that there was a difference in time, even when one could not appreciate it.

In some cases conviction manifests itself a good while before the man reaches repentance, and sometimes a man is penitent a long time before a clear view of the Saviour is presented to him. I know a case where repentance lasted a year before faith came.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Give an account of the Island of Crete: (1) Where, what the dimensions and what the topography? (2) Early inhabitants. (3) Density of population including citation from Virgil.
2. What the strange statement of Tacitus as to national origin, of Jews and the probable ground of the statement?
3. What the strange account in Maccabees of the common origin of Jews and Spartans?
4. Give account of Jews settling in the Island and the authorities.
5. What the New Testament references prior to this letter to the Island and its Jewish population and how may the gospel have been planted there?
6. What the character of the population according to one of its poets quoted by Paul?
7. What noted myth concerning Crete?
8. Who conquered Crete for the Romans, what surname did he receive and with what other section of country was it constituted a Roman province?
9. Later what Mediterranean Sea power conquered the Island?
10. To what nation does it now belong?
11. What archaeological testimony to Titus?
12. Give connected New Testament history of Titus and the impression of his character and ability conveyed.
13. Give the analysis of the letter.'
14. What the keynote of the letter?

15. What the two great doctrinal statements in the letter?
16. What relation does the letter establish between doctrine and morals, or practical religion?
17. What the office of Titus, and what his special authority?

## X. EXPOSITION OF THE BOOK OF TITUS

### Titus 1:5 to 3:15

At the close of our discussion on the historical introduction to the letter to Titus, I gave an elaborate outline of the letter, so inclusive that it practically becomes an exegesis of the letter. Moreover, we need now to consider but three points in the letter, because in the first letter to Timothy we have gone over much of the ground relating to preachers, their ordination, and all the parts relating to their social life.

The historical introduction also expounded the elaborate salutation, so that this section really commences at 1:5: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge."

"Elders in every city": there can be no efficient development of church life without pastors. The pastors teach the word and rule according to the word; they oversee the work of the church; they shepherd the flock, feeding, guarding, and healing. Upon the entrance qualification into the office of elder, we need to emphasize one point additional to those considered in the first letter to Timothy. It has been rightly said that the entrance spiritual qualification to church membership should be the simple, trustful acceptance of Christ as Saviour. It is not necessary for one to be a theologian in order to unite with the church. We receive babes in Christ into the church. But it is not true that in ordaining elders we should limit the scope of the examination to entrance qualifications into the church. Let us commence with verse 9. He is here cautioning Titus about whom to ordain, that the candidate to the ministry must "hold to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine and convict the gainsayers."

Then follow the reasons for such high qualifications on entrance into the ministry. He shows the presence of "unruly men, vain talkers,

and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake." The fact that there are capable opponents to the Christian religion, sometimes exceedingly plausible, who can overturn the faith of whole households, makes it necessary that the man to be ordained to the ministry must understand the teaching, the deposit of faith, as enunciated in the New Testament, and summaries of which are given repeatedly by the apostle Paul. We had this thought in part in the first letter to Timothy, where he says, "Lay hands suddenly on no man; not on a novice."

In order to do the work of a preacher, and especially that of a pastor of a church, one must be able to lead babes in Christ to mature Christian knowledge. That is what he is for, and he must be able to meet the gainsayers, those who stand out against the doctrine. Where the pastor is unable to do either one or the other, his church in all probability will suffer severely, not only in lack of development, but also by in-roads of the opposition. That this point may be clear let the reader study this passage from Ephesians:

"And he gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

The keynote of the letter to Titus is the practical religion coming from the acceptance of sound doctrine. Paul never conceived of an empty Christian faith. He never dissociated morality from doctrine, but always predicated morality upon doctrine. Doctrine is the fountain and morality is the stream.

While standing as he did with such earnestness for the truth which he had received from Christ, and while exhorting them to keep this truth just as he gave it to them, to preserve it inviolate, to transmit unimpaired, he always insisted that the evidence of one's acceptance of this truth was a sound religious life. This letter, perhaps more than any other, stresses that point. True, in every letter after he had stated his doctrine, there is an exhortation to practical morality, but in this letter the main thought is in the direction of practical holiness, and the doctrines introduced are for illustration.

With this thought before us, we consider the first great doctrinal statement, which is the second chapter. Throughout that chapter he defines the things becoming sound doctrine: "That the aged be temperate, grave, sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience," how the aged women, young women, and young men should do.

But when he unveils the fountain from which the stream of moral life flows, and which this good life adorns, we find this doctrinal origin: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world." He affirms that this is the teaching of salvation by grace. There is no antinomian fruit in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

From the lips of every expounder of salvation by grace in the New Testament comes the one teaching that sound doctrine concerning the world to come leads us to a sound life in this present world; that here on earth and in time, we should live soberly, righteously, godly, and in denial of worldly lusts. It is a little difficult, in view of the clear statement upon this subject, to understand how antinomianism

ever originated. Certainly it is not warranted in the Bible. We may put it down as a fundamental of Christianity, that where there is anything of Christianity in the heart, it will make its subjects better, here and now. It will make a husband a better husband, a wife a better wife, a child a better child, a citizen a better citizen, a slave a better slave. Many times in my life I have felt called upon to preach from this text: What the grace of God which bringeth salvation teaches.

The second thing that it teaches us is to "look for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Wherever there is a genuine acceptance of Jesus as a present Saviour there is an attitude of expectation toward the second advent. We cannot have sound faith in the historical Christ without having an expectant hope of the coming Christ. Baptist churches need to have that ground into them. Whenever we find that a considerable part of our life is elapsing without thought of the final coming of our Lord, then there is something wrong in us.

As the first coming was the highest mountain peak which loomed up on the Old Testament horizon, so is the second advent the highest mountain peak in our future, and we should never lose sight of it.

Here the question arises: "How do you maintain such an attitude toward the final coming of our Lord, with your postmillennial views?" It is easy to answer that question.

1. Having postmillennial views, I have no trouble with the universality in preaching required in "bringing salvation to all men," since our only hope of saving men is before the final advent, expecting none to be saved after that advent; whereas the premillennial view expects to save only an ever-lessening few before that advent, and looks to postadvent times for saving the bulk of those to be redeemed.

2. To any one individual life it is only a little time until the Lord comes. As soon as we come to death we pass out of time into



eternity, where there is no time, no measuring of duration. So the only period in which my looking for the Lord can be beneficial to me is in my lifetime here upon earth. But to the race of man, the succession of individuals, it may be a very long time until the second coming of Christ. All through the New Testament men are addressed not so much with reference to the lapse which must pass in the history of the race before the final advent, as to the individual's brief stay on earth.

To illustrate: Peter positively knew that Christ would not come before he died, because Christ had told him just how he was to die. He himself makes reference to that. And yet Peter was marvelously stirred in his heart with the thought of the final coming of the Lord. He knew that it would not be in his time, but he knew he was influenced by the thought while he lived. In the great prophecy of our Lord, each steward in his day, whether that day be remote from the second advent, or near to it, is warned not to say in his heart: "My Lord delayeth his coming," that in such a time as he thinks not the Lord will come and he will be cut down and his portion appointed with hypocrites. Very much in point is a passage in John's Gospel: "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go I will come again to receive you unto myself." This was meant for the men addressed and men ages remote from the final advent.

It is unquestionable that there is a sense in which the advent of the Lord comes to the individual. He meets every one at the depot of death. It is not at all peculiar to postmillennial people to neglect the thought of the second advent of our Lord. While I believe that it is absolutely impossible for that advent to come in my life time, and base my belief upon the clear teachings of preceding things – things which must come to pass before the final coming – yet the influence of the second advent has been a tremendous power over my life. I have preached from it oftener than from any other one theme in the Bible except the cross of Christ.

To resume our discussion: Paul says that the grace of God which bringeth salvation teaches these things: (1) That in this present world we must live soberly, righteously, and godly; (2) That the heart must be turned toward the final coming of the Lord. These two lessons, and they are both good lessons, are reinforced by the following:

"God gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." So the teaching is buttressed by the purpose which was in the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ. You recall how that point was emphasized when we recently passed over Ephesians, where it said that Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

It was once common for preachers, resting on the King James Version, to insist that God's people must be peculiar, i.e., odd. But that is not the meaning of the word. He gave himself for his people, having in view their complete holiness, and that they were to be a people for his own possession, i. e., peculiar to him and zealous of good works. If one finds himself without that zeal for good works, he may question the Lord's title to him. First make a tree good, then its fruit will be good.

The other doctrinal passage is much more difficult. Indeed to expound it satisfactorily to myself is to dissent from most Christian scholars. I have tried hard to fall in with their views, but cannot do it.

3:3: "For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another, but when the kindness of God, our Saviour, and his love toward man appeared, not by works done in righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us,

through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

The only difficulty in the passage is that relating to the washing of regeneration. Most commentators find here an allusion to baptism. To my own mind there is no allusion whatever to baptism. To justify my dissent from the majority of commentators, I submit an exegesis of the passage, and then leave the reader to agree with the author or to follow some other exegesis, as he pleases.

The difficult passage is one of a group, all based on Old Testament imagery, and referring exclusively to the divine side of salvation, and not at all to our responses to divine commands. Neither in this, nor any passage of the group) is' anything that we do referred to or considered; neither contrition, repentance, faith, baptism, nor anything else.

This passage with its true parallels, is sharply contrasted with another group which does set forth what we do in response to divine commands, e.g., Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." That is something we do. We believe and we are baptized. Acts 2:36: "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you unto the remission of sins." Here again is something we do. We repent and are baptized. Acts 22:16: "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." Here is an injunction to human duty. Paul is commanded to be baptized. I Peter 3:21-22: "Eight souls were saved through water; which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh ... " Here again is a passage that tells us what baptism does and what it does not.

All of this group of passages must be construed together, whatever the interpretation. They all set forth something that we do, and all discuss the human responses to divine commands; but this expression, "the washing of regeneration," in the Titus passage is

dissociated particularly from anything we do, expressly saying, "Not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Christ Jesus our Saviour."

Unlike Galatians and Romans, this passage does not even consider salvation in its legal aspects – justification, redemption, adoption – i.e., the salvation done outside of us and for us, but confines itself wholly to the salvation in us, wrought by the Holy Spirit. The "washing" is in us as much as the "renewing," and both by the Holy Spirit.

The divine side of salvation alone is considered and the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit refer to the Spirit's work in contradistinction to the Father's work or to the Son's work in salvation, and especially to anything we do. That baptism in water is a work of righteousness done by us is evident from the statement from our Lord to John: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." But this passage says that the salvation here discussed is according to mercy, "not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves."

Now the kindred passages with which this passage must be associated in exegesis are to be found in John 3:2-8 and Ephesians 5:25-27. In these two passages, as in Titus, the divine side of salvation is considered. Christ said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." Again he said, expanding the same statement, "Except a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

Note particularly the following: Christ and Nicodemus are discussing two births, one natural, the other spiritual. "That which is born of flesh is flesh, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." He is not discussing three births – one natural, one figurative, and one spiritual.

Second, his teaching concerning the necessity of this new birth was clearly taught in the Old Testament, for he rebukes Nicodemus, he being a teacher in Israel, for not understanding the new birth. If there had been any reference to baptism in the word "water," Nicodemus, as a teacher of the Old Testament, could not have been rebuked, because the Old Testament knew nothing of this New Testament ordinance of baptism. So that whatever "born of water and Spirit" means, it is something unequivocally taught in the Old Testament.

Where, then, in the Old Testament is it so plainly taught? The answer is, first, in Numbers 19. God, through Moses, makes provision for the typical purification of his people; a red heifer was killed and burned outside of the camp, her ashes gathered up and mixed with water and this lye of commingled ashes and water was kept for purification, hence the name "water of cleansing and purification." It was administered by taking a branch of hyssop and sprinkling it upon the one to be cleansed.

In Ezekiel 36 we have a second exceedingly pertinent reference: There the prophet foretells that the dispersed Jews shall one day be gathered together and saved and, as in this Titus passage, he says that it is not on account of anything they have done. Then he describes how they are to be saved: "Then I will sprinkle the water of purification on you and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness and all your iniquities. I will take away your stony heart and give you a heart of flesh, and put my spirit within you, and then ye shall keep my commandments." Here we have the first element of regeneration typified, in the water of cleansing; its second element in the renewing by the Holy Spirit. Regeneration always consists of two elements: first, cleansing; second, renewing. The cleansing always comes first.

We have another reference to it in Psalm 51 where David says, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow; purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. Renew a right spirit within me." Here are

precisely the same thoughts presented by the psalmist, and they are the very thoughts presented by the Titus passage, the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," and it means exactly what it means in chapter 3 of John, "Born of water and Spirit." What then, does the water of purification, referred to in the Ezekiel and psalmist passages, typify? The answer is to be found in Hebrews 9: "For if the ashes of a heifer sanctify unto the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ purify your conscience to serve the true and living God?"

So that this water cleansing in Numbers and in Ezekiel, and in Psalm 51 and in John 3 refer to the cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ. When our Lord said to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born of water and Spirit" it was the same as saying "Except a man be cleansed by the Spirit's application of the blood of Christ, and by the Spirit's renewal, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."

The proof positive of the matter is Christ's answer to Nicodemus' second pressing question, "How can these things be?" "The wind bloweth where it listeth and we hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." Nicodemus kept insisting, "How can these things be?" And Jesus explained in this fashion: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have eternal life." That is how these things come about. That is, when Christ is held up before our eyes, in preaching, and we accept him as a Saviour, then the Holy Spirit first applies the blood of Christ to our hearts) purifying them, and then renews us, changing our nature.

The other passage (Eph. 5:25-27) is perfectly in line. It says, "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it; that having cleansed it by the washing of water through the word, he might sanctify it and present it to himself a glorious church, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor blemish, nor any such thing." Here again the work done is all on the divine side. It is Christ that loved us. It is Christ that

gave himself for us. It is through the application of Christ's blood that we are cleansed, washed through the word preached and believed. There is nothing in it that we are to do. We may learn our duty from other passages of Scripture, but not from these three.

The cleansing, mark you, is a washing by the word, not a washing by water. That is, the word of God holds up Christ as the object of our faith, we accept him and the Spirit applies the blood for our cleansing. It is said in the first letter to the Corinthians, "Such were some of you, but ye were washed, ye were sanctified." Here we have the washing first again. The washing here referred to is not a bodily washing in baptism, but a spiritual cleansing that comes from the application of Christ's blood by the Spirit, then follows the sanctifying.

It has been objected that the term *loutron* in Titus 3 and Ephesians 5, meaning laver or bath, is too expressive and broad a word to correspond to the sprinkling of the ashes of the red heifer. I meet this criticism squarely by citing a pertinent passage from Zechariah 13:1: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." This fountain evidently refers to the blood of Christ, and is so embodied in Cowper's hymn which we often sing: There is a fountain filled with blood Drawn from Immanuel's veins; And sinners plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains.

Certainly if the blood of Christ can be referred to as a fountain into which the bathing or cleansing takes place, *loutron* in Titus 3 and Ephesians 5 is not too broad a word to express the fact.

But to put on the crowning proof: In Revelation 7, referring to the great multitude which no man can number, which God brought out of every nation, of all tribes and places, and tongues, standing before the throne of the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, with palms in their hands, this explanation is given: "These are they that came out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

In the last chapter of the book (Rev. 22:14) it is said) "Blessed are they that wash their robes that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city." Here is the washing that corresponds to the passage in 1 Corinthians, "Ye were washed," and to the passage in Ephesians, "having cleansed them through the washing of water by the word," and to the passage in John, "born of water."

If anything more were needed, the added clause in the Titus passage is, "which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ." That is, the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, both come from his out-poured Spirit. Indeed, if it could be maintained that the "washing of regeneration" in Titus, and the "born of water" in John, and the "cleansing by the washing of water through the word," in Ephesians, refer to baptism, two things would follow like a conqueror: First, that baptism is absolutely essential to salvation; second, it must precede in every case the work of the Holy Spirit in renewing our hearts. The grammatical construction demands as much, and no less.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Why should every church have an elder or elders?
2. What reason here given for extending the scope of the examination of the elder beyond church entrance qualifications?
3. What passage in Ephesians emphasizes this thought, and what the substance of it?
4. What the keynote of this letter?
5. What use does Paul make of doctrine in this letter?
6. What the first great doctrinal statement in the letter?
7. What does the grace that brings salvation teach us?



8. What fundamental of Christianity taught here?
9. What the relation of the second advent to the life?
10. How may one with postmillennial views maintain such an attitude toward the second advent?
11. How are the lessons of grace reinforced?
12. What the meaning of "peculiar" in the King James Version?
13. What the second great doctrinal passage in the letter?
14. What the difficulty of the passage?
15. What is the meaning of "washing of regeneration," what its true parallels in Scripture and what their explanation?
16. What hymn contains this truth?
17. If "washing of regeneration" here means baptism, then what must follow?

# 2 TIMOTHY

## XI. INTRODUCTION TO 2 TIMOTHY AND EXPOSITION OF 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-6

### 2 Timothy 1:1-6

We now come to the second letter to Timothy, the last writing of Paul of which we have any account. In the general introduction to the pastoral epistles we have already considered the historical problem of Paul's movements after his acquittal at Rome.

This letter finds him again at Rome and once more a prisoner, but under new charges and by a far different prosecution. Before, the Jews were his bitter accusers and the Roman judges his friends, but this time the persecution is heathen. Rome, in the person of that blood-crazed and beastly Caesar, Nero, now seeks his life. Seeking to avert condemnation for himself on account of his burning the Imperial City, and to divert thought from his own horrible brutalities, he charged Christians with burning the city. A conflagration of persecution greater than the ocean of flame which devoured the world's metropolis is now kindled against Christians, and fanned by the flames of devilish passion spreads beyond the city to other shores and paints hell on the sky over the followers of Christ.

Croly, in his *Salathiel*, or *Wandering Jew* (which General Lew Wallace puts above all other human books), gives the most vivid description in all literature of the burning of Rome. It commences: "Rome was an ocean of flame." Often when a school boy I have recited that matchless piece of rhetoric.

We now consider, I say, a more awful, wide-spreading fire, the moral arson of time, which finds no parallel until Alva's day in the low countries of Belgium and Holland. Philip II of Spain, and Nero, in persecution and hypocrisy at least, are *par nobile fratrum!*

When Christians are fed to the wild beasts of the amphitheatre, when, like parallel lines of lampposts they are staked out, tarred, and set on fire, to form an illuminated avenue through which Nero may drive, then all sycophants, all imperial appointees, whether executors or judges, all spies through neighboring lands, will court royal favor by affecting his spirit and following his cue in accusing and persecuting them.

Thus the lightning struck Paul. Our last account of him is his direction to Titus, when relieved by Artemas or Tychicus, to join him in Nicopolis, where he proposed to winter. But in this letter he is urging Timothy to join him in the Roman prison before that very winter comes, and to bring his cloak left at Troas with Carpus, to keep him warm in his winter cell, and to bring his books and parchments to cheer his loneliness. Not now does he live with liberty in his own hired house, and preach to visiting crowds.

Two circumstances detailed in this letter vividly suggest the great change wrought by this first great heathen persecution. First, its effect on his summer friends in Asia Minor and Achaia. Second, its effect on his summer friends at Rome. It is now a death circle which environs Paul. Whoever abides near him courts imperial disfavor and death. It is as if a general surrounded by a numerous staff found himself the focus of a converging fire of a suddenly unmasked battery. What a scattering when the chief is struck! How vividly it recalls an earlier scene in the crisis of his Lord: "They all forsook him and fled."

The thunder of the coming storm sounded in Asia, and at Ephesus.. Only after careful, long-continued study have I reached the conclusion that the beginning of this storm struck Paul at Ephesus. The usual argument against this opinion is Paul's statement in Acts 20, when he bids the elders of the church at Ephesus goodbye at Miletus and says, "Knowing that you shall not see my face any more." In the main they did not, but unquestionably we cannot understand this second letter to Timothy unless we conceive of Paul

at Ephesus. The first letter shows that he wrote it to Timothy at Ephesus, and now he seems to have gotten back there.

How pathetic his own account of the situation, and how tragic his loneliness! He writes in this letter to Timothy: "This thou knowest that all that are in Asia are turned away from me, of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes." Now, it is a difficult thing to account for such a revolution toward Paul in the place where his greatest labors were bestowed and his greatest triumphs achieved, and yet we must in some way account for it. There are three elements in the account:

1. The frown on Nero's face toward Christians would take away from Paul, or any other Christian, sympathy and cooperation, or even justice on the part of Roman population.

2. Under the shadow of that frown, like wild beasts at night, come out the old Jewish opponents of Paul and attack him, the more incensed because of his recent letter to the Hebrews. So he says to Timothy: "Alexander, the coppersmith, displayed much evil behavior to me. The Lord will reward him according to his deeds, against whom be thou on thy guard also, for he strongly withstood our words." Then in another part of the letter he mentions Hymeneus and Philetus, apostates from the faith whose words eat as a canker. In the great discourse at Miletus, years before, he had warned them that from among them should arise wolves, not sparing the flock. So long as Paul had Roman favor, they could not proceed to extremities against him, but now that Rome is persecuting Christians, all of these Judaizing teachers came out in bitterest opposition against Paul.

3. This is now about the year A.D. 68. In the year A.D. 70 Titus destroyed the city of Jerusalem, so at this time war was just about to break out in Judea between the Jews and the Romans. Josephus is in command in Galilee. We find a full account in his Jewish wars. The spirit that led them to revolt against Rome became exceedingly aggressive and proscriptive.

In Christ's time a publican was hated because he gathered Roman revenue. Jerusalem was always like a boiling pot and any one recommending submission to the powers that he was intensely hated. Everywhere Paul taught that Christians should pray for and be obedient to those in authority. These injunctions of Paul would naturally be intensely resented by what was at that time called the patriotic part of the Jewish people, those who wanted to rebel against Rome; "pay no tribute," they said, "but fight for natural freedom."

These things, together with the announcement in Hebrews of the abrogation of the Old Covenant and the impending destruction of the nation, account for the change of sentiment toward Paul in Proconsular Asia. Not only Christian Jews but Gentiles would be cowed by imperial disfavor, and so Judaizing teachers on the outskirts of each congregation would press the point that he was untrue to his own country in advocating submission to Rome. So all Asia was turned against Paul.

Hymeneus and Philetus, apostates from the faith, whose words eat like a gangrene, resume their profane babbling and overthrow the faith of others. Indeed, Paul might have starved, had not Onesiphorus in many things ministered to him at Ephesus, with the cognizance of Timothy. When Paul left Ephesus, according to this letter, he left Timothy in tears: "When I remember your tears." He first escaped to Miletus, a seaport, and from that place, in all probability, he hoped to get an outward bound ship that would take him far away. When he gets to Miletus, his staff begins to thin out.

He says, "Trophimus I left at Miletus sick, and Tychicus I sent back to Ephesus." They at Ephesus, yet friendly, would want to know how he was getting along, and then, too, he wants to have somebody there to relieve Timothy, so that Timothy can join him. Finding no outward bound vessel, he, as may be conjectured, takes a coasting vessel for Troas, that from that port he may reach Europe across the Aegean Sea.

We infer that after reaching Troas he left it in a hurry. That is inferable from the fact that he left his books, parchments, and cloak, which constituted his bed as well as outer protection in bad weather. He reached Corinth, and there another adjutant dropped out: "Erastus abode at Corinth." The staff keeps thinning.

Titus, it is possible, acting upon the letter sent him, has 'joined him. Somewhere, perhaps in Achaia, the bolt struck him. It is now lightning where it had been thunder. Notice the effect: "Then Demas forsook me, having loved this present world." Demas struck out for Thessalonica. It seems that to stay by Paul's side meant the next world, and Demas loved this present world. Crescens turns back toward Galatia, and Titus toward Dalmatia, only Luke is with him.

See how his crowd has thinned out, and how it answers the illustration I gave of the general and his staff meeting suddenly the fire of a masked battery. I have seen such a thing on the battlefield myself, and the "scatteration" that takes place, leaving the general alone, where just before the staff is parading all around him.

It is even worse at the other end of the line, that is, at Rome. When he gets there no friendly delegation comes out to meet and encourage him. Men through fear of Nero's deadly hate turn from Paul as from a leper. At his examining trial he stands alone: "In my first defense no one came to my help, but all forsook me. May it not be laid to their charge. But the Lord stood by me and empowered me, in order that through me the message might be fulfilled and all the Gentiles might hear." That is, Paul cannot die until he completes the gospel for the nations that are alien from the commonwealth of Israel.

Though the Lord stood by him, the strain of loneliness was terrific, and the hunger for human sympathy and companionship. This scene recalls an incident in the life of our Lord after his hard doctrine discourse on the Bread of Life at Capernaum. The record says that many of his disciples went back and walked with him no more, and Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, "Would ye also go away?"

So Paul, in this dire case, with some trace of apprehension seems to plead: "Oh, Timothy, don't you be ashamed of my chain; don't you fail to guard the deposit of faith which God gave to you. Come to me quickly, before winter, I need my cloak and books. Bring them. Pick up Mark by the way and bring him."

One ray of light shines in the gloom: Onesiphorus who had protected and supplied him in dangerous times at Ephesus, followed him all the way to Rome, hunts him up, and ministers to him many times, not being ashamed of Paul's chains. No wonder Paul says to Timothy: "May the Lord have mercy on the household of Onesiphorus, and reward him in that day." That was a plucky thing to do. There in Ephesus, when all Asia turned from him, Onesiphorus had said, "I will take care of you." And when he heard that Paul had been arrested and taken to Rome, he leaves his home and his business and goes to Rome. It is hard to find Paul now, not as it was before. Doubtless at this time he is shut up in a cell, but Onesiphorus finds him, and Paul says he came to him and refreshed him many times.

From this imprisonment Paul is not so hopeful of deliverance as before. He considers himself as already being offered up and the time of his departure at hand. He seems to consider that he has finished his course, and fought his fight, and yet later on in the letter he expects to winter at Rome. When he says, "At my first defense nobody stood with me," that seems to imply that he had a second examining trial, more favorable than the first one, and that somebody stood by him in that trial.

Whether Timothy finds him alive, this letter does not show. But it is sure that toward the last his condition is more favorable than at first. Indeed, there seems to have been quite a favorable reaction. How otherwise will you account for the letter's ending this way: "Give diligence to come before winter. Eubulus saluteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren." And the preceding

expression: "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." It seems that the situation has moderated.

They could not connect Paul with the burning of Rome, yet it may be that was the first charge against him and nobody would stand by him under such an accusation. It is evident that in this first trial Paul was delivered from imminent death, though held on other charges. If the charge were arson, Paul might well show his absence from the city at the time of the burning, and everywhere he taught against lawlessness, sedition, arson, anything that would subvert society, anything like anarchy.

Now I will take up the exegesis: The first thing to determine is about when was this letter written? Probably late in A.D. 67. The "winter" of this letter must be the same as the winter referred to in Titus. Winter is coming and he wants Timothy to come before navigation closes.

The salutation set forth in the first two verses contains a note of special affection: "Timothy, my beloved child." Circumstances call for this tenderness. The analysis consists of only one thing: A faithful minister of Jesus Christ. That is the subject of the whole letter – fidelity in a preacher. We will consider that fidelity, however, from many viewpoints. Whatever the viewpoint, one thing runs through this letter – be faithful to Jesus Christ from conversion to death.

Note his thanksgiving and prayer: "I thank God whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications night and day." He left Timothy in a pretty hard place, with that menacing coppersmith, all those Judaizing teachers, and with the hostile attitude of the Roman power.

Next thought: "Longing to see you." We may rest assured that that is not a formal statement. If there was anything on this earth that Paul wanted right then, apart from God's favor, it was to see Timothy.



What brought up that longing to see him? "Remembering thy tears." When Paul had to leave Ephesus so suddenly, he had left Timothy in tears. Remembering this, it makes Paul long to see him.

Now comes a second remembrance. He is in a position where memory would have much to do with both his prayers and his longings. "Having been reminded of the unfeigned faith in thee." Who brought that reminder? Somebody must have brought a message to Paul that Timothy's faith was standing like a rock. I think it was Onesiphorus, whose coming constitutes a part at least of the occasion of the letter. When he contemplates the steadfastness of Timothy's faith as reported by Onesiphorus, he thinks of its origin: "Which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice." Paul's mind goes back to that first meeting held in Derbe, those Jewish women, the mother, the daughter, and the daughter's little boy sitting in the audience, and under his preaching all were converted.

His mind, rapidly reviewing the past, comes to his second meeting with Timothy on the occasion of his ordination, hence the exhortation: "For which cause I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God [now, Timothy, I want your memory exercised] which is in thee through the laying on of hands." When Timothy was ordained, Paul was in the presbytery. After the prayer the presbytery passed by and each one laid his hand on Timothy's head. When Paul's hands touched his head the mighty power of the Spirit of God came upon him. "Timothy, stir up that gift; don't let it rust from disuse. That gift was made for use."

That is a good exhortation for any preacher. Whatever gifts the Lord has given us, we can make them stronger by use, or we can enfeeble them by disuse. Sometimes a spirit of lethargy comes on a preacher; he seems to be spiritually about half asleep. He needs to stir up the gifts which have been given him. I remember once for about two or three weeks, while I could theoretically take hold of things, I could

not take hold of them with my soul. When that time comes to us, let us stir up our gifts.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Give the circumstances under which this letter was written.
2. When and where written?
3. How account for the sudden revolution toward Paul?
4. Who entertained Paul on his last visit to Ephesus?
5. What route did Paul take when he left Timothy at Ephesus, what points did he touch, and what of his staff?
6. How received at Rome?
7. What one ray of light shines in the gloom?
8. What passage in this letter indicates his loss of hope of deliverance?
9. What indications that conditions were more favorable toward the end?
10. What the tenderness in the salutation and why?
11. Put the analysis into one great theme.
12. What are Paul's remembrances as expressed in his thanksgiving?

## XII. A FAITHFUL MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST

### 2 Timothy 1:7 to 2:5

We closed the last chapter with the statement that when Paul laid his hands on Timothy's head, the power of the Spirit came upon him. He reminds Timothy of the fact that the gift of the Spirit has for one of its purposes to confer boldness and courage. That leads us to see the application, verse 7: "For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love, and discipline."

We see the force of the "therefore" with which verse 8 commences: "Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God." Paul did not know but that Timothy over there, with all that outgoing tide might do like some of the others – get scared and be ashamed of the gospel and its testimony. I have known preachers who were ashamed of it in what is called "polite society."

Paul illustrated by referring to God's salvation and calling, "Who saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal [he never loses sight of the doctrine of election and foreordination], but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Now comes a great text. I have preached from it about thirty times in my life: "Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

When the Southern Baptist Convention met in New Orleans, I was appointed to preach at a Presbyterian church at night. I took that text and for just about one hour, without stopping, and with great fervor, I preached on it. The Presbyterian preacher's wife said she knew I had written it and memorized it word for word. But I had not. My heart was in it, and speaking of the King my tongue became as the pen of a ready writer.

"Jesus Christ, who abolished death." Very few people believe that. He said to Martha: "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?" What is meant by it? Not altogether as death was abolished in the cases of Enoch and Elijah, and the living who are to be changed at the second coming of Christ, as it was originally intended that man should, by access to the tree of life, be freed from all susceptibility to weakness and death and mortality, and become immortal. That is not the meaning here. What is meant is that in the separation of soul and body there is a difference between the believer's case and the sinner's case. To one, in a true sense, death is abolished, and to the other it is not abolished.

The meaning can more accurately be conveyed by an illustration: In the Pentateuch Canaan is the Land of Promise, and Egypt is this world. There are types running all through the pilgrimages. The last barrier intervening between them and the Promised Land is the river Jordan. When they got to the river it was at its flood – no bridges, no boat. They had to cross that – men, women, children, flocks, and herds. Without any explanation God commands them to go straight forward: and it came to pass that when the feet of the priest who went before the ark of the covenant, touched the brim of the water, the river divided. God stayed the waters, and the waters backed up against his will, his will being the dam that stopped it, all the water below ran off, and they crossed over dry-shod. In that illustration we see that when they came to the last barrier separating them from the Promised Land, that dreadful river was no river to them. The channel was there, but they passed over dry-shod. It is represented this way in our hymnology:

Could I but climb where Moses stood and view the landscape o'er  
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood could fright me from the shore.

When the Christian dies, no matter what suffering his body may seem to go through, in the hour of dissolution of his soul and body, there is no death, no matter whether he is a young Christian or an

old one. It is no more than stepping over a chalk mark on the floor; it is no more than stepping through a door into another room. It is to him all light – no darkness.

Take the case of Lazarus: "And it came to pass that the beggar died [no pause at all], and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Abraham reclining at a banquet in the kingdom of heaven, many coming from the north, south, east, and west, and reclining with him; one of them is Lazarus, who was starving on earth, begging the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. At the very instant of his death he passed to the heavenly banquet, and received the honorable place next to Abraham, so that his head is against Abraham's bosom, as John at the Lord's table rested his head on the bosom of Jesus.

That is what Paul means by abolishing death. There is no sting. My soul has so taken possession of that thought, and I have witnessed so many cases where dying Christians realized it, that I have not had any fear of death whatever for many years. There is nothing horrible in it to me, not a bit more than just lying down and going to sleep. Jesus has abolished death to his people.

I have before quoted the testimony of a Methodist bishop, who all of his lifetime feared death; it was a terrible thing to him. He was afraid that when he came to die his agitation would bring reproach on the cause of Christ. He was not afraid of any external enemy, but was afraid that in dying his fear might reproach Christ's name. But just as he was dying his eyes were opened) his face was shilling, and looking around the room he said, "Brethren, brethren, is this death – this light, this glory? Why should I have dreaded it?" That is the thought. "Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, hath abolished death." The bearing of this on Timothy's case was this: "Persecutors are seeking your life, as they seek mine. Remember that the Lord said they cannot kill the soul. They cannot even bring terror to the soul, in the dissolution of soul and body." There is no sting in death to the Christian. The sting of death is sin, and sin has been blotted out. The

strength of sin is the law, and the law has been satisfied. The power of death is the devil, but he has been conquered.

Now look at the second part: "Who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." What is life? Life everlasting for the soul. A man dies and there lies his cold body. Where is that which a few moments ago warmed and animated that body? As Job said: "Man dieth and giveth up his spirit. Where is he?" When Jesus brought life to light, and he himself entered into the realm of death, that bourne from which no traveler has ever returned, and came back from it, he flashed a flood of light upon the status of the spirits of the departed saints. That status existed before, but had never been brought to light.

The river Niger has many mouths and empties itself into the Gulf of Guinea. It has always had them, ever since it has been a river, but the fact was not brought to light until a few years ago. Travelers inland would speak of a great river flowing southwesterly) which must somewhere empty into the Atlantic Ocean. But sailors who had coasted along the coast of Africa and finding no such great river emptying into the Atlantic, were positive that it was all a lie – that there was no such river) for a river must flow somewhere. Finally Dr. Lardner went inland and struck it. He got in a boat and determined to follow it to the ocean to find out where the river went. Thus by actual experiment he discovered that before reaching the Atlantic the river divided into a great many small streams) reaching the ocean through a delta.

Just so, Jesus, having entered personally into the disembodied state, and returned to the embodied state of his resurrection, opened up to us the path of life – that is, the path of the soul. It goes right to heaven. Now, immortality is quite a different thing; that concerns the body. When he came back he brought to light the immortality of the body through his resurrection, that God intended to save the whole man, not only his soul, but to raise and glorify his body.

In view of the fact that our Saviour had abolished death and brought to light the life of the soul and the immortality of the body, by the power of his resurrection, why should we be afraid of death? What is there frightful in it? Paul says, Jesus having brought back these messages, concerning both the state of the soul, and the future redemption of the body, the next thing is the gospel, the story of God, or glad tidings. He says, "I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and & teacher."

Look at these three words. I was appointed to go out and preach these things to the people intimidated by formidable adversaries, in bondage to the fear of death, the sting of sin, the strength of the law, and back of it all the power of the devil which pressed to pallid lips the cup of death. I was appointed to go out and tell everybody these good things. That is preaching.

Then he says, "I was appointed an apostle." That is a very different idea. An apostle must be a witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He testified that he was an eyewitness. How? "I have seen the Lord since he came back. He appeared to me on the road to Damascus. He has stood by me many times since. I saw him in his glory, and therefore I am an apostle. I am a witness to that resurrection."

The other thought is that he was appointed a teacher. That is somewhat different from a preacher. A teacher instructs and expounds; a preacher proclaims. The teacher takes the word of God and rightly divides it, giving to each one his portion in due season, administering the sincere milk of the word to young converts, and the meat to the more mature Christians. That is the distinction between preacher, apostle, and teacher.

He goes on: "For which cause I suffer all these things, yet I am not ashamed." "These things have not come upon me because I have done wrong. How can there be shame unless I have sinned? I have robbed no temples, I have committed no murder, I have violated neither the Jewish nor the Roman law; but these sufferings have

come upon me because I have preached these glad tidings, witnessed these glad tidings, and taught these glad tidings."

He continues the thought (Paul's thoughts are always connected) : "am not ashamed." "If I had stolen something, or had killed a man and had been convicted therefore before the court, I might be ashamed. But these things have come upon me because I have done what I ought to do, and I am not ashamed and you ought not to be."

That brings us to the next great text: "I know him whom I have believed." Faith is not credulity; it is founded on knowledge, as Dr. Taylor so well put it in a sermon, the outline of which appears in chapter 3. "Knowledge brings you near to the kingdom, faith puts you in it." Knowledge precedes faith. "I know him whom I believed. I never would have attained this serene confidence by some kinds of knowledge. It is not what I know, but whom I know, the personality of Christ, and I am persuaded, I have assurance in my mind, that Jesus is able to guard what I have committed to him."

Paul by faith received Christ, and then by faith committed to Christ his life: "Now I have turned that over to the Lord; it is in his keeping. If you say that I am not a skilled swordsman and am therefore unable to defend my life, I will admit it. If you say that my powers are below the powers of the devil, who seeks my life, I will admit it. But I have this persuasion: The very day I believed in Christ I committed all to him, and my life is hid in Christ with God, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard it today, tonight, tomorrow, next week, next year, when I die, after I die, and clear on until that day, i.e., the time when he will come back, and when he comes he will bring it with him. He will guard what I have committed unto him through all peril periods. There will be no after perils when Jesus comes again."

Verse 13: "Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." Modern people say, "Don't have much creed, and when you state it, don't let it take any particular form. Somebody might object." Paul said, "I delivered



you a pattern of sound words, and you are to take it just as I gave it to you. You are not to change it." No man is true to the faith who departs from the pattern.

Suppose, for example, baptism, the pattern is this: "They both went down into the water; John baptized him and they both came up out of the water." What did he do when he baptized him? Christ was buried in baptism, and we with Christ were buried in baptism in the likeness of his death and raised in the likeness of his resurrection. That is the pattern. Why not just sprinkle a few drops on one's head? That changes the pattern. It changes the thought. Let it stand as it was given.

We may apply that pattern to the Lord's Supper. We notice how carefully a Baptist preacher, when he administers the Lord's Supper, quotes Christ's very words, and the words that Paul used in repeating the ordinance. Why? He must stick to the pattern. He must present the ordinance just as we received it.

He refers to the same thing again in verse 14: "That good thing which was committed unto thee, guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." Some say it makes no difference what a man believes if his heart is all right. If his heart is all right he will not believe all sorts of things. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so he is." It is the faith we have that forms the life we live.

In the introductory chapter I expounded verses 15-18. What Paul refers to here is what took place when the storm broke on him. All Asia turned away from him. Only Onesiphorus and Timothy stood by him. Speaking of Onesiphorus: "How many things he ministered at Ephesus thou knowest very well." Then when he heard that Paul was a prisoner at Rome, he went to Rome and many times refreshed him there. That closes the chapter.

2:1: "Thou, therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Jesus Christ." When Paul wrote this he knew that the time of his departure was at hand, and he knew that he had given to Timothy a

pattern of sound words, he had given him the faith. But he knew that Timothy would die after a while, and what then? "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." That is the way the gospel is handed down.

A truly sound preacher is possessed with the desire that somebody who hears him will receive the gospel in full from him, and long after he has passed away will transmit that very thing to somebody else, and that one in turn to his successor, and then to another, and just keep it going. That is succession, and I believe in the succession of the past, but especially in the succession of the present. No matter what we believe about succession back yonder, this is my day and I have the deposit of faith and the injunction is on me to transmit it to somebody else. I am more concerned about present succession than in spending my life trying to prove that there was one way back yonder, though there was one way back yonder, too. Remember the soldier hymns: "Am I a soldier of the cross," and "My soul, be on thy guard."

Listen to Paul's soldier talk: "Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." Soldiers do not sleep in the parlor (by the way, that is the worst room on the place to sleep in) ; he does not attend many banquets. Sometimes we see him with just one shoe, and sometimes none. Sometimes he has to stand guard all night, and sometimes "double quick." Sometimes he is cold and sometimes hot. Sometimes he is hungry and sometimes gorged. The army that can endure such hardships is going to win.

The fashion soldiers in times of peace, with their hurrahs, gorgeous uniforms, flags flying, drums beating, attending receptions, making speeches, these we call "holiday soldiers"; but the soldier who goes into the fight when the command, "charge!" is given, never stops to consider the wisdom in it, but storms the fortress crowned with belching artillery and bristling bayonets, is the real soldier.

"No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." When a man enlists he is on service as a soldier. He cannot go to the exchange to gamble; cannot go to the farm to make a crop; he cannot entangle himself with the affairs of this life; he is committed to a special line of duty. "Now, Timothy, you are a soldier on duty; beware of entangling alliances."

I knew one preacher who ran fifteen kinds of secular businesses, and was then surprised that he was not equal to Paul as a preacher! He had that many irons in the fire. I would advise the preacher not to try to ride, at the same time, two horses going in opposite directions. But that is as easy as it is for a preacher to entangle himself with the affairs of this world. If he makes a good deal of money, he will take the sore throat, and every time one sees him he will explain how he had to quit preaching on account of his voice failing; that his physicians advised him to stop.

But let a preacher be nearly barefooted, with not much of this world's goods, and with the fire burning in his heart that he must preach, and he will preach. But if he is able to go in a coach and six, he always says, "Put up some of the other brethren."

I knew one preacher who was doing well as a pastor until a rich man called him to be his private secretary. Since then he has quit preaching, and is now only a millionaire.

"And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned except that he contend lawfully." Every man must conform to the law relating to the line in which he is engaged. If he is a farmer he must be ready to go to work just as the sun rises. There are some other occupations that do not call for such early rising. But whatever his line of work, he must conform to the laws governing it.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What the force of "therefore" in verse 8?

2. How does Paul illustrate here?
3. What great text follows, and what the meaning of "abolished death"?
4. Illustrate by Canaan and Egypt; also by the case of the Methodist bishop.
5. What the bearing of this on Timothy's case?
6. What the meaning of "life" here? Illustrate.
7. What the meaning of "immortality"?
8. What effect should the teaching of this text have on a child of God?
9. Distinguish between the meanings of the words "preacher," "apostle," and "teacher."
10. What are some causes for shame, and what not a cause for shame?
11. What the relation of faith to knowledge?
12. What kind of knowledge brings salvation? 13, What had Paul committed to Jesus Christ, and what his confidence?
14. What the meaning of "pattern of sound words"? Illustrate.
15. What God's method of preserving the truth and keeping it always before men?
16. What was Paul's idea of a good soldier of Jesus Christ?
17. What general principle cited here by Paul?

### **XIII. ILLUSTRATIONS OF A FAITHFUL MINISTER**

#### **2 Timothy 2:6-26**

This section includes 2 Timothy 2. In the preceding chapter we discussed somewhat the first five verses of this chapter, but in order to a full understanding of the connection we now glance at the whole chapter.

The first question I propound is this: What the gospel provision for the transmission of the correct teaching? The answer to that question is this: "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2:2). Evidently the gospel contemplates a succession of the gospel ministry from the days of Christ to the end of the world. What Christ gives to Paul, Paul gives to the churches and commits to the preachers, and charges the churches and the preachers to commit that same thing, without variation, to faithful men coming after, that they in their turn may teach others. It is not my intention to show that there has been, historically, such a succession of churches and gospel preachers. I think there has been such succession, but I think it would be very difficult to prove it according to human history, if for no other reason, because so very large a part of that history was written by the enemies of evangelical Christianity. Particularly in the dark ages, those faithful to apostolic doctrines were so hunted and persecuted they had no opportunity to preserve records. But we do see faithful churches and faithful preachers now, and every one would be able to say, as far as his own knowledge goes, it was transmitted to him. I don't suppose that anybody ever originated it. From this day back to Christ, in some way, by some faithful preacher or other, or by some faithful church, the truth has been handed down. That is the answer to that first question.

The second question is: What is the first metaphor, or figure, by which the apostle illustrates the faithful minister? The answer to that is to be found in verses 3-4: "Suffer hardships with me, as a good

soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier."

In this illustration, or metaphor, the Christian is compared to a soldier, a regularly enlisted soldier, and as a soldier gives up his private business, places his whole time and his entire service under the direction of the power that enlisted him, so the Christian preacher should not entangle himself with the affairs of this world. As a faithful soldier has no time to run a farm, or be a merchant, or be a banker, or to follow any other kind of business, so it was certainly the purpose of our Lord that the preacher should make preaching his life's business.

On that similitude of the Christian as a soldier, much of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is founded, using that chapter in Ephesians about putting on the helmet, the breastplate, the girdle, the sandals, the shield, the sword. The Christian is contemplated as waging warfare. Paul says of himself in this letter, "I have fought a good fight." From that idea come some of our best hymns: Am I a soldier of the cross,

A follower of the Lamb? And shall I fear to own His cause,

Or blush to speak His name? Must I be carried to the skies

On flowery beds of ease, While others fought to win the prize,

And sailed through bloody seas?

What the second metaphor, or illustration of the faithful preacher? That is found in verse 5: "And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned except he contend lawfully." References to the games in Paul's letters are so abundant, we cannot interpret him without a knowledge of them.

The principal games in Greece were called the Olympic games. These games were held on the plain of Olympia, on the river

Alpheus. The isthmus of Corinth connects upper and lower Greece. The lower part is called the Peloponnesus, which is almost an island. In the western part of the Peloponnesus is the river Alpheus. On the right bank of that river lies a level plain. In that plain is a grove sacred to Jupiter, and in that grove is a marvelous temple. In that temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world – a colossal statue of Jupiter Olympus, done in gold and ivory, by Phidias, one of the greatest of the Greek sculptors. Then there was the statue to Minerva overlooking Athens. She was the patron goddess of the city and so here this gigantic statue, made of ivory and gold, represented the patron of the Olympic games. These famous games were held from 776 B.C. to A.D. 394, over a thousand years. They were discontinued by an edict of a Christian emperor of Rome – Theodosius, but for that thousand years they attracted the attention of the world.

These games were held every four years – the first full moon after the summer solstice. From them chronology was reckoned for the Greek world. The first Olympiad was 776 B.C., the second four years later; so by four-year periods they continued until their abolition. Pagan Rome reckoned from the building of their city, until the new epoch of Christ's birth superseded both.

Commencing 776 B.C., for one or two Olympiads these games were foot races only. Soon after were added quoit and javelin throwing, wrestling, boxing, leaping, and still later chariot races. A hippodrome was built covering a circuit of 2,400 feet. The chariots had to drive around that circle twelve times, making a five-mile race. In Ben Hur there is a brilliant description of the chariot race. In the Greek games were no combats with weapons, no gladiators, no fights with lions. The Romans added these bloody contests.

That the whole Greek race might attend the Olympic games, a truce was established so there would be no war anywhere between the petty states while the Olympic games were being played. No state was allowed to send an armed man up to these games. It was a time

of peace and festivity. The general and peaceful gathering of all the petty Greek states at the Olympic games gave them the name "panegyris" as opposed to each particular "ecclesia." This distinction Paul utilizes in the letter to the Hebrews. The general festive assembly of all the saints when warfare is over, the eternal feast in the presence of God.

Now let us consider verse 5: "And if a man contend in the games, he is not crowned except he contend lawfully." That brings us to the rules of the games. In the first place, they were open to all classes of competitors. Whatever might be the home distinction between the plutocrat and the poor man, at the Olympic games they were on a dead level. It was not how rich is the man, nor how illustrious, but can he now as a man win this athletic contest?

The second rule was that he must be of pure Greek descent. A mixed blood could not contend. He must make proof of that before the judges.

The third was that he must have had ten solid months of preparation under competent coaches. After that ten months of training he must give one more month to exercise. No man, whatever his wealth or social status, could compete without this thorough training and exercise on the field itself. Mark the bearing of this on the training of preachers, if you please, because this is a preacher illustration.

The next rule was that he, and every member of his family, must take an oath that he would observe the rules of the games, that he would not play foul. His own father or brother must take the oath that he would play fair. If he played foul in one of these games he was judged a degraded man and must pay a heavy fine. All over the grove were seen remarkable works of art paid for out of the fines assessed on men who would not play fair. Hence we have in our times the proverb: "Play the game according to the rules."



The next rule was that no form of bribery should be used, either to bribe a judge, or to bribe a competitor, paying him so much money to let them win. Whoever offered or took a bribe was disgraced.

The next rule was that the crown awarded to the victor must have no intrinsic value. They wanted no financial incentive. Honor and glory – not gold and jewels – must be the incentive.

The next rule was: No women were ever permitted to be present. In all of my readings I do not remember but one woman being present at these games. A woman might enter a chariot in competition, but some male friend must drive the chariot.

The next rule was that this competitor, having shown that he was born a pure Greek, must also show that he had never been disfranchised, that he had never been guilty of a sacrilege, like robbing a temple or anything of that kind. These were the rules.

Let us see again: "And if a man contend in the games, he is not crowned except he contend lawfully." He must observe every regulation, and his crown of victory was a wreath. In order to deepen the interest in those panegyric assemblies, the great poets were here accustomed to recite their poems, and the great sculptors and painters to exhibit their masterpieces, so that it was somewhat of the nature of a fair. They could sell these poems, or those pieces of sculpture, or paintings. After a while people not only came from Greece proper, but from all the colonies of Greece, all along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea – wherever in the world the Greeks had a city, wherever Alexander's conquest had extended, the Greeks would come here to witness or to contend. At first the assembly lasted just one day. Just think of what it would cost to be present for one day! Later it lasted five days. It was a glorious time, those five days.

Those were the Olympic games. And yet we must see in some of Paul's writings references to the Isthmian games near Corinth and the amphitheatres of Greek cities, as at Ephesus. Later when the

Roman idea dominated, they put in gladiators, and fights with lions. They became blood-crazed, and women were allowed to attend. When gladiators fought until covered with blood, it was at the option of the crowd to indicate whether they wanted the combat to stop without death. They voted by turning their thumbs up or down; and it was noticeable that women usually voted for a fight to the death. So are they merciless in the Spanish or Mexican bull fights. But all these bloody combats were of Roman origin. Paul may have spoken literally in saying, "I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus."

Now, brother preacher, you are entering a race. As Paul says, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." You will not receive your crown if you do not contend lawfully – if you do not observe the rules of Christ's games. As they must be of pure Greek descent so must you be born of the Spirit. You must train, you must lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset you. You must fix your eye upon the heavenly crown, not of fading laurel or olive bough, but the crown which Christ, the righteous Lord, will give to us at his appearing. Said Paul: "I have run my race and finished my course, and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown which Christ, the righteous Judge, will give to me." It is laid up in some of the mansions of heaven, and if you were permitted to visit heaven's gallery of waiting crowns, you might see the most dazzling crown ever designed for human brow. That is Paul's. When does he receive that crown? When Jesus comes, in the presence of the universe, he will be crowned for being faithful to the game, for playing the game according to the rules. One of the most convincing arguments in the whole Bible for the necessity of ministerial training is this illustration of Paul comparing the preacher's preparation to the work of a soldier and to a contender in the Olympic games.

The next illustration or metaphor is verse 6: "The husbandman that laboreth must be the first to partake of the fruits." It is the farmer this time. First a soldier, then a contender in the games, now a farmer. What about his work? Whoever does the work must receive

first pay. No matter who owns the land, this man who did the plowing, who did the hoeing, who did the planting and cultivating, before anybody else gets anything, he is entitled to his part. What a fine thought to apply to political economy: not to let the man who does the work be deprived of what is coming to him. Therefore, they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel. The laborer is worthy of his hire.

The fourth metaphor or illustration is covered in verses 1012, the thought culminating in, "If we suffer with him we shall reign with him," and it is expressed in these words: the cross before the crown. We do not come to the crown first; we go by the way of the cross. That is the given order. What Shylock said of the Jew is true of the Christian, "Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe," and we must suffer if we would reign. On that point we have some magnificent hymns. One of them is:

Must Jesus bear the cross alone And all the world go free?

No, there's a cross for every one, And there's a cross for me. Or, the way that hymn was originally written: "Must Simon bear the cross alone." On the way to Calvary, they found a man named Simon coming in from the country, and when Jesus broke down they compelled Simon to bear his cross and that song originally read: "Must Simon bear the cross alone and all the world go free?"

I knew a preacher who once invited all who thought their sufferings beyond their strength, more than they could bear, to come and hear him preach a sermon. There was a big crowd out, and it was a burdened crowd. He took this text: "If we suffer with him we shall reign with him," his theme being the cross before the crown. He drew a picture of the pilgrim who bears the cross. "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." He showed how the disciple from a child must bear a heavy cross, and how at times he stumbles with it, groans under it, is weary of it, envies people who have no burden, but how after a while, bowed down with the burden of the cross of long carrying,

with trembling feet he comes to the Jordan of death. And when he gets there he shouts and takes his cross, as Elijah took his mantle, and smites the river of death with it and divides the river, going over dry-shod, leaving his cross behind never to be seen any more forever, and goes up to his waiting crown. So it pays to carry the cross even that long, as with it he divides the river of death.

Notice in verse 10: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake." There we come to a new motive. "Why do you endure all this suffering, Paul?" "Not only for Christ's sake, but for the elect's sake. I am anxious for their salvation. If I can reach more men by suffering, I will bear it. If I can save souls by my bleeding wounds, by my jangling chains, by my stripes, and by my imprisonment – if that gives me more power in converting men, then for the elect's sake I will bear it."

I next call attention to a great theme in verse 15: "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." What a commentary that is upon the necessity of ministerial training. Be careful to present thyself approved, tested. God puts us to a test, and we are to endure this test, and we should be very careful that we are approved under any test he may propose. "Handling aright," or as a good rendering states it, "dividing aright the word of truth." I have heard many sermons on "the right dividing of the word of truth." The idea is that of a farmer plowing a straight furrow, not crooked, curved, or zigzag. I have seen in a great field men plowing a straight line for a mile – straight as an arrow. So, when we come to the discussion of the truth, we should plow a straight furrow, divide it right, handle it right. ing to flush something, but go straight to the mark, hew to the We should not zigzag around among words as if we were tryline, and if we are tested as a minister of God we can do that. Here is one way by which we may know that we are plowing a straight furrow: If we put on some passage an interpretation which in the next book will run up against a wall, or strike it, that furrow won't go clear through the Bible and we have the wrong idea about it. If we have

the right idea it will be a straight furrow from Genesis to Revelation. It will be according to the canon, or rule of the truth.

For instance: If we so preach election that we knock over some other doctrine; or if we so preach on human effort as to plow up the doctrines of election and predestination, then we have not plowed a straight furrow. What a great theme for ministerial training!

Now let us consider verse 18: "Hymeneus and Philetus, men who concerning the truth have erred, saying the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." What do they mean by saying the resurrection had passed already? Mainly this: They argued that the resurrection of the body that dies is foolishness) and that what is meant by the resurrection is the conversion of the soul. That the quickening of the soul in regeneration is the only resurrection. Later this idea succeeded: That the resurrection is when the soul, at death, escapes from the body which held it. It has no more use for the body than a butterfly has for its cast-off chrysalis. Paul says that that doctrine eats like a cancer. It denies the salvation of the body, and thus denies the real resurrection of Jesus Christ. Notice further he says that they overthrow the faith of some. Does this mean that these men so fell away from grace as to be lost forever? Let us look at the next verse: "Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal." Here were men who professed to be Christians. Now come these false teachers and persuade them to abandon the true teaching, overthrowing their faith. Does that mean apostasy in the modern sense of the word? "The foundation of God standeth, having this seal." What is the seal? ,The seal is the impress of the Holy Spirit, and on every seal there are two surfaces, and on each surface is an inscription. On this seal the first inscription is: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." The Lord's true man is sealed, and the impress on one side of the seal saith: "The Lord knoweth them that are his," whether men do or not, God does. Judas was not sealed.

Now let us look at the other side of the seal: "And let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteous-ness." One inscription shows God's infallible knowledge of their salvation. The other shows that whom God saves departs from iniquity. These are the two inscriptions on the seal. Let us never talk about baptism being the seal. We are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and that seal has two sides – two different impressions on it. First, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Second, those that are sealed depart from iniquity. And if a man never departs from iniquity, Jesus will say, "I never knew you."

We now come to verse 20: "Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honor, and some unto dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." In every great house – that is, in every great congregation, every great church – are different vessels. They are not all the same thing. Some are vessels unto dishonor, some unto honor. One may be compared to gold, another to silver; others are just wood, inflammable, and will perish in the fire. That is what is meant by a vessel of dishonor in the church. Compare 1 Corinthians 3:12-13. But though a man be a false professor while in the church, the way is yet open for his conversion. If he will purify himself from that dishonor, seek purification in the blood of Jesus Christ, he shall become a vessel of honor.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the gospel provision for transmission of correct doctrine and what does this necessarily imply?
2. What the first illustration in chapter 2 to show ministerial fidelity, and what the particular lesson taught?
3. What the second illustration and its particular lesson?

4. Cite from Paul's writings at least six metaphors based on the athletic games of ancient Greece and Rome.

5. Give an account of the Olympic games, the place and its celebrities, what the time interval between them, how long did the festival last, how long the period of their observance, how used in chronology, when and by whom abolished?

6. What the games?

7. What additions to the Greek games made by the Romans?

8. What the rules of the Olympic games?

9. What the bearing of the illustration on the necessity of ministerial training?

10. Name another distinguished place for these games.

11. What other arenas for these games in all great Greek cities, citing one?

12. How did the Greeks provide for peace between, the petty warring Greek states at the Olympic games?

13. How did they distinguish in name between this general gathering and the governing body in a particular state and how does Paul use and apply both names?

14. What the crown awarded, why not of intrinsic value and how does Paul contrast the Christian's crown?

15. When is the Christian's crown awarded?

16. What features of a fair characterized the Olympic games?

17. What Paul's fourth illustration of ministerial fidelity and in what phrase do we embody it?

18. Cite the hymn based on this illustration and how did it originally read?

19. Give some account of the preacher's sermon to all who felt that their cross was too heavy and how did it end?

20. What new motive does Paul introduce in Christian suffering and how do you apply it?

21. Show the application to ministerial training in the great theme in 2:15.

22. What the idea in "rightly dividing" or "handling aright" the word of truth?

23. What the original meaning of those who said: "The resurrection is already past"?

24. The later meaning?

25. How does Paul characterize the heresy?

26. Expound the reference to the seal and its inscriptions?

27. Expound the passage concerning vessels of honor and of dishonor in a great house, i. e., (1) What the meaning of the house? (2) Who are meant by vessels of honor? (3) By vessels of dishonor? (4) The hope held out to vessels of dishonor? (5) Compare with the passage in 1 Corinthians 3.



## XIV. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST DAY

### 2 Timothy 3:1-17

We continue the discussion of the second letter to Timothy with chapter 3. The apostle calls attention to some characteristics of the last day, just as he did in chapter 4 of his first letter, and just as we find in Peter's second letter. "Mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts." I do not know in any literature such a description of the character of man as given here, except that by the same author in Romans 1.

What does Paul mean by "last days"? The phrase "last days" to be properly expounded, requires a whole chapter. The "last days" in many instances means gospel days, but in the case immediately before us, and in the parallel passage in the letter to the Hebrews, there seems to be a reference to the closing days of the dispensation. He does not mean that progressing Christians will all be that way, but he is warning against a class.

We have them with us now. If a country boy were lifted up suddenly and put into the atmosphere that surrounds what is called the higher circle in Paris, London, New York, or Washington, he would say, "Last days!" It would be questionable with him whether any of those occupying front places in national society have any character at all.

Let us look at this paragraph: "Men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof."

The surprising thing of these characteristics is that they are applied to church members – men that have a form of godliness but deny its power. We now sometimes meet with a heresy affirming the power of godliness, but denying its form. Such heretics do not want any

form of a church or particular ordinances, and lay great stress on spirituality and internal relation with God. But he commits a sin who denies form to godliness. It is an old question: What is chaff to the wheat? It depends upon the stage of the wheat. After the wheat is threshed the chaff is nothing, but it amounts to much until the wheat matures. It is the form which protects and shields it. And we must have a form of godliness in order to godliness of spirit. But when we insist on having form only, it reminds one of a man going into a field during the last great drought we had in Texas. The corn looked all right, good large ears, but when he gathered it he found nothing but shucks. Just the form. No corn was there.

What I want to impress upon the reader is that form is essential to the purpose which it serves, but more important than form is the inner life. There is an inner man and an outer man. We cannot safely disregard the outer man. We may say that we will live spiritually, but the body gets cold, it gets hungry, it has to be clothed and fed. There is an intimate relation between the body and the spirit. A Quaker may say, "We have no form of baptism; we believe in baptism of the Spirit, and we dispense-with all externalities." That is a capital mistake, and contrary to the Bible, but this mistake which Paul is here discussing is infinitely worse. They held onto the form and left out altogether the heart and power of religion.

Romans 1:28-32 resembles this passage somewhat: "And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful, etc."

It is easy to see how that parallels with the one we are considering. The sin of the Timothy passage is more heinous, for these are

professed Christians that have these characteristics. Claiming to be Christians, and yet with such characteristics as these I There are times of spiritual power and strict discipline when people are not allowed to retain the form of religion, when their lives are at variance with the form. But at times of spiritual decadence and relaxation of discipline, any kind of a life will be tolerated if only the externals of religion are maintained.

Paul's one theme in this letter is an exhortation to be a faithful preacher. He is calling Timothy's attention to his necessity of being faithful in view of a class of men who would come to the front. He says, "turn away from these men," and gives a description of them and their propagandism. It must be evident to any one who has carefully studied the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians, that this gnosticism had a method of propagandism just the opposite of the gospel's. The gospel is open and above board. A man gets the biggest audience he can, proclaims from housetops to all classes of men without any distinction, the very quintessence of the gospel. Contrary to that, the prevalent Gnostics evaded public presentation to crowds. They always wanted to address privately single individuals or single households, and they are represented in this letter, and in all other letters on the subject, as people who crept privately into the church, crept privately into the home, under the disguise of a form of religion. Retaining their membership in the church, they would go around and talk about a select few, making a distinction in classes. Only the cultured few were to be initiated into the mysteries of this new philosophy.

Paul says, "For of these are they that creep into houses and take captive silly women." The word "silly" is not the best translation. It means little women. Not little in the sense of Miss Alcott, who wrote a most engaging series called Little Women; young people who can be trained to have the graces of older persons; not in that sense, but in the moral sense. They take captive women with little souls. There are great men and little men; great women and little women – some of them infinitesimally small. They seem to have no

high nature; it is all low. They are on the plane of brute beasts. Their pleasures are sensual – pleasures that appeal to the animal nature. It may be the pleasure of eating like the lion or tiger, gorging himself on blood. So a glutton lives to eat. It may be in the direction of gossip, slander, or lasciviousness. That is what Paul calls "little"; little in the sense that it keeps down to the animal part of man.

When Henry Ward Beecher, rather upon his own solicitation than upon accusation, before an assembly of the Congregationalists was being catechised as to his departure from the faith, a question was put to him: "Do you believe in the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit?" he said, "Unquestionably." The second question: "Do you believe that this necessity arises from the sins each man himself commits or from the depravity of his nature?" That was putting him in a close place. He evaded it most adroitly; he never knew any man to more adroitly evade a question: "I believe," said he, "a man needs regeneration because he is an animal." That is an exceedingly acute thought, and much can be said about it. For instance, when man was originally made part of him was made out of the dust of the earth, and God himself provided the tree of life that the mortality should be eliminated from that body, and it should become an immortal body. To evade the doctrine of depravity, Beecher took the position that regeneration should be predicated upon the fact that man is an animal – that is, has a lower nature.

In the passage before us Paul is bringing out a class of women – "little women."

Any woman is little who is satisfied with the mere round of social pleasures, loving pleasure more than God; who is satisfied to reign in merely fashionable circles, who never looks up, never thinks of what is due God.

In Paul's sense that is a little woman.

He is about to show how irreligious teachers retain the form. He says they are "ever learning and never able to come to the

knowledge of the truth." They claim to have a gnosis, a knowledge that is a finality, and yet they never come to any definite result. What is gnosis to them one year may be exploded in the succeeding year. The revealed word of God is a fixed standard. It is not different in one country from what it is in another country; not different in one age from what it is in another age. The Ten Commandments are applicable to the world, the world over. But where people set up a subjective standard of knowledge, the standard changes with the individuals. Even one man may have a standard one week which he would not acknowledge the next week. All subjective knowledge is ever knowing and never knowing. This applies to all human philosophies whether by Kant, Aristotle, Epicurus, or Socrates. Unaided human wisdom cannot evolve a definite knowledge or determine a fixed standard. Says Paul, "They are ever knowing, and ever unable to come to the knowledge of the truth." The world by its science and wisdom could never find out God.

He cites a case: "Even as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth." Here is the only place in the Bible where we get the names of the magicians who simulated the first miracles wrought by Moses. The question arises: Where did Paul get the names? I answer: By inspiration.

There was a prevalent philosophy in Egypt in the days of Moses much like this Gnostic philosophy, a philosophy that attempted to account for the creation of things; a philosophy that attempted to account for sin and gave its remedy; a philosophy that divided the race into sharply distinguished classes, only a select few to be initiated into the mysteries, and yet a philosophy that had no moral influence over their lives. A man could be at the very head of the mysteries in Egypt, and at the same time be as corrupt morally as hell itself. Just as one could be an expert in wisdom at Corinth, and yet be utterly corrupt in the sight of God: "Men corrupt in mind and reprobate concerning the faith."

How squarely against that Paul puts himself, as we have seen before, and will see again before we are through with the letter. As an example, he denies having any such record as that; he appeals to Timothy's knowledge of him: "Thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patience, persecution, sufferings, what things befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord delivered me." "There is my life as a teacher of the Christian religion. It has been a life of great suffering, persecution, patience, endurance. It has not been corrupt, beastly, animal, devilish." He puts that right over against the life of these other teachers.

It is the easiest thing in the world, as well as the most flattering to the human mind, to devise beautiful theories, and we are amazed to find that some theories as beautiful as the rainbow come from the lips of men and women who are as corrupt as the pit. They are meant just for theories, not to dominate life. I once saw a young lady crying over a most beautiful tribute to purity in a novel. She said the author must have been one of the best men in the world. She was surprised to learn that he was utterly corrupt in his own life. Anybody can fix up a thing like that on paper, but that does not argue internal purity.

Take this law in verse 13: "Evil men and imposters shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." There is an awful trend from which no man can escape, any more than he can escape from the suction above the Niagara Falls. A man who lives an animal life, a life of evil desire, a life of slimy imagination, a life of unholy thoughts, is going down just as certain as a boat without oars or help will go down when it strikes the current of the Niagara, or as a boat when it strikes the circle of the maelstrom. It may seem that the man is holding his own, but every circle he makes, he goes deeper, deeper, deeper, and at last he goes under. That is the law inexorable. They wax worse and worse. It is another law that there is a tendency in habit to crystallize into character. In other words, to attain after a

while the fixedness of type. When things get to that stage they are irreformable.

Paul now makes almost pathetic appeal: "Timothy, do you remember from whom you learned the standard that you are being guided by? Do you remember your old grandmother Lois, your mother Eunice; that you from a child were instructed in the Holy Scriptures which are able to make one wise unto salvation? Do you remember the time the apostle came to your home and held up Christ and him crucified as your Saviour from sin, and you accepted him?" Now, what was the standard held up? It is expressed in the Greek: *hiera grammata* – the "Holy Scriptures." That is not subjective knowledge; we do not evolve that out of our own consciousness.

The question arises: What Holy Scriptures? It means the sacred books put into the hands of the Jewish people, the Holy Scriptures which were in the hands of Christ. In other words, the books of the Old Testament, just as we have them, clearly defined. Now comes a declaration: Having referred to these scriptures collectively, *hiera grammata*, he declares concerning them distributively: *pasa graphe*; every one of these sacred scriptures is *theopneustos*, "God-inspired," and is profitable for teaching, conviction, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work. This makes a fixed and perfect standard. From inspiration comes power. First, these scriptures are able to make one wise unto salvation. They are profitable for teaching what a man ought to believe and what a man ought to do.

The next point is, they are profitable for reproof, for convicting of error. Not only to teach what to believe and to do, but when one goes wrong in belief or in life, these scriptures will convict him of error. Next: "for correction." That means that having shown wherein one has believed wrong or done wrong, it will tell him how to correct that wrong.

"For instruction," or discipline, "in righteousness." There the word "instruction" has the idea of training, disciplining. We see a woman put out a bulb or plant a seed. Even before it comes up she has a purpose in her mind and fixes a frame over it. When the vine begins to grow she trains it to run on that frame, and when it wants to run off at a tangent, she gently attaches it to the frame and trains it, trains it, trains it, until it circles all around her window. That is the power of training. These God-inspired scriptures are profitable in training one in doing right. A raw recruit does not know whether to commence buttoning his coat at the top or bottom, does not know how to "present arms," "order arms," "right shoulder," "shift arms," "charge bayonets"; does not know how to keep step. He has to be trained. He is turned over to an experienced drill sergeant. After he is trained as a unit, he is then trained as a member of a squad, then of a company, then of a battalion, then of a brigade, then of a division, so that he not only knows what to do from a military point of view, but he knows exactly where his place is when the trumpet calls to arms.

"In order that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." The sum and substance of the teaching of the word of God is that doctrine must be transmuted into life. We must not only bloom, but bring forth fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and thrown into the fire. Herein is the supreme difference, broad as the ocean and deep as eternity, between the Christian system of religion and other systems of religion. It is the effect on life, bringing men nearer to God.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What the meaning of "last days" in 3:1?
2. What the present indications as to the fulfilment?
3. Cite a passage similar to this third chapter of 2 Timothy?



4. Why is Paul's description of 'men here more terrible than his description of the heathen in the first chapter of Romans?
5. What the relation of "form" to "godliness"? Illustrate. Which the more important? Illustrate.
6. What elements of Gnosticism are here condemned?
7. What the meaning of "silly women"?
8. What was Henry Ward Beecher's position on the necessity of regeneration?
9. Contrast the *gnosis* of the teachers here referred to with revelation as a standard.
10. What is characteristic of all subjective knowledge?
11. What flashlight here on Old Testament history?
12. What the Egyptian mysteries?
13. What moral influence on its subjects?
14. Does it require purity of character to devise beautiful theories? Illustrate.
15. What law stated in verse 13?
16. What pathetic appeal in verses 14-15?
17. Why is it better to be trained in right ways from childhood than to sow wild oats?
18. What the "sacred writings" in verse 15?
19. What the meaning of "every scripture" in verse 16?

20. What the value of verses 16-17?

## XV. PAUL'S FINAL WORD

2 Timothy 4:1-22

This chapter concludes the second letter to Timothy. We commence with chapter 4. This chapter is one of unexampled solemnity. All the circumstances make it so, as well as the character of the man who wrote it and the character of the man to whom it was written. It is Paul's final word in the form of a charge.

Nearly everybody who delivers the charge when a preacher is ordained uses some of this chapter 4, and very appropriately. I call attention to the significance of the word "charge." Sometimes it is used in the sense of "adjure." The high priest said to Jesus, "I adjure thee before God." To adjure means to put on oath. "I put thee on oath before God, are you the Messiah?" "I am." That is the same as if he had sworn it with uplifted hand. A charge has that signification. "Oh, Timothy, I put thee on thine oath before God." It also has the meaning of enjoining very solemnly.

Now we will see how he charges: "I charge thee in the sight of God and of Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the living and the dead and by his appearing and his kingdom." God, Christ, Christ's appearing, Christ's judgment of the living and the dead, Christ's kingdom! What an assemblage of solemnities!

Now do what? Preach the word. The emphasis there is on "the word." Preach the word. Over and over again we have noticed that Paul had a system of truth which he received from Christ and which he delivered to Timothy, and that this system of truth is the most precious deposit in the world. That is what he must preach. That is the supreme limitation of the theme of the preacher. I have felt shame, sorrow, and contempt, all blended, at some things I have heard from the pulpit. They were nice enough little things, but nothing from the word of God, nothing to convict a sinner, nothing to lead a sinner to Christ, nothing to lead a babe in Christ to maturity

in Christian knowledge, nothing to develop high, holy, and enduring Christian character. Preaching is a solemn work.

Just here I commend to the reader what Cowper says about the preacher who gets up in the pulpit to be a mountebank instead of a herald of the cross. "Imagine Spurgeon before a mirror practicing the attitudes and postures he will assume when he goes to preach!"

"I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the living and the dead, by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word." Some call me cranky on the subject of what I preach. One man, in criticizing my first book of sermons, said, "There is too much scripture in it." I thanked him for his criticism. I try to preach sermons that are literally saturated with scripture.

"Be urgent in season and out of season." Perhaps a little better rendering would be: "Be alert," that is, "keep your eyes open, do not go through the world sleeping." To be alert is to be ready. I traveled once with an old Indian scout, and the most notable feature about him was his alertness I could see his eye play over every bush or tree, over the mountains or plains. Not a thing in the range of his vision escaped his notice. He was alert. Everything around him was searched for a token of the presence of an enemy. He slept that way. I noticed that when he went to bed everything was put right where he could get it. He could in one minute after sudden waking be ready for a fight. That is alertness, and that is the thought here rather than urgency. The thought is: "Be alert in season and out of season." Any man can be alert under some circumstances. They are pregnant with warnings. But other circumstances lull into a sense of security. Paul urges alertness at all times, so as not to be taken by surprise.

Now come a number of words which have a special signification: "Reprove [or rather, convict], rebuke, exhort." "If your brother sin, convict him," that is, first make him see his sin. Then, having shown him his sin, rebuke, or admonish him; then having admonished him, exhort him, and let all of it be done with all possible forbearance and long-suffering, line upon line. A pastor should keep in mind John's

vision of the alert Son of God, moving among the churches, noticing everything, taking cognizance of all conditions.

He assigned the reason for this solemn charge: "For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine." We are to preach the sound doctrine – the word – for a time will come when our congregations will not endure the sound teaching; when they will not want it. They will want something else. What will they do? "Having itching ears," that is, ears eager to hear pleasant things, "they will heap to themselves teachers after their own desire." The times do come when people won't hear sound doctrines. One of the saddest instances I know was the case of Jonathan Edwards, who is regarded, and particularly after his great revival, as one of the theologians since Paul. He insisted that in order to save that place the old-time word of God must be preached; that there is a devil and he must say so; that there is a hell and he must say so; there is imminent danger of falling under the wrath of God, into the hands of Satan, into the depths of hell. He preached that, and a most marvelous revival followed. Before the close of the series of meetings, which this sermon originated, 250,000 people were converted. Jonathan Edwards was the oracle of God. But there came a time in that very community when they would not hear Jonathan Edwards. They wanted a different sort of teaching, and just about the unsoundest piece of Christendom today is the section where Jonathan Edwards was repudiated. If one wants to get a set of preachers that know just the least part of the gospel, that is the place to find them. They have heaped up to themselves teachers that are according to their own desires. I have been in places, strategic places, mighty places, and have groaned in my soul because some mighty man of God was not in charge of that place. Maybe some preacher is in charge, and the people want him in charge, who does not care a snap of his finger for the mission work, for the cause of Christ, for anything except a good, comfortable, easy pastorate. I never wanted to be a bishop in the Methodist sense, but if I were a bishop I would make some quick removals.

I have seen churches turn away from preachers of real ability and unquestionable piety, preachers whose history demonstrated that they were alive with life, glory, and power. They were shelved, or turned out to make way for some popinjay, whose ministrations never instruct, never develop, but who holds the young people together. The trouble about ministrations of that kind is that when the older people of the congregation die off, the younger people do not know anything at all about doctrine and would just as soon drift into one denomination as another, or away from them all.

Old Dr. Lyman Beecher, the greatest of all the Beechers, saw that illustrated in his own children, and yet he is the man who stood up and said, "The time will come when the imposture of Mohammed will be exposed, when the principles of Mormonism will receive no favor in an intelligent community. But I fear the time is also coming when the preachers will preach a gospel that has no power to awaken a sinner, nor to save him after awakened, nor to console a broken heart, but of simply enough power to lull him to sleep until the day passes and the night of eternal death has come."

"They will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables." What did the apostasy which he predicted do when it came? It turned aside from the truth to accept the infallible declaration of the Pope. It condemned the giving of the word of God to the people. It reared up monasteries and nunneries where marriage was adjured and where a string of fables concerning the saints were doled out instead of the word of God. That time did come when people left the Bible, the impregnable rock of the Holy Scriptures, to take up something else.

He exhorts Timothy as to his own conduct. "Be sober in all things. Suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry." Can we ever get that thought sufficiently in the minds of our preachers – that the ministerial service is a hard service and that the preacher has a course to fulfil, so that whether he lives long or dies

soon he ought to be able to say: "I have finished my course, I have fulfilled what I had to do"?

This deep concern of Paul arose from his knowledge that his own day of departure was at hand. The gospel must be transmitted. It must not die with him. He had fought his fight and finished his course, but who would be the standard bearer when the flag fell from his nerveless hand? "The time of my exodus has come." This is the same word in the Greek that we have in Moses' time. It means the unmooring of a ship. The time had come for that ship to go out on an unknown sea. In view of that fact he takes a backward look at his life, and this is what he says: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course. I have kept the faith." There is not one iota of the revelation made to me that I have swerved from. I have preserved it inviolate, and I desire to transmit it intact.

Now we come to a new thought: "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day." This is a reward. There are several kinds of crowns mentioned in the Bible – a crown of victory, a crown of rejoicing, and there is a crown which Jesus will bestow upon faithful laborers. The question is, When will he do it? In other words, as soon as Paul died did he get his reward? He did not; that is not the doctrine at all. He got his salvation, which was not a reward, but grace. He went straight to God, for to be absent from the body is to be present with God. His reward is laid up and will be bestowed when Jesus comes again. At the second advent of our Lord is the time for the bestowing of rewards. Then, according to our fidelity as Christians, will we be rewarded. As it is said by Paul in 1 Corinthians 3, where he compares a preacher to a builder whose foundation is Christ, and if any man build on this foundation of bad material like wood, hay, and stubble, he shall suffer loss that day – the day that tries by fire. But if he has built with enduring material, gold, silver, precious stones (not jewels, but good building rock), he will get his reward.

Now I will tell a dream which I had. I am sure that my study of the subject had something to do with my dreaming it. It seemed that I was just gliding around. I could lift myself up without making a step, without wings, and move with great rapidity by volition. Moving that way I came to a glorious habitation. I don't know how I got in, but when I got inside I saw a vast hall with the most glorious objects that my eyes had ever beheld or my heart had conceived of, hanging on the walls: jewels, medals, badges of honor, and everything on earth I could conceive of. Finally, I came and stood right under one, by far the most glorious of all, and read this inscription: "This crown is reserved for Paul."

When that day comes and every Christian stands before God, according to his fidelity as a Christian, he will be rewarded or suffer loss. That does not touch the question of salvation. He says here that Christ will not only reward him, but all that have loved his appearing, all who have believed in his advent. I am sure that when the time for this distribution comes, it will be an eye-opening time. Many people will be startled. People who expect their crown to be a brilliant diadem will get but small reward. Instead of their ship coming in with every flag flying and mast standing, it will have to be towed in by the tug, Grace. It barely gets in, and is "saved as by fire."

I give one more scripture before closing this chapter. The last book of the Old Testament states that one cannot right now altogether discern between righteousness and wickedness. Some sins go before man and some follow after. There are a great many things that keep us from discerning the righteous and the wicked now, but when we appear before God on that day, we shall discern between the righteous and the wicked.

In Malachi 3 he says that in a time of great spiritual dearth, when it looked like everybody was going astray, there were some who feared God, and who spake often one with another. God-fearing men who thought much about heaven, and about prayer, held their



communions with each other. The record says that God listened, that he heard what was said, and' commanded the angel to write it down. "That is worth keeping. Put that in a book. That which men count great you may pass over; it does not amount to anything, but here is something worthy of record, these God-fearing men and women, in this awful spiritual dearth, speaking of heaven one to another, put down what they say."

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Of what does this last chapter of 2 Timothy consist, and what use has been made of it?
2. What is the meaning of the word "charge"? Give example.
3. Name the five Solemnities with which he gave this charge.
4. What the charge?
5. What the meaning of "be urgent in season and out of season"? Illustrate.
6. What the reason he assigns for this charge? Give an instance.
7. What danger to the rising generation here pointed out? Give an instance.
8. What did the apostasy which he predicted do when it came?
9. How does Paul exhort Timothy as to his own conduct?
10. Why this deep concern of Paul?
11. What his famous parting words?
12. What Paul's reward, and when bestowed?
13. What the basis of our rewards? Cite other scripture.

14. Give .the author's dream relative to this point.

15. What startling facts mentioned here will be brought out at the Judgment?

# THE LIFE OF PETER

## XVI. THE LIFE OF PETER

This chapter, and the next, will be confined to a glance at the life of Peter, as set forth in the New Testament. The material is as follows: The Four Gospels, as arranged in the Broadus Harmony, the Acts of the Apostles, several chapters of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, two chapters of Galatians, and the letters of Peter himself.

We have in this account the history of one of the most remarkable men that ever lived. He was a poor man, though his partners, James and John, were well-to-do. He was an uneducated man, and later was reproached with the fact that he had never had any learning. He was a married man and had a family to take care of when he was converted, and his only educational training was under the Lord Jesus Christ for three years, and under the Holy Spirit later. This case of Peter illustrates what I have often said: that it is not essential to the ministerial office, or to ministerial success, that a man should be a graduate of a college. I must not, however, be misunderstood. Far be it from me to speak against a college education on the part of those whose circumstances, age, environment, and means enable them to get a college education, and who have the capacity to take it. But I do mean to affirm that Christ and the original twelve apostles were not school men, and yet they have impressed the world.

It oftentimes happens that God calls a man to preach in middle life, after he has a wife and children. It is the folly of some good people that the ministry should be cut down to men who have first obtained a college degree and then a seminary degree. The thought is unscriptural, unbaptistic, unhistorical, and it is incalculably mischievous.

Now we take up Peter's name. His given name was Symeon in Aramaic (see Acts 15:14; 2 Peter 1:1) or Simon in Greek.

We get his surname from Matthew 16:17, i.e., "Bar-Jonah." "Bar" means son; "Simon, son of Jonah" – or the son of John, as some represent it. His cognomen given by Christ was Cephas in Aramaic; or in Greek, *Petros*; in English, Peter, meaning a stone (John 1:42; Matthew 16:18).

His home was on the border of the Sea of Galilee, Bethsaida first, then Capernaum. He was living at Capernaum in his own house when Christ went there. He not only had a wife, but later on in life when he went out on his apostolic tours, he took his wife along. There are some preachers who, apart from the question of cost, don't particularly care to have their wives go with them. Sometimes it is much better that the wife be along. She will at least see that his clothes are properly brushed, and his neck cloth tied, and she will be sure to point out any wrong mannerism in the pulpit or in mixing with the people. He is apt to fret a little at that. Many preachers are thin-skinned when it comes to criticism, but it is much better for the preacher to remember that his wife does not do that for the pleasure of nagging, but it is because she loves him, and does not like to see him make wrong impressions. Now all of this grows out of the starting point, that Peter took his wife along with him.

In the next place, Peter took care of his mother-in-law, however strange that may seem. Notwithstanding all of the jokes on the subject of mother-in-law, some people have dearly loved their wife's mother, the author for one.

We notice his business. He was a fisherman. The Sea of Galilee has always been famous for its multitude of fishes.

In getting at the character of Peter from his own viewpoint, we must study Mark's Gospel, commonly and rightly called Peter's Gospel, and Peter's letters. We should read Mark through at one sitting, keeping in our mind that this is virtually Peter speaking, and watch for the outcropping of the author's view of himself. In the same way read his letters. In such light Peter shows to much advantage. Then study the other authorities for the view of him from their standpoint.

Here again, on the whole, Peter shows to advantage, particularly when we consider our Lord's estimate of him. Jesus knew what was in the man. While rebuking Peter often, he ranked him very high.

It is evident from all these sources of information that he was a plain, straightforward, sincere, impulsive, and withal a very curious man. He was a regular interrogation point. In going over the places in chronological order where Peter's name comes into history, we cannot help noticing that Peter asks more questions than all the rest of the apostles put together. Generally, he asks his question straight out: "Lord, what do you mean by that parable of the blind guides?" "Lord, where are you going?" "Lord) why can't I follow you now?" "Lord, look at the temple and these stones" – and where he cannot ask a question himself, he nudges John to ask it, as in the case of the Lord's Supper when he prompted John to ask Jesus who it was that was going to betray him. David Crocket once said that he had a hound puppy that he set great store by on account of his inquisitive disposition; that he could nose around into more things than any other dog he ever saw; sometimes he got himself into trouble, but if a dog did not have an inquisitive disposition he would never jump a rabbit. A great many people lack knowledge for not asking questions. A wise man never needs to ask the same question twice.

Peter had a streak of weakness in him arising largely from his impulsiveness and overconfidence in himself. We might call it a presumptuous streak; a conceited streak. He had no idea that anybody in the world could hold onto Christ like himself. Everybody else might turn loose, but he would not. He frequently overestimated himself, and underestimated the power of the devil. The element of presumption in him is intimated by his rebukes of the Saviour. Jesus, in a great press of people, says, "Who touched me?" and Peter spoke up at once – he always says something – "Lord, you see this crowd all around here pressing us, and say 'Who touched me?' Who could tell? Why should you say that?" Jesus replied to him: "I know some particular person touched me for a particular object, for virtue went out from me." Now, Peter had not

thought of the power of Christ's consciousness to determine outgoing virtue in response to silent appeals. We see that presumption manifested again when he said, "Far be it from thee, Lord, to suffer and die." And again when he said, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" "Lord, you shall never wash my feet." And again, "Wash me all over, head, and hands, and feet." We see him again in the great vision he had at Joppa correcting the Almighty himself: "Not so, Lord."

An element of weakness shows itself in Antioch. He is influenced by certain men who come up from James. Peter had been eating and drinking with the Gentiles, until through fear of their censure he is involved in dissimulation, but like all other impulsive men he is quick to get right and frank to make full confession of his wrong. His weakness appears particularly in his denial of the Lord, and that too after being warned' beforehand and cautioned the second time, and yet it came on him so suddenly that he turned loose all hold of Christ and denied that he ever knew him, and swore like a trooper. Notwithstanding all this, Peter is one of the most lovable characters in history.

A distinguished lady once said to me, "I cannot stand Paul; he never makes any mistakes. But Peter is a great comfort to me; he is so human in his errors." He had faults with his greatness, and it rather comforted her to think that a great man like Peter would shoot off his mouth so fast sometimes. That is why she said Peter was a comfort to her. Now, there is a distinct development in Peter. We can trace the training; as he gets older he becomes stronger in character and more mellow in spirit. In all literature we do not find a document more humble in spirit, more loyal, and more royal than Peter's first letter. It is a great document – the letter we are now going to study.

Now, while I have before me every New Testament passage which names Peter, and arranged in chronological order, giving the page in the harmony, and the citation from the New Testament books, I will

cite only a few incidents which made the greatest impressions on his life. From them we find what things done and said by our Lord, or what impressions from the Holy Spirit, most touched Peter's heart. Just as in the case of David, we might ask, "What things in David's life most impressed him, allowing the Psalms to interpret the impression?" and taking the book of Psalms find out from them what great impressions had been made upon the mind of David by the incidents of his life. Now, by taking Peter's two letters, and adding to them Peter's speeches as reported in Acts, it is an easy thing to determine what experiences impressed Peter more than the others, and in the same way we find from John's Gospel what things particularly fastened themselves upon his mind. But we are dealing with Peter now, and the first instance is his conversion, when he was brought to Christ by his brother Andrew, an account of which is found on page 19 of the Harmony, and recorded in John 1:40-42. Our Lord recognized the power of the man as soon as he saw him, and before Peter could say a word he uses the language that I make a text of in my sermon, found in my first volume of sermon.8: "Thou art Simon; thou shalt be called Cephas, or Peter." That sermon is called "From Simon to Cephas," and its object was to trace the development in the character of Peter. Simon means a hearer or learner, and Peter means a rock – stability.

It is probable that Peter went with Jesus to the marriage of Cana in Galilee, and went with him to Capernaum, and was also with him on his preaching tour in northern Judea near where John was baptizing in Enon, and was also with him in passing through Samaria to go to Galilee, but not with him when Jesus went to Cana a second time and to Nazareth the first time.

The next great impression on his mind comes from his call to the ministry. That is on pages 27-28 of the Harmony (Mark 1:16-17). Jesus called to the ministry two pairs of brothers: James and John, and Peter and Andrew, at the Sea of Galilee. In close connection with this call comes an incident profoundly impressing Peter's mind, found on the same page of the Harmony, but told in Luke 5. It was

the miraculous draught of fishes resulting from casting the net according to Christ's direction. When they went to draw up the net it was filled with such a multitude of fishes that the net broke, and the boat was filled, ready to sink, with the fishes put in it. The miracle profoundly impressed Peter. Here was either a power that could bring the fish to a certain point, or the omniscience that could know where they were in a school and could so give the direction that just letting down the net would take a great multitude, and as the miracle worked in on his mind he became conscious that he was in the presence of one holier than himself. Sin rose up in him, the conviction of sin, and he knelt down before Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." I often use that to illustrate the strangeness of conviction of sin.

Most people whose words and actions convict other people of sin are not conscious at the time that they are convicting of sin, and many a preacher studies a sermon and preaches it with a view of conviction of sin, and never convicts a man in the congregation. But there was that conviction of sin forced upon Peter's heart by the consciousness that he was in touch with divinity. In any kind of meeting as soon as God's presence is felt people will be convicted right and left; convicted quickly in the strangest kind of ways.

The next thing that impressed Peter was to have the Lord in his own house. Now, hospitable people might rejoice in having pleasant company or great company, but here was one of the few humble houses of Galilee that sheltered the Lord, and as the Lord came in the fever left the mother-in-law. His power came with him, and Peter's house became a focus of power, and his front yard full of supplicants crying for mercy and healing, and salvation blazed all around Peter's house because the Lord was there.

The next look we have at Peter is the impression made upon his mind by these tremendous miracles of our Lord. His presumption is excited, and so we find on page 30 of the Harmony, as recorded in Mark 1:35 and Luke 4:42, that Peter tries to work a corner on



salvation. Christ had gone off to spend the night in prayer. Peter obtruded upon him in his private devotion, with a view to keeping him there at Capernaum, as if he could dam up salvation in a little town and not let it outflow to other places. Our Lord rebuked him and said, "I must go to other towns also; you cannot hold me here; you cannot dam up this stream of life and limit it to one locality.'

Without comment I note the fact that he was one of the three at the raising of the daughter of Jairus, and that he was one of the disciples that plucked grain on the sabbath day and caused a controversy. He was also one of the disciples in the little boat which Jesus had pushed out into the sea away from the multitude in order to teach the people.

On page 49 of the Harmony (Mark 3:14-17) is the ordination of Peter and the other eleven disciples. The call had preceded and they had learned a good many things in being with Jesus. But Jesus, after spending the night in prayer, ordained these men and set them apart to the full work of the ministry, and designated them as apostles to be witnesses for him. That ordination was followed by the great Sermon on the Mount, expanding and expounding the law.

The next impressive thing in his history is on pages 71-76 of the Harmony, as set forth in Matthew 10. The twelve have been ordained and have heard his preaching, and now he is going to send them out, and Mark says, "two by two." Peter knows that he went with one of them wherever he went. I suppose John was with him; more than apt to be with John than with his own brother Andrew. Now, in chapter 10 of Matthew we have the elaborate instructions given to these men before they were sent out. This was the first time Peter ever went off from his Lord to do any work, and they went in every direction, two together, with instructions as to what to do and how to do it, and they came back and made a report. There Mark brings in a new fact again, which he gets from Peter, and it was just like Peter to make that kind of a report. When he came back he reported not only what he had done, but what he had taught. There is

the defect in our missionary reports today; we report the miles traveled, sermons preached, houses visited, the Sunday schools, prayer meetings, and churches organized, but we do not say what we have taught. Now Peter came back and reported what he had taught.

We now come to the next important incident in his life, the appearance of Christ walking on the water, which shocked all of them. They thought it was a ghost – an apparition. When they learned that it was the Lord, that impulsive Peter said, "Lord, tell me to come to you; I will come if you say, 'Come.' I don't mind the water. If you tell me to walk on the water, I will do it." The Lord says, "Come," and Peter steps out and walks on the water, and if he had kept his eye on Christ he would have walked all the way, but he got to looking at the waves tumbling around him, and at the wind, and began to sink. But whenever Peter got into trouble he cried out for help, so now he prays: "Lord help me, or I perish." Now, that incident illustrates Peter and his character. The original character of the man, the impulsiveness of the man, the audacity of the man, and then the shrinking of the man from the responsibility which he had brought upon himself.

We next come to a more important event. We find it on page 83 of the Harmony. It is his first confession. Jesus had preached a sermon on hard doctrine, "the Bread of Life," and his main object was to slough off transitory people. He wanted the right kind to stick to him, but he did not want his body of disciples to be filled up with unprepared material, and he preached that sermon with a view to sloughing off and the crowd sloughed off, and it looked like everybody was going to leave him. Upon this many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, "Will you also go away?" Simon Peter answered: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." Peter is great there. Nobody else spoke, and as usual Peter was all-inclusive, he was ready to speak for others as well as for himself, and he included too many when he spoke for the whole twelve. Jesus

corrected it and said, "One of you is a devil. You can speak for yourself, but not for all." That is the first confession of Peter. "Thou hast the words of eternal life. There is no one else to go to. We have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God."

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Where do we find scripture material for the life of Peter?
2. Give an account of Peter: (1) His circumstances. (2) His education and the bearing on an educated ministry. (3) His family relations.
3. What his Aramaic name, his Greek name, his surname, his cognomen in Aramaic, Greek, and English?
4. Where was his home, and what lesson from his taking his wife along with him?
5. What his business?
6. What books may one study in order to get at Peter from his own viewpoint; how does he show up from the viewpoint of other New Testament writers and what was Jesus' estimate of him?
7. What noted characteristic of Peter gave him prominence?
8. What his chief weakness and its cause?
9. Give illustrations of his presumption.
10. What ground for comfort in the life of Peter?
11. What the first event of his life that made a great impression on him?
12. What the second thing that impressed him, the incident that led up to it, and the impression on his mind?

13. What the next event that impressed him?

14. How did Peter try to "corner" salvation?

15. What was Peter's first missionary work and what in his report unlike our missionary reports?

16. What was Peter's first great confession, and what the occasion for it?

## **XVII. THE LIFE OF PETER – (CONTINUED)**

In the preceding chapter the question was asked: "What incidents in Peter's life most impressed themselves upon his own -life, judging mainly from his literary remains, to wit: His gospel through Mark, his speeches in the Acts, and his letters?" In answering that question, the following, out of many incidents, were cited, in the chronological order in the Broadus Harmony:

1. His first interview with our Lord, and probable conversion (John 1:40-42; Harmony, p. 19).
2. His call to the ministry (Mark 1:16-17; Harmony, p. 28).
3. The revelation of his sinfulness through a realization of Christ's presence and divine power (Luke 5:1-11; Harmony, p. 29).
4. Christ in his home (Mark 1:29-34; Harmony, p. 29).
5. His ordination as an apostle (Mark 3:14-17; Harmony, p. 45).
6. His being sent out to preach away from Christ, the accompanying instructions, the work, and the report of it (Mark 10:1-42; Mark 6:7-30; Harmony, pp. 71-76).
7. His walking on the water (Matt. 14:22-36; Harmony, p. 80).
8. His first great confession (John 6:61-71; Harmony, pp. 82-83).

Out of the many references to Peter in the Gospels, those eight were particularly discussed as bearing upon his character and growth, his own impressions, and the audacity and weakness of his faith.

Now, this chapter resumes the discussion:

9. His greater confession at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:13-20, Harmony, pp. 89-90). The reader will note that on the first interview with Peter our Lord said, "Thou shalt be called Cephas." Now, at the

conclusion of Peter's great confession here, that promise was fulfilled. He became Cephas, a stone: "Thou art Peter," and from Peter's own words as to the real foundation of the church and of his relation to that foundation as a living stone, we get a comment in 1 Peter 2:4-8, where he makes it very clear that the foundation of the church is Christ, the rock; he does not understand that the church is built upon him. He was not bothered as a great many modern theologians in interpreting that passage in Matthew 16, and they would have saved themselves a great deal of trouble if they had allowed Peter, to whom the words were addressed, to give his own inspired understanding of what Christ meant. And it seems always to me that there must be disrespect for the inspiration of Peter when any man says that in Matthew 16:18 the rock upon which the church was built was Peter, and it is disrespect also for Paul, because he is just as clear as Peter: "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ Jesus." Peter says that he is a living stone in the Temple, but that Christ is the elect precious stone which constitutes the foundation, and that is the true conception of it. Peter does not understand from this passage by the promise of the keys, that he was to open the door of the church (that is, to declare its entrance terms) to both Jews and Gentiles.

This appears in the subsequent history; in Acts 2, Peter, standing up in Christ's completed church and his Spirit-filled church (for the Spirit that day filled it), and under inspiration opened the door, and from the inside, mark you, to the Jews – representative Jews from all over the world, and told them how they could get in. This is evident from Acts 10. There Peter opened the door to the Gentile world, using these words: "To Christ all the prophets bear witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive forgiveness of sins." And in Acts 15 he avows that that privilege was conferred on him. In the discussion that took place in Acts 15 he commences by saying, "Brethren, you remember that how through me, or in me, the Lord made selection from among you about opening the door to the Gentiles." It is also evident from this passage that Peter held the first place among the twelve apostles to the

circumcision. As a distinguished Roman Catholic historian puts it, *primus inter pares*. That means first among equals, and this appears further from the fact that in the four lists of the twelve apostles his name is always first, and from the further fact that in the subsequent history he invariably took the lead. But Peter did not understand that this priority conferred upon him the papal autocratic jurisdiction claimed by the Roman Catholics, and this appears from his subsequent conduct in the following instances: In Acts 2 the church at Jerusalem holds him to account for going in and eating with the Gentiles, and instead of answering them by authority, he answered them by an explanation, which was accepted. Then, in Galatians 2 when the question came up of Paul's entirely independent gospel and jurisdiction that occurred at Jerusalem, on that occasion Peter conceded Paul's entire independence and his appointment to be the apostle to the Gentiles, and gave him the right hand of fellowship.

It further appears from this passage in his first letter: "The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight thereof, not of constraint, but willingly according to the will of God, not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall be manifested from heaven you shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." From this passage we see that while Peter considered himself an elder, an apostle, and a shepherd, he puts himself on a level with other apostles and with other elders and with the Chief Shepherd over all, who is Jesus Christ himself, and that this oversight which he exercises is not an oversight by constraint, nor for money, but as an example. It is impossible for a man to put it any more plainly than Peter does, how he understood the priority conferred upon him on account of his great confession in Matthew 16.

10. His great presumption in tempting Christ to shun the cross and our Lord's severe rebuke (Mark 8:31 to 9:1; Harmony, p. 91). Though Peter had made a confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, he had not up to that time got into his mind the necessity for the death of Christ, as an expiatory sacrifice, and so when our Lord, after that confession, began to lead them into the new idea of the Messiah, that he was to be a vicarious offering, Peter's presumption manifested itself by tempting Christ to shun the cross. Now to show what impression that made on Peter's mind after Christ corrected him, read what he says in 1 Peter 1:18-19. Peter does not shun the cross now. He has learned better, and he tells the people that they are purchased, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.

11. The next incident that impressed his mind was his witnessing our Lord's transfiguration (Mark 9:2-13; Harmony, pp. 92-93). Peter's witness of that transfiguration showed himself yet to be a learner. He misconstrued the presence of Moses and of Elijah, and said, "Let us build here three tabernacles, one for Moses [we will still hold on to Moses] and one for Elijah, and one for Christ." And he was rebuked by a voice saying, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him!" You can't associate Moses and Elijah with Christ as equal teachers.

Now the true import of that transfiguration Peter did not get in his mind right then, but he got it later as we see from 2 Peter 1:16-18: "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory when there was borne such a voice to him by the majestic Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice we ourselves heard borne out of the heavens, when we were with him in the holy mount." Now, that transfiguration scene never passed out of Peter's mind. He understood it, at last, to be a miniature representation of the power



and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, Christ's transfiguration is the way in which he will come in his glory.

In the next place, when he comes in his glory, his power is manifest in two directions: He raises the dead, represented by the appearance of Moses there, and he changes the living, represented by Elijah, who was one of God's Old Testament instances of transfiguration. That will be the power of his second coming, the instantaneous change of the living and the raising of the dead.

Then again Peter understood it to mean that the law led up to Christ. It was a schoolmaster unto Christ. That prophecy foreshadowed Christ as represented by Elijah. Now Peter got the right idea, at last, of the transfiguration. I am citing these cases to show what particular instances in his own life made the deepest impression on his own mind.

12. Now we go to' the next one, the Temple tax (Matt. 14:24-27; Harmony, p. 97). The facts of the case are these: The tax-gatherer came to Peter and said, "Does your Master pay Temple tax?" Now Peter, instead of referring that question to Jesus to be answered by him – he always thinks he is competent to speak for anybody – says, "Yes." They replied, "Well, then, pay it." And he did not have any money. Peter takes the case to the Lord, and the Lord shows him that his answer was an answer of ignorance; that there was no obligation resting upon him to pay that tax, but to get Peter out of his dilemma, he gives him directions to go cast a hook into the sea, take out a fish, and find the money in the fish's mouth to pay for Peter and Jesus. Now that lesson made an impression on Peter's mind, and so when we come to his letters he gives directions in 1 Peter 2:13-16 about honoring the powers that be, and the paying of tribute, and closes by saying substantially, "Even when you waive a right to do it, pay it through expediency, that ye be not evil spoken of." Like Paul, he never would waive duty or principle, but when it was a privilege or right, personal to himself, and by waiving it he could do some good, he would waive it. We may always waive a

right, as Paul says, "Meat offered to idols is nothing, nothing to God. I know that everything that God has made is clean, if you receive it with thankfulness." But he says, "If my eating that meat offered to an idol will cause some weak brother to stumble and fall, I will never eat any meat offered to idols as long as I live." "All things are lawful, but not expedient." Now that is the great lesson Peter got from the Temple tax business.

13. Let us now take up the lesson on how often to forgive a penitent brother (Matt. 18:20-35; Harmony, p. 101). A practical question came up in Peter's life when the Lord said, "If thy brother repent, forgive him." Peter says, "Lord, how often, seven times?" as if he had an idea there ought to be a limit to it. "You can't spend your life forgiving a fellow; now how often – seven times?" Jesus says, "Seventy times seven." That question of Peter's comes up in our lives. I heard a very distinguished deacon once make a snarling speech in a church conference when a certain man came before the church and asked forgiveness, and Dr. Burlison, with his customary suavity and with a strict adherence to Scripture, advised the church to forgive him. This deacon got up and said, "I would like to know what will be the end of that? We have spent a good part of our life as a church in forgiving that man, and I don't want to dig about him any longer." To show you how that thought impresses Peter, when he wrote his letter he says, "Have fervent love towards each other, remembering that love covers a multitude of sins." "If you love anybody, you can keep forgiving him." A father here on earth will forgive his child for doing wrong, on penitence, a good many times more than he will forgive another one's child. He loves his child more; the relation is dearer. Now, the Lord wanted to teach Peter that when he got deep into the thought of the heart of God's love, there was no limit; that love would be like the two sons of Noah who took a mantle between them and walked backward and covered up the sins of their father. Love covers a multitude of sins.

14. The reward at the earth's regeneration (Matt. 19:27-30; Harmony, pp. 133-134). There Peter puts a question on rewards:

"Lord, we have left all to follow thee, what shall we have?" "Now, we have given up everything; we are standing by you while all the world is turning away from you. What shall we have?" Our Lord replied to him that there should be a reward in this life equal to a hundredfold. Not in kind, but in other things. Then he goes on to speak of the true reward that would come at the regeneration – not the regeneration of man, but the regeneration of the earth. "You that have followed me in the regeneration shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. That is the reward ye shall have." But the thing that fastened itself most on Peter's mind was that idea of the regeneration, the restoration of all things, and that the eye of the Christian should be fixed rather upon rewards that followed that than upon anything that takes place here in time. Now to show how that impressed him, in his speech in Acts 3, he refers to it: "Whom the heavens must receive [referring to Jesus, who is gone into heaven] until the time of the restoration of all things." And in 2 Peter 3:7-13, he unfolds the whole doctrine of the regeneration of the earth. He says that the earth once passed through a purgation by the waters of the flood, and shall pass through a purgation by fire, and that there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and he bases a strong exhortation upon the fact that "The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall be melted with fervent heat. Seeing, then, that all of these things shall be dissolved, what manner of men ought ye to be in all holy conversation, and godliness, and walk here in this time."

15. Our Lord's great prophecy (Mark 13 and Matt. 24-25). That prophecy is found in Matthew 24-25, but Peter's connection with it is stated in Mark 13:3 and the whole account of it may be seen in the Harmony, pages 160-168. Peter puts a question that calls forth that great prophecy, covering two whole chapters of Matthew, parts of Mark and of Luke, and made a lasting impression on the mind of Peter. To show something of the impression that it made upon his mind, I will cite an occasion. In 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; and 3:1-6, that is, three times he brings out in his letters the reference to our Lord's great prophecy.

16. The lesson of Christ washing his feet. We find the account of that in John 13:7-10; Harmony, page 174. Notice what the points are: According to the Mosaic law, they had at their place of residence, or wherever they were abiding, performed the bodily ablution preceding the Passover, but they had to pass from that to the upper room, where they were to eat the Passover, and in passing from it they got their feet dusty, as they had only sandals on their feet, so that when they got into the house the custom was that at the door the sandals were taken off and their feet were washed and water was always provided for that. So that a man who had complied with the regular ablution prescribed by law, needed only to wash his feet, but as that was not a home where a host would provide for washing the feet of guests, but an upper room in which they were to make their preparations, the question came up: "Who shall do the feet washing?" there being no servant there to do it for them. "What about it?" Peter would say, "I cannot do it, because I am first of the apostles – primus inter pares." And there was a dispute among them while they were going there as to who was the greatest. They wanted to make some one small enough to wash feet.

Christ knew about their contention; it was a little thing on so great an occasion to cause a disturbance. So they concluded they would go in and recline at the table and eat the Passover without washing, whereupon Jesus arose and girded himself, taking a towel and a basin. They were reclining on their left elbow with their feet stretched out behind them. Christ walked around -the horseshoe table and began to wash their feet. Nobody said a word until he got to Peter. Peter said, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" "Yes." "Lord, you shall never wash my feet." Jesus said, "Well, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." "Then, Lord, wash me all over." The lesson there needed was the lesson of humility, service, and hospitality. That was what was needed and they were too proud to do it, whereupon Jesus, their Lord and Master, took the lowly part upon himself. Peter never forgot that. In his letter there is an evident reference to it) 1 Peter 5:5, where he exhorts against strife, and that we should gird ourselves with humility to serve one another.

17. This incident perhaps made more impression on Peter's mind than anything, and that was Christ's warning against Satan's sifting of Peter and the other apostles, and of Peter's failing, and his promising to pray for Peter that his faith fail not, and his direction to Peter that when he was converted from the error that he held that he would strengthen his brethren. That lesson appears in Luke 22:31-33; in Mark 14:29-31, and we must consider in connection with it the three denials of Peter that took place afterward. Those denials appear in Matthew 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; John 18, and the whole matter is set forth in the Harmony, pages 176-177; 193-195.

That transaction, that trial of Peter's faith, that sifting of Peter by Satan, that intercession of Christ which kept his faith from failing, the awful bitterness with which he regrets his fall – we see how it impressed him in the following passages. There is a reminder of it in the scene described in John 21:1-17. As Peter had denied Christ three times, Christ asked him the same question three times over. But we get Peter's own words in 1 Peter 1:6-7. He says, "The trial of man's faith is more precious than the trial of gold by fire." In 1 Peter 1:3-5 he strengthens the brethren as Christ commanded him to do. His error was that he could hold onto Christ himself, hence he says, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Before that he thought he was keeping himself. We see the thought again brought out in 1 Peter 5:5-10. He believes in a devil now, and he warns them that "their adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion." He warns them against overconfidence: "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble." Just as if he had repeated the old proverb: "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall," and urges them to watch themselves.

18. Christ's resurrection and appearance to Peter. We find the account of it in Luke 24:33-35, and 1 Corinthians 15:5, and in the Harmony, page 224. If we read Peter's speech, recorded in Acts 2:22-36, and his great speech in Acts 3:11-16, and his great speech, in Acts 10:38-43, we see what a tremendous impression was made

upon Peter's mind by the resurrection of Christ and his appearance to him.

19. Christ's words to Thomas, which Peter heard (John 20: 24-29; Harmony, pages 225-226): "Thomas, you believe because you have seen. Blessed are those who, not seeing, believed." Peter quoted that very thing in his first letter (1:8). This shows what an impression it made on him.

20. The solemn lessons at the Sea of Galilee; Christ's questions and Peter's answers (John 21:1-17; Harmony, pp. 226-227). First, Peter had gone back to his secular business. Second, Christ meant him to be a fisher of men, and not of fish, and a shepherd of spiritual flocks. Third, Christ wanted proof of his faith in him, trusting him to take care of him and his love for him. That great lesson received a reflection in 1 Peter 5:2-4.

21. The prediction of the manner of his death (John 21:18-19; Harmony, p. 227, reflected in 2 Peter 1:14). In that letter he tells that the Lord made known unto him how he was to die. 22. The twenty-second incident is his baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-18), and the reflection of that in full in 1 Peter 1:12.

23. A class of incidents: Peter's suffering for Christ. He was arrested five times (Acts 4:3; 3:18; 5:26; 12:3; John 21:18). He was in prison four times (Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:3; John 21:18). He was beaten with stripes one time (Acts 5:40). He was crucified (John 21:19). Those were Peter's individual sufferings. To see how those sufferings impressed his mind, all we have to do is to read 1 Peter 1:6-7 and particularly 1 Peter 4:12-19.

24. A class of incidents: His contact with Paul. These contacts were Acts 9:26-30 construed with Galatians 1:18; Acts 15:1-29, construed with Galatians 2:1-10; Galatians 2:11-21. To see how these contacts with Paul impressed Peter, let us read 2 Peter 3:15-16.

25. His vision at Joppa. Several times in his letters he refers to what God has cleansed.

## QUESTIONS

1. What Peter's second or greater confession?
2. What promise fulfilled here?
3. What Peter's understanding of the foundation of the church, and his relation to it? Proof?
4. What did he understand by "the keys of the kingdom"?
5. On what two occasions did he use these keys?
6. What place did he hold among the apostles to the circumcision? Proof?
7. Did he understand that his priority conferred upon him the papal jurisdiction as claimed by the Catholics? Give proof.
8. For what did Jesus severely rebuke Peter, and how does he show the impression it made on his mind?
9. How did Peter understand the transfiguration at first? Later?
10. What great lesson did Peter get out of the incident of the Temple tax?
11. How does Peter express his impression of Christ's teachings on forgiveness?
12. Give Peter's elaboration of Christ's teaching on the regeneration of the earth, and rewards.
13. What reference in his letter to the incident of foot washing?

14. What event probably impressed him most, and what references to it in his letter?

15. Describe his sufferings for Christ by answering the following questions: (1) How many times arrested? (2) How many times imprisoned? (3) How many times beaten with stripes? (4) How did he die? (5) What impressions made on his mind by these sufferings, and where do we find them?

16. What the contacts with Paul, and what their impressions on him?



# 1 PETER

## XVIII. INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER

### 1 Peter 1:1-6

In the general introduction to his first letter, we have devoted two chapters to the New Testament life of Peter. So far, I have had nothing to say of Peter's life according to tradition and legend, after giving the accounts in the New Testament. My reason for not going into that is that the whole business is so very shaky; there is a vast amount of it we know to be forgery, but I am impressed that this much of the legend is true: that Peter did finally go to Rome, and suffered martyrdom there.

We now take up the special introduction to 1 Peter, and answer the following questions:

1. Who wrote this letter?
2. To whom was it written?
3. Through whom was it written?
4. Where was it written?
5. What is its theme?
6. What is the letter?
7. When was it written?
8. What was the occasion of the letter?
9. What its relations to previous New Testament books?

1. Who wrote this letter? Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. There are three strong overwhelming arguments in favor of ascribing this letter to Peter:

(1) The letter so states. (2) The internal evidence is very strong that Peter wrote it. (3) The universal testimony of primitive Christendom is that Peter did write it.

Now opposed to Peter's authorship are some objections by the radical critics that are hardly worth considering. I will tell on what ground they base their objections, but I am not going to discuss it, for I do not honestly think it is worth while. They first adopt this theory, that there was an antagonism between the teaching of Peter and the teaching of Paul, and that this first letter is so manifestly in agreement with Paul that therefore Peter did not write it. That is the ground of their objection, put in a few words. They assume a premise without a particle of evidence, and then on the ground of that premise deny Peter's authorship.

2. To whom was it written?

(1) The letter says: "To sojourners of the dispersion" – Jews and proselytes. The Greek word diaspora, referring to a dispersion of the Jews has a signification in New Testament literature, and in the literature of the times, that does not admit of controversy. It means those Jews who were originally deported from the Holy Land by certain conquerors, as Sennacherib, the king of Babylon, Pompey and others, carried away into captivity and settled in foreign countries.

(2) Those Jews that for purposes of trade lived out of the Holy Land – and this constitutes a majority of the Jews. A certain writer states that they are in the whole world, and on every ocean; that certainly is not much of a hyperbole. Alexander the Great put a great many of them at Alexandria, and from that time until now that city has been a particular home of the Jews. They once had a temple in Africa. There were large settlements of these Jews in Babylon, from which

place Peter seems to write, and we get an idea of the countries settled by the dispersion from Acts 2, which tells us that devout men came from every nation under heaven to the Passover and heard Peter's great sermon. This is the first item: they were Jewish sojourners in foreign lands.

(3) This letter is addressed to these sojourners in five provinces of Asia Minor, as follows: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The order, on the map, in which these places are named, furnishes an argument as to where Peter was when he wrote this letter; for instance, from Rome we would have to reverse the order in speaking of it and say, "Bithynia, Asia, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Pontus." But as Peter is over in Babylon when he writes them the order is just as he says: "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia."

But we still have not settled the question, "To whom?" We have found out two points; written to the Jews of the dispersion, and written to the Jews of the dispersion in five provinces of Asia Minor; third, written to the Jews who were Christians, or professed to be Christians. He says, "elect sojourners." Now, that settles the question, "To whom?"

3. Through whom was this letter written? 1 Peter 5:12, answers the question. By Silvanus or Silas, as he is sometimes called, which means the same person, and it is that very Silas who was with Paul on his second missionary tour described in Acts. He finally traveled with Peter, though he first traveled with Paul, and noting a little difference in the style of the first letter and second letter of Peter, we may infer that when it says that this letter was written by Silas, that Silas was Peter's amanuensis, and something of the style of Silas crept into it. We see how the style of a document may depend somewhat on the amanuensis.

4. Where was it written? 1 Peter 5:13 says, "The elect in Babylon salute you," that is the elect churches in Babylon salute you. Here the question arises, Why does Peter say Babylon? In other words,

does he use Babylon in its literal sense or symbolic sense, as John does in the book of Revelation? There, "Babylon" is a figurative or symbolical form. A great many of the early fathers – and of the later fathers – hold that, though Peter says Babylon, he means Rome, and they say, with all Roman Catholics, that Peter wrote this letter from Rome and called it Babylon, because at that time a great persecution was going on by Nero and therefore he used a symbolical word. If it were not for the great number of distinguished names that support this theory, I would certainly say I had no respect for it. This letter of Peter is not an apocalyptic book. An apocalypse is written in symbolical language. When it says "woman," it means something else not a woman; when it says "sea," it means something else, not the sea, etc. And so all the way through it is a symbolical book. But this is just a plain book of prose, and if Paul, writing near the same time, could have no hesitation in referring to Rome, I don't see why Peter should, and so I don't believe at all that it means Rome when it says, "Babylon." Peter, being an apostle, traveled a good deal. We notice in the Acts of the Apostles how he left Jerusalem and went to Samaria, and another time went to Lydda and Joppa and Caesarea, and another expression says he travelled through all parts. Now, it was a very natural thing that Peter, being an apostle of the circumcision, should follow the Jewish migration east among the Semite people, and so I take it that Babylon means Babylon. Mark, who also travelled with Paul, has joined Peter in Babylon. 5. What is the theme of the letter? 1 Peter 5:12 tells us the theme: "I have written unto you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God." That is his theme – the true grace of God. There are some people who talk a great deal about grace and claim to be the subjects of grace, and yet live a life contrary to the teaching of grace, and so this theme is a splendid one. There is a false idea of grace, viz: that a man can have grace and yet live contrary to the principles of grace. So the object of the letter is to give a true account of the grace of God.

6. What is the letter, i.e., what is its character? Here it is, "I have written unto you briefly, exhorting and testifying." The style of it is

exhortation and testimony. He is going to speak as a witness of what is the true grace, and then he is going to deliver an exhortation based upon that true grace, and that exactly explains the letter.

7. When was it written? About A.D. 65, just after Paul's last letter of the first Roman imprisonment was written. In other words, we would place 1 Peter right after Hebrews. The order is: Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Hebrews, then 1 Peter, A.D. 65.

8. What was the occasion of the letter? Two elements, judging by the letter itself, enter into the occasion. First, those to whom it is addressed were suffering very great persecution; and, second, they were much affected by teachers of false doctrine, who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. Now in writing it his object is to strengthen and comfort these persecuted people, and to expose all false notions of the true grace of God.

9. What are the relations of this letter to previous New Testament books? The Gospel of Mark was the Second Gospel written, supposedly about A.D. 60, and as Peter was the virtual author of that, it is called Peter's Gospel; it is easy to see the connection between this letter and Mark's Gospel. He had been acquainted with the Gospel of Matthew and of Luke, but certainly not with the Gospel of John. We do know from the letter itself that there is a strong relation between this letter and the letter of James. James was the earliest New Testament book written. Now there is a very marked relation between this letter and all those letters of Paul, as follows:

1 and 2 Thessalonians. That is the first group.

1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans. That is the second group.

Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Hebrews. That is the third group.

I am a little doubtful whether he had yet seen the letter to the Hebrews, but it is certain that he had before him the letter to the Romans and the letter to the Ephesians, but he had seen Hebrews before he wrote his second letter. The book is brimful of references to Paul's arguments to the Romans and the Ephesians. In 2 Peter, he refers to Paul's writing to them, the people to whom he is writing, that is, the Jews of the dispersion of Asia Minor. I think he makes a reference to Hebrews in his second letter. He refers to all of Paul's letters and counts them scriptures. It is perfectly certain that on every doctrine of grace he stands squarely with Paul in his letters to the Galatians, Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians.

Now we come to the analysis of his first letter and I give what is called an expositor's analysis. The first item of the analysis is this:

Peter's doctrine of election illustrating the work of the Trinity in the salvation of men. 1 Peter 1:1-2 represents the Trinity in the work of salvation: "The elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." There we see he presents the whole Trinity – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That statement of the doctrine of election in a few words, when coupled with a part of 2 Peter I, gives Peter's whole idea of the doctrine of election. As Peter states election, what is it? It means chosen to salvation. Who elects? God the Father. According to what does he elect? According to his foreknowledge. What does he mean by foreknowledge? The Greek word is "*prognosis*": "*nosis*" means knowledge, and "pro" (the "g" being for euphony) means before, or foreknowledge, and that word is a noun is used only by Peter in the New Testament. He uses it three times, as follows: Acts 2:23; the passage here, 1 Peter 1:1, and in 1 Peter 1:20. These are the only places in the New Testament where we have the word "prognosis," foreknowledge, which means to know beforehand. But both Peter and Paul use the verb "*prognosco*," which means to know beforehand. Peter uses that verb in 1 Peter 3:17, and Paul uses it in Acts 26:5; Romans 8:29; 11:2. Both Peter and Paul use the verb once to talk about a previous

happening, i.e., a happening before the time of which he is speaking. Paul says that the Jew had known him beforehand, and Peter uses it in a similar way where it refers to men knowing one thing before they know another thing. We have nothing to do with that foreknowledge. Paul uses that word with reference to God foreknowing his people, and all the other times Peter speaks of God's foreknowledge. Now, then, the question is: What does foreknowledge mean? Foreknowledge is used by Peter, and "to foreknow" is used by Paul, referring to God. My reason for putting that question is, that when I was a young preacher, a Baptist preacher who was a good man, but Arminian in his theory, preached a sermon on election; and he said, "election is according to foreknowledge; God foreknew that certain men would repent and believe, and having before seen they would repent and believe, he elected them." When he got through I told him that the New Testament use of foreknowledge was just about equivalent to predestination, and that any Greek scholar would tell him so, and that election was not based upon any foreseen goodness in man or any foreseen repentance or faith in man, but that repentance and faith proceed from election, and not election from them. So that what Paul means by foreknowledge is just about the same as predestination; that in eternity God determined and elected according to that predestination.

Now we proceed with Peter's idea of the election, viz:

1. This election is in sanctification of the Spirit. In other words, every man that God elects to be saved is renewed in regeneration and perfected in sanctification by the Holy Spirit. That is Peter's idea of election.
2. He says, "elect unto obedience and unto the sprinkling of the blood of Christ." Every man who is elected has the blood of Christ applied to him and has in him the spirit of obedience to the commandments of God. God never elected a man to disobedience, but he elected him to obedience, and therefore the evidences of our

election are to be sought for in the following facts: Have I any reason to believe that I have been regenerated, that I have by faith in Jesus Christ, had the blood of Christ applied to me? Have I in me the spirit of obedience to Christ? If I have, that is evidence to me that I am one of God's elect, because these things are fruits of election. In other words, the order of the thought is this: The Father, in eternity, determined and chose those to be saved.

3. He chose them to be saved by the blood of Christ, and to be renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

4. He chose them to become obedient, so that election is evidenced by calling, and by faith in Christ, by regeneration, by a progress in holiness, and by obedience. Now, that is Peter's doctrine of election.

To show you that I am correct in it, in his second letter he urges Christians to make their calling and election sure. What did he mean by it? He does not mean to make it sure to God, for God knows who are chosen, but he means to make it sure to themselves. "Make your election sure to yourself." He has just told them how to make it sure: "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged of his old sins. Wherefore, make your calling and election sure."

Now by that use of it we can see how Peter could answer a question put to him on the question of election. Peter, who are the elect? He says, "I will let God answer that question from his side, for he knows, but when you ask me from the human side I will tell you how you may be sure that you are elected. If you have the evidence of Christian piety, that you have been converted, been renewed by the Holy Spirit, have in you the Spirit, and are making progress in



holiness, that is evidence that you are one of the elect." And we can't make it sure to ourselves in any other way in the world. Now, if we could climb up to heaven and open the book of life and see who are enrolled up there, we might look at that roll and see whether our names are on it; but we can't get up there, and the doctrine of election does not say that God chose John Jones and his wife and one of his daughters and two of his sons. It does not speak that way, and so our only way of determining whether we are elected is as I have shown. Now, the doctrine of election in *Pendleton's Manual*, as recorded in the "Baptist Articles of Faith" is the view of Peter. Now that is the first item of the argument.

Second item. The effect of Christ's resurrection on the hope of his disciples. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." And so I make that the second item in the expositor's analysis. What was the effect of Christ's resurrection on the hope of his disciples? The last chapters of the Four Gospels show how depressed Christ's disciples were upon his death. They all forsook him and fled. They thought that the battle was lost. The two on their way to Emmaus said, "We had trusted that this was he that should deliver Israel," but they now looked upon that as a dead hope. Now, after Christ rose from the dead, and they saw him and recognized him by many infallible proofs, their hope revived and it became a living hope, meaning a hope to live forever: "He hath begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." In other words, if Christ had stopped at his death and burial, Christianity would have been absolutely dead according to his own words, for he gave that as the sign by which to establish all of his claims – that he would rise from the dead on the third day. To these depressed disciples the resurrection of Christ was startling. It had a tremendous influence. Listen to Thomas: "You tell me he is risen. You couldn't make me believe unless I put my fingers in the print of the nails in his hands, and thrust my hand into his side." And yet when he met Jesus and was asked to do just what he requested, he fell at the feet

of Jesus and said, "My Lord and my God!" And when Jesus stood before Mary, who was weeping, she said to him, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." And he was already risen and she turned around and looked at him, and fell at .his feet saying, "Rabboni," that is, "My master, my Lord!"

Easter Sunday is the Sunday according to some church calendars that commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and all over the Christian world we see and hear on that day such things as this: "He is risen! He is risen indeed." If we were in Russia, where they have a formula when they meet on this Sunday, we would hear one say to another, "Christ is risen," and the other would reply, "He is risen indeed." And every Roman Catholic country sets apart a holiday called Easter Sunday. It is a composite of blended Jewish, Christian, and heathen elements, but it certainly does exhibit the effect of the resurrection of Christ upon the hope of his disciples and upon nobody more than upon Peter. When Christ was risen, he said, "Go and tell Peter." Peter had denied him. When he appeared to James, his brother, James was converted.

Now, the third item is the great inheritance. Here it is: "Unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God, are guarded through a faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Now, let us analyze that inheritance; this living hope is unto an inheritance: First, what is the character of it? There are three characteristics named: (1) It is incorruptible. (2) It is undefiled. (3) It is fadeless.

If we inherit money, it is corruptible. Some men refuse to receive gifts from certain syndicates because they say the money is tainted, defiled. Riches take to themselves wings and fly away; but this inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeless. Now, when are they to get it? "Reserved in heaven." We have not got there yet. Where are they to get it? "In heaven."

Abraham did not get his inheritance here. He sought a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Hebrews II says that all people of that class, or kind, say they seek a country, a better country, which is heaven. Jesus said to his disciples when he left them: "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." And the letter to the Hebrews describes that place, the New Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem, and tells of its companionship : human, angelic, and divine.

Now the character of the inheritance, the time of the inheritance, the where of the inheritance, and for whom: "You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." The inheritance is for those who are preserved unto the second advent of Christ, and whom he preserves through their faith. So I make the fourth item, preservation of the heirs. In Luke 22:31-32, Jesus says to Peter, this very man: "Simon, Satan hath obtained you apostles by asking that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and when thou art turned from thy error, strengthen thy brethren." Peter's error was that he could keep himself: "Though all men forsake thee yet I will not; I hold on." When the devil went to sift Peter he shook Peter's hold loose, and it didn't take much to do it, but he did not shake Christ loose from Peter. Christ didn't turn Peter loose, and Christ says, "Now when you are converted from that error, strengthen your brethren." Here he is doing it. "Who kept themselves?" nay verily, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith." "I have prayed that thy faith fail not." That is what we call the perseverance of the saints; perseverance explains our continuance through the help of God, and the preservation shows how God enables us to persevere.

Fifth item: The next item is the consummation of salvation. Verse 5: "A salvation ready to be revealed at the last time." We say that a man reaches salvation when he is justified, that he is saved. Well, he is saved from the law, but the work of salvation has not been completed in him, and it will not be completed in him until Christ

comes again, and hence it is here referred to as a salvation ready to be revealed; when Christ comes the salvation is consummated. It is consummated because then takes place the salvation of the body. That is part of ourselves. Our bodies are not saved now, but when our bodies are raised from the dead and glorified, salvation will be completed. The elevation of our souls is not complete now because we are not sanctified. I never saw anybody that was. Sixth item: The next item of the analysis: "Joy in grief," in verse 6: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials." That is what we call a paradox. Dr. Crawford in that inimitable book of his called *Christian Paradoxes*, makes this one of them. "As sorrowing, yet rejoicing," rejoicing in grief. In the sufferings which come upon Christians they are put to grief, tears flow from their eyes many times. They feel their heartstrings snap; they are bowed down with heavy sufferings, and yet in all of it there is joy. Paul praised God while his back was bloody with the stripes received from the lictors of the Romans. He rejoiced in sorrow.

Take this for example. Suppose one who is a father should lose a little child. He can stand at the grave of that little child and weep and rejoice. He rejoices in the hope of meeting him again; in the assurance of God that he will see him again, and all around our Christian life there are those two, joy and sorrow. Joy in grief. There is no way to get around it. It isn't best for us that we should get around it in this world. We must have tribulation.

## QUESTIONS

1. What can you say as to the tradition concerning Peter?
2. Who wrote this letter, and what the arguments?
3. What objection by radical critics?
4. To whom was it written?

5. What the bearing on the "Where written"?
6. Through whom written?
7. Where written, and why do you think so?
8. What the theme of this letter?
9. What the character of the letter?
10. When written?
11. What the occasion?
12. What the relations to previous New Testament books?
13. On Peter's doctrine of election answer. (1) What is it? (2) Who elects? (3) According to what? (4) What does he mean by foreknowledge? (5) In what? (6) What the meaning of "in sanctification of the Spirit?" (7) Unto what? (8) What the evidences of election to the individual? (9) Restate the work of each of the persons of the Trinity represented by the doctrine of elects.
14. What the effect of Christ's resurrection on the hope of his disciples, and the important of the doctrine involved?
15. The Christian's inheritance: (1) What the character of it? (2) Where? (3) For whom? (4) When received? (5) What the assurance that we shall realize this inheritance?
16. What the meaning of salvation in verse 51?
17. Explain the paradox "joy in grief. Illustrate.

## **XIX. UNDESERVED CHRISTIAN SUFFERING**

1 Peter 1:7-25

We have considered in two chapters the New Testament life of Peter, all the passages referring to Peter in their chronological order, and we have had a chapter on the special introduction to the first letter of Peter, and in addition have proceeded in the expository analysis of that letter down to verse 6.

That brings us to the seventh item of the expository analysis. The preceding items were these:

1. Peter's doctrine of election.
2. The effect of Christ's resurrection on the hope of the disciples.
3. The great inheritance to which that hope points.
4. The preservation of the heirs of that inheritance.
5. The consummation of the salvation.
6. Joy in grief – that paradox.

The seventh item of the expository analysis, the one which we are to discuss in this chapter, is suggested by the following words: "Ye have been put to grief in manifold trials that the proof of your faith being more precious than gold that perisheth, though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." That declaration introduces the value and purpose of the Christian's undeserved suffering in this life. Peter makes some references to the Christian's suffering where it is deserved through his faults. But the problem is that of undeserved Christian suffering in this life. This is the problem of the book of Job, also the problem of Psalm 73. It is the old story of the burning bush and of the fiery

furnace of Nebuchadnezzar. But 1 Peter throws more light on it than all the books of the Old Testament put together.

The following passages in this letter continue to bring up the subject: 1 Peter 2:20; 3:14, 17; 4:1; 4:12-18; 5:10. So that in every chapter of this letter there is a discussion of the problem of undeserved suffering. If we were to gather all the statements in the letter bearing upon that subject, we would reach the following results:

1. One object of undeserved Christian suffering is to try our faith, and his illustration is "like gold that is tried in the fire." By fusing gold in the crucible the pure metal is separated from the alloy; the gold is not destroyed by being fused, but it is cleansed and purified. We find the same thought in the book of Malachi, where he says, "Jesus will sit as a refiner of silver." The refiner puts the silver in the crucible and keeps increasing the heat and watching it, and as soon as it is thoroughly melted, then there is a separation of the dross from the silver. Let us fix the thought in our mind that God's object, or one of his objects, in permitting or sending undeserved trouble, is to refine us. It is the fiery trial of our faith. Peter did not understand that when he was subjected to the sifting trial at the request of the devil: "Simon, Satan hath obtained you apostles by asking that he may sift you as wheat." He could not have gotten the permission for another purpose, but he did get it for that purpose, for wheat ought to be sifted; it does not hurt it even if the devil shakes the sieve. We thereby get rid of the chaff.

2. These trials, no matter who the immediate agent, are by the will of God. The will of the devil was indeed in that trying of Peter, but so was the will of God. In other words, the devil's will in the matter was permissive and limited. We may be slandered and the man or demon who slanders us may be prompted by envy, hatred, or malice, but if we are submissive to the dominant and benevolent divine will, great good accrues.

3. "Beloved brethren, think it not strange concerning this fiery trial that has come upon you." That is the first impression of the average Christian. He is amazed at what has come upon him. A strange, a very strange providence!

There are several reasons why he should not think it strange. One reason is that such trials are common to all of God's people; always have been and always will be. Paul says, "No temptation hath come to you but such as is common to man." In other words, "It isn't worth while to try to make a martyr out of yourself by supposing that you are a special case." Another reason why we should not think it strange is that that is the only way to accomplish certain good results – results that are intensely beneficial. A good sister in the church in Waco when I was pastor, wanted me to join with her in prayer that she might have patience, and I asked her how she wanted that patience to come, handed down in a sealed package from heaven, or by God's method? She said of course God's method. "Then, my dear sister," I said to her, "there is only one mill that I know of that grinds the grist of patience, and that is tribulation." "Tribulation worketh patience," and desiring patience we must not complain of the antecedent and necessary tribulation.

If we want permanent relief from an incorrigible tooth, we must endure the ordeal of extraction.

4. Our patient endurance of affliction is a powerful means of convicting sinners of sin. A Christian who meekly endures, without murmuring, what God puts on him, and goes right on saying in his heart and in his life that the Judge of all the earth doeth right, that man convicts sinners. They know they can't do that and that he has something they have not. And not only is it a way of convicting sinners, but it is an evidence, a token of our salvation, that we belong to the elect, that we belong to God's people.

5. This endurance of undeserved affliction is acceptable with God. No matter what it costs us to bear a thing patiently, we have this consolation: "It hurts me, but it is acceptable with God."



6. The next thought he sets forth is, that we are called unto these things. Every man that is a Christian in some way received a call. Just as Jesus met Paul in the middle of the road, and said, "Saul! Saul!" So in a way through the gospel we are called. There was a time when we felt that call. Now that very first intimation to us that God's Holy Spirit sent us, called us unto suffering. When Jesus called Saul he spoke to Ananias and said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my sake."

7. The next thought that Peter presents with very great force is the example of Christ. The servant should not seek to be better than his master; to be exempt from things that his master has to bear; it was in the mind of Christ to be a sufferer. It was a joy to him, as he looked to the recompense of the reward, and so Peter says that Christ suffered that he might put before us an example. True, there are some things in which the sufferings of Christ are not an example to us. We can't follow Christ as a vicarious expiation for sin. But we can follow Christ in most of the sufferings that came upon him when he was in the flesh. "Can you be baptized with the baptism that I am to be baptized with?" And he answers the question: "Ye shall indeed be baptized with that baptism. The waves roll over you."

Then Peter makes this point that looks like it is too simple for a statement, yet when we keep turning it over in our minds, we get something out of it. He says, "It is better to suffer wrongfully than justly." Everybody in the world suffers; there is no escape from that. Some people suffer justly; they deserve it; and some suffer wrongfully. Peter says of the two, it is better to suffer wrongfully than to suffer justly. He then makes this capital point that whenever we have a trial as a Christian, when something that we didn't deserve has come upon us, we then share with Christ; a partnership is established between us and the Lord.

When he was on his way to the cross, and it was heavy, and he had been subjected to great maltreatment and was hungry and weary and wasted, as he staggered under his burden, "Simon, a Cyrenian, they

compelled to bear the cross" of Jesus. I don't suppose Simon did it voluntarily, but somebody laid hold of this passer-by and compelled him to share that burden with Christ. And though unwilling to suffer voluntarily as a Christian, somebody will compel us to bear the cross of Christ; some outsider will take a hand in it, and so we might as well volunteer. Peter says that whenever we thus suffer, it is an evidence that the Spirit of glory and of God resteth on us.

Frequently he makes this point: That judgment must commence at the house of God. That is where it has to commence and there is a judgment in this world and a judgment in the world to come, and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear? We must take our choice: The judgment now or hereafter. Where will we have ours? We are wise to let the hand of God rest on us as heavy as it may in this life; that makes it easier in the time to come. They are exceedingly foolish who dodge suffering in this life; who shut their eyes to the fact that somewhere, some time, every man must render an account of himself to God and must be a burden-bearer. Let us take it as heavy as we can stand it in this life, and it will be all the better in the next.

Take the case of David to illustrate it: In that case it was deserved. God says to him, "I have put away thy sin," that is, 80 far as the future's concerned. "When you get to heaven there won't be the weight of a pin against you up there; but you sinned down here on earth and you must be chastened." But that is different from the problem we are considering here. He says, "If any man suffer, let him not suffer as a wrongdoer, for if when you are buffeted for your faults, what glory is it if you take it patiently? But if ye suffer as a Christian, the Spirit of glory and of God resteth on you." He winds up his letter with a climax on that problem. It is a precious text to me, and it was to Spurgeon: "The God of all grace" – grace in the daytime and at night; in sickness and in health; in good and evil report; in this world and in the world to come. "The God of all grace, after that ye have suffered a while, will perfect you himself; himself strengthen you; himself establish you, himself perfect you."

The eighth item of the expository analysis is based on this scripture: "Whom having not seen, ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." What a theme for preaching! I have it this way in my analysis: Loving, believing, rejoicing, and receiving without seeing. In the first chapter on the life of Peter we were examining those experiences or observations on his own life that made the most impression on his own mind. and one of the things so noted was Peter's presence when Thomas said, "Except I put my fingers in the print of the nails in his hands, and thrust my hand in his side, I will not believe." Peter was also present when Jesus came into the assembly and said, "Thomas, behold my hands, reach hither your fingers, thrust your hand in my side." And Thomas believed, but Jesus said, "Blessed are they who not seeing, yet believe."

That saying made a great impression on Peter, believing without seeing. Andrew Fuller in his works, has a sermon on what faith is contrasted with. He says faith is not contrasted. with frames and feelings. If we feel good today and felt bad yesterday, that is what he means by frames and feelings, but faith is contrasted with sight. "We walk by faith, not by sight." Faith takes hold of the invisible. Moses endured as seeing him who is invisible. In other words, faith is the eye to the soul. Our carnal eye cannot see heaven, invisible to natural sight. To give an illustration: If we step out at night and throw our eyes up toward heaven, we see a splash across the sky called the Milky Way. The natural eye cannot discern between the parts of the whiteness, but when we look at it through the big telescopes in the observatory, that splash of whiteness differentiates; it separates into millions of distinct worlds. What the telescope is to the natural eye, so faith is to the soul. It brings distant things near and outlines them so we can take hold of them. Peter says not only are we called on to believe without seeing, but we are to love without seeing, and we are to rejoice with joy unspeakable without seeing, and we are to receive the salvation of our souls without

seeing. It is all visible by faith. Faith gives substance to things hoped for, and is the evidence of the things not seen.

The ninth item of the analysis is the unity and glory of the plan of salvation based on 1 Peter 1:10-11: "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow. To whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven, which things angels desire to look into." Analyzing that compound sentence we get the following thoughts:

1. The unity of the two testimonies; they strike hands. What these Old Testament prophets foretold, our New Testament apostles proclaimed as facts and proclaimed them with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. The two parts fit into each other; one is the development of the other, so that there is a unity in the plan of revelation.

2. Wherever a revelation comes from God in the form of a prophecy, it becomes a subject of inquiry to the receiver of it. Imagine Isaiah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, looking upon that mysterious suffering servant of the Lord revealed to him: "Who hath believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? His visage was marred more than that of any of the sons of men. He was esteemed stricken and afflicted of God. All our sins were put on him." Immediately the question came up in his mind: "What time and what manner of time will this be?" Those prophets searched diligently. Searched on what point? As to the time and manner of time that the things they foretold would take place. But not only the prophets tried to look into it, but the angels tried to look into it. It

attracted the attention of the angels: "Which things the angels desire to look into."

3. When they so searched, it was revealed unto them that these things which they were foretelling were not for themselves, but for us, to come long after they had passed away. God let them see that these wonderful things about Christ's sufferings and those marvelous glories that would follow his sufferings, would not come in their time. Observe the analogy of the New Testament prophecy and notice how now, as well as then, men want to get at the time and manner of time of the second advent. When Christ predicted the destruction of the temple and the end of the world, Peter, with others, asked, "Lord, when shall these things be?" Notice that he had that inquiring spirit which the old prophets had, the curiosity to look into the question of time and circumstance, and every one of us is an interrogation point on the same things. A brilliant lady in the days of Queen Anne made this remark about Alexander Pope, the great poet: "Why is Pope like an interrogation point? Because he is a little crooked thing that asks questions." The witticism was brutally cruel in its reference to his small, malformed body. But every one of us is an interrogation point on the time and the manner of the second coming of Christ. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom?" "Lord, will it be next week?" "Lord, can't we figure it out as we do an eclipse, and make it known to the people, the day that all these things take place?" But how foolish, for when the wheels of time roll around they grind into powder all their mathematical calculations.

Our Lord would not answer that question. He would answer us just as he answered the prophets. He can reveal to us as he revealed to them, that these things are certain, that they are coming and that they are for somebody, but not for us. Peter was one of them. He knew the second advent was not for him, because Christ had told him that he would die by crucifixion; so he knew it would not come in his time. So the Thessalonians went wild until corrected by Paul. It is one of the most curious things in psychology – a man's curiosity to know the very things of the least concern to him. Wouldn't one

rather be saved than to know the time of salvation? Wouldn't we rather be sure of our salvation than of the time of it? "When Thou, home. O! how can I bear the piercing thought, what if my my righteous Judge, shall come to take thy ransomed people name should be left out?" Had we not rather be sure of the. fact that we will not be left out than to be sure of the day?

Let me assure you solemnly that the great power of the second advent, just like the first, is not in the day of its coming, but it is in the fact of its coming and what follows.

I once took up this line of thought: "Which things the angels desire to look into," and I followed it all through the Bible. When we get on an angel's-trail, we are on a good trail. I followed it up all through the Bible to see, just as far as revelation would show, about the angels. I found them intensely interested in the affairs of this world from away back yonder when God made the world, and the sons of God shouted for joy. I found that from the time that he made it angels above, and angels below, angels of love, and angels of woe, concentrated their attention on the problems of man's earthly and eternal life, and therefore, in those symbolical representations in Solomon's Temple, the cherubim were carved as bending over the mercy seat and looking down there where the blood falls, intently looking down (that is what the word means). They were investigating the question of salvation by the shedding of blood.

Then their figures were represented on the veil, and when we come to the New Testament we find that they take stock in everything from the announcement on. They are not only at the cradle, but at the tomb, and a shining angel announced the resurrection. Paul says that whenever God's people come together let the women have covering on their heads because of the angels; they are there. There are angels hovering round. They are students. They have not omniscience – they have to learn by studying, by looking, therefore, Paul says that the church is the instructor of angels. "It shall be made known unto the angels the manifold wisdom of God by the church."

Newt here we have this plan of salvation with the angels studying about it and the prophets studying about it.

This brings us to the first exhortation in the book: "Wherefore," that is, the "wherefore" looks back at every preceding thing, "girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." In other words, "That is the thing to think about. Don't you set your mind on the time when, but on the grace that is to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "As children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance, but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living, because it is written, 'Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.' "

That is his first exhortation. Peter does not let the taste get out of our mouth when giving a doctrine until he has a practical use for it. Doctrine is not something to be debated about, but assimilated in the life. A man may be go sound in doctrine that he is nothing but sound. Doctrine must be applied. We must so apply every revelation of God; every truth of God. Peter was a practical man.

The next point in my analysis I call, "What prayer entails." "And if ye call on him as a Father who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to each man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear." If we pray, what follows? Let us pass the time of sojourning here in fear. In other words, Christian prayer is a lot of foolishness if it is like school children slipping along down the street, running up to the front door and ringing the bell, then running off before anybody comes. If we ring the bell, if we pray, there is an obligation entailed when we pray. If we call on him as Father, we should pass the time of our sojourning here in fear. That covers his thought so well we will go to the next.

Our next division is "The Cost of Redemption," and it covers a great deal of space. Let us read it: "Knowing that ye are redeemed, not with corruptible things) with silver or gold, from your vain manner

of life, handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."

So, in discussing redemption, the first thing presented is its cost. What does it mean? To redeem is to buy back. It is the buying back of a lost soul. What did it cost? He says, "You were bought back, not with money, silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ"; that is the price he paid for it. He then says, following his thought on redemption, "Who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake." This was the redeemer who, on the cross, paid the price of our redemption. But that was not the beginning of it. He was foreknown from the foundation of the world.

What took place on Calvary was the result of what took place before the world was made. It was not accidental, it was not an emergency prompted by the startled and surprised mind of God, seeing the devil had gotten away with the human race. At the beginning, and before God ever said, "Let the world be," Christ knew all about it, and Christ, the Redeemer, was then in covenant with the Father. While he was foreknown before the foundation of the world, he was manifested in those last times, the fullness of time. Think of it, four thousand years I That will give us some conception of God. A thousand years are with God as one day, or like a watch in the night. Four thousand years that purpose of the Redeemer seemed to be slumbering. Every now and then a star would flash out a prophetic light, coming yet nearer and nearer to the truth: through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Joseph, etc., he must come; he must be born in Bethlehem of Judea. Getting nearer and nearer, at last he was manifested. God was manifested. The Redeemer came. And so will be the next advent.

Continuing the thought of redemption, he says, "Who through him are believers in God." We should stop to think where our faith came from, and how utterly unknowable God is without Christ; now we



can get hold of him. My own heart leaped for joy at the revelation of God the Father, when my soul by faith-took hold on Jesus Christ the Son. I never before had understood God. Jesus revealed God to me. It was through him that I believed in God. I saw God now to be loving and near, tender, and compassionate.

The redemption proof. The next thought that Peter presents is, "God the Father who raised him from the dead and gave him glory." How calm was he at the last, when the three hours of darkness passed! Our Lord Jesus Christ, the only undisturbed soul in the universe, lifts up his eyes and prays, "Father, I have done what you told me to do; I have finished the work that you told me to do. Now, Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with you before the world was." And he went down to death in unshaken faith that God would raise him and take him back to glory.

The next thought on redemption is its method of application, as presented in this verse: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." Now the application of the redemption – "having been begotten again" – we were begotten once of our earthly fathers and their seed, corruptible seed. That birth introduces us to the depravity of our sires. But when we get in touch with redemption we have a new birth, a birth from above and of a different seed, a different sire; the next time our sire is God. In the other case it was man, and since God is our sire in this regeneration we are born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, and the instrumentality employed is the word of God. "Of his own will he brought us forth with the words of truth," says James. Peter himself adds: "having been begotten, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." "For all flesh withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth forever." Some old-time Baptists contended that the word was not the seed, but the

instrument of seed-planting, that the seminal principle of life was communicated through the word.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the problem of the book of Job, of Psalm 73, and of this book?
2. What two symbolic representations of this problem in the Old Testament?
3. How does the discussion in this book compare with the Old Testament light on the subject?
4. On the undeserved suffering of the righteous answer: (1) What one of the objects? (2) By what are they permitted? (3) What usually the first impression made by them, and why should the Christian not think it strange? (4) What the effect of the patient endurance of them on the world? (5) What the consolation of undeserved affliction? (6) How is this subject related to the purpose of God? (7) What encouragement by way of example? (8) What distinction does Peter make on the subject of human suffering?
5. What great text for preaching? Give the author's analysis.
6. What incident in Peter's life brought forth this statement from him?
7. With what is faith contrasted, and what sermon cited?
8. Give an analysis of 1 Peter 1:10-11.
9. What is a more important question than the question of time?
10. What interest displayed in man's salvation?
11. What the first exhortation in the book?

12. What does prayer entail?
13. What did our redemption cost?
14. What the meaning of "foreknown," v. 20?
15. How are we through Christ believers in God?
16. What is the redemption proof?
17. What the method of the application of redemption?

## XX. WHAT TO PUT AWAY

1 Peter 2:1 to 4:6

This section commences at 1 Peter 2:1: What to put away, and on what to be nourished. The Christian should put away wickedness, guile, hypocrisies, and evil speaking. The nourishment is "the sincere milk of the word, which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby." No man can grow in the Christian life without feeding upon Christian food, and therefore men who preach the word are said to break the Bread of life to the people.

This brings us to a new and emphatic item of the analysis: "The spiritual temple," (2:4-10), as follows: "Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because it is contained in Scripture. Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: And he that believeth in him shall not be put to shame. For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve, The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner; and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; For they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

Consider first the foundation of the spiritual house. The characteristics of this foundation are first, that it is a livingstone, not a dead one. The foundation of Solomon's Temple was inert matter. The foundation stone of the spiritual house of which Peter speaks was the Lord Jesus Christ himself; not dead, but living. This foundation is not only alive, but the stone which constitutes it was elected. That means it was chosen. God selected that foundation. As

it is God's house, it is for him to say what substructure shall uphold the superstructure. For this purpose he elects his only begotten Son. Not only elect, but it is precious. The word precious there has the sense of costly. We say a precious stone in contradistinction from a stone of no particular value. Precious Christ. From that word we get our word "appreciate." To appreciate anything is to put it at its value. To depreciate it is to put it below its price. So it is not only an elect stone, but a costly one.

The next thing in this spiritual building is that all of the material that goes into this spiritual house must be living material. We also are living stones. No man can be put into the temple of God who is not made alive by the Spirit of God. The apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 3, referring to the foundation, says, "There can be but one foundation." The building is God's building, and that he, a preacher, is a co-laborer with God in putting up that building. Now he says that if in putting up that temple this human laborer shall put in material that will not stand the first test, all that material is lost, and the man who puts it in suffers loss in the day that tries his work by fire. He refers then to the building material used. Some people use hay, wood, and stubble for thatching a house; they put that on the roof, and some build the walls of wood. Combustible material will perish in the fire. There is a passage in Jeremiah which refers to the same thing, that in putting up the spiritual temple we should not daub with untempered mortar. Mortar must be such that when it is dry it will hold together. Now the thought is the same here, that this spiritual house of which Christ is the foundation (and he is the only foundation) must be made of spiritual, living material. That distinguished Christ's house from Solomon's house. This passage interprets Matthew 16:18. It shows that Peter never supposed himself to be the rock on which the church is built.

The next thing in connection with the spiritual house is that its members (here he changes the figure, no longer speaking of them as the component parts of the wall, but speaking of them as servants in the house) constitute a priesthood. Every member of God's true flock

is a priest without regard to age or sex. They are all priests – a spiritual priesthood. In the Old Testament the priesthood was a special class. In the New Testament God's people constitute a kingdom of priests. Every one of them is a priest.

The next thing is the kind of sacrifices that this priesthood offers. In the Old Testament the sacrifices were symbolical. Here they are spiritual. Praise is spiritual; prayer also is, contribution is, when given from the right motive. The entire family of God are priests, offering sacrifices unto God. The next thought (here the figure is changed again) is: There was an old nation deriving its descent from Abraham. Now Christians belong to a new nation. That is clearly expressed here in the passage. It says, "Ye are an elect race," that is, "you derive your descent from the spiritual seed, Christ being the head of the race." The old-time Israel was a national people made up of those who by fleshly descent constituted its members. Now we are a spiritual nation. The people of God are conceived of as a nation as well as a race.

Now we come to the purpose, and that is expressed in these words: "That ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." That is the purpose. That is really the purpose of every Christian organization, of every Christian life, that the Christian should show forth the excellency of God, his Saviour.

We have in 1 Peter 2:11-17 some general exhortations that do not particularly need any exposition, and in verses 18-22. we have some exhortations based on the fact that a large number of the Christian people in that day were slaves, servants, and he starts out with that idea. He speaks to slaves: "Be in subjection to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward, for this is acceptable, if for conscience toward God a man endureth griefs, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye sin, and are buffeted for it, ye take it patiently? But if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye shall take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."

All this bears on the hard condition of the slave at that time; that the slave would be put to grief wrongfully; that he would be buffeted wrongfully; that he would be reviled wrongfully. Now what are these slaves to do if they are Christians? He does not preach as a member of an abolition society. He doesn't propose to introduce any revolutionary measures. But he tries to fix the minds of those slaves upon better things: First, that they can as slaves illustrate the truth and the power of the Christian religion, and can show forth the excellencies of God. That if they are buffeted, so was Christ. If they are reviled, so was Christ. If they are maltreated, so was he. "The thing to do, whatever your lot) is in it to illustrate the power of the Christian religion, and you will do more good that way than by trying to organize a slave insurrection."

I have a Texas friend who wishes me to quit preaching the gospel and preach socialism. He says that I am wasting my time and gifts. I tell him that I am following in the footsteps of our Lord. I go through the world seeing many things that are wrong – wrong politically, wrong economically, wrong in a thousand other ways. If I enter into this political arena, try to revolutionize the world as a politician, I will certainly fail as a preacher. Other men before me have tried it and failed. I do a better thing; I can preach a gospel whose principles will reform society, whose principles will ultimately bring about the greatest good to the greatest number in all things.

In 1 Peter 3:1-7 he discusses the relation of husband and wife, and very much as Paul discusses it in his letters. In every letter Paul writes, he takes up the case of the slave, the husband, the wife, the citizen, the child, the parent. Peter does the same thing, and shows that real Christianity in the heart of a good woman will prompt her to honor and respect her husband, to be obedient, and will prompt the husband to love and cherish the wife, and that a married state blessed by the power of religion will do more toward reforming society than all the divorce courts in the world. That is his way of dealing with social, domestic, economic, and political questions.

He calls attention to the fact that Christian women, like all other women, like adornment. That is characteristic of the sex, and he is not depreciating a woman wearing nice apparel – that is not the thing with him – but in the method of the New Testament teaching, he is showing a higher kind of adornment when he says this: "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price." There are many teachings of the New Testament that, taken on their face, seem to condemn external adornment altogether.

Dr. Sampey in a judicious article calls attention to the power of contrast in certain Hebraisms, and shows how that principle goes all through the New Testament. When God says, "I will have none of their offerings," he does not mean that he would not accept the offerings which he had commanded them to make, but he means when compared to what they signify they are but the chaff of the wheat. If a woman lives merely for dress, and her adornment is merely jewels and silks and ribbons and things of that kind, then it is a very poor kind of external beauty. But over against that he puts the true adornment of the soul, and virtues and graces of the Christian religion, and that gives her in the true idea of dress, the most shining apparel in the world. That is his thought.

In 3:10, we reach a new idea in the analysis: The way of a happy life. Let us see what it is: "He that would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him turn away from the evil and do good. Let him seek peace and pursue it."

Here are three directions for a happy life, summed up as follows: "Watch out what you do; watch out about what you pursue." Now if a man goes around talking evil and doing evil and pursuing fusses, it is impossible for him to have a happy life. The reason is expressed in verse 12: "For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his



ears are open to their supplications; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." That is the reason. God is above man, his eye is on us all the time, his ears listen. We are under his jurisdiction, his face is against them that do evil. His favor is toward them that do well. Now the question comes up about a happy life. I am to do these three things: Keep my tongue from evil, turn away from doing evil, and live in peace and not fusses. And the reason that those directions will bring happiness is that God is against the bad and for the good. That constitutes the way of a happy life.

At the beginning of a great meeting in Caldwell, a good many years ago, the old pastor preached the opening sermon from that text: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their supplications, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil"; and his theme was the government of God. It was a fine introduction to a revival.

Continuing the thought, he says, "Who is he that will harm you if ye be zealous of that which is good?" That is, take the general run of things. If one moves to a community, and while living in it he does not speak evil of his neighbors, he does good and not evil, and he avoids fusses and cultivates peace, now who is going to harm him? Now as a general rule (there are exceptions to it) he will be liked in the community.

That is the rule; now the exceptions: "But even if ye should suffer for righteousness' sake, blessed are ye; fear not their fear, neither be troubled." Suppose as an exception that one moves into a community and lives right and talks right, but on account of his religion he is subjected to ill-treatment – and that may happen, has happened, there is always a possibility of that exception coming in – now what if he does suffer, he is blessed in it; nobody can take anything away from him that God cannot restore to him a thousand-fold, or give him something better in the place of it.

The spirits in prison: This is a hard passage. Let us look at it carefully: "Christ being put to death in the flesh but made alive in

the spirit; in which he also went and preached unto the spirits in prison that aforetime were disobedient, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved through water; which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."

I call attention first to the textual difficulty. The version that I have before me reads this way: "being put to death in the flesh, and made alive in the spirit." This translation contrasts Christ's soul with Christ's flesh, and says that he was put to death in his body, but made alive in his soul. The same translators take the passage in Timothy 3: "was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit," and there they again make the spirit refer to Christ's soul as opposed to Christ's body.

I take the position unhesitatingly that they are in error in both places – that there is no reference in either place to the soul of Christ. Christ was put to death in the flesh, and that flesh was made alive by the Holy Spirit. That is what it means. He was declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection) and in other places he was manifested in the flesh, and so manifested he was justified by the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit" refers not to Christ's soul in either passage, but refers to the Holy Spirit. That with me is a capital point. It is the later modern radical critics that insist on making "spirit" in both of these passages refer not to the Holy Spirit, but to Christ's soul, and hence their teaching of this passage is that Christ died as to his body, but was made alive as to his soul, and hence in his soul he went and preached to the other spirits.

My first objection to their view is this: That Christ was not made alive in his soul at the time he was put to death in his flesh – nothing

was the matter with his soul. The question is whether it means the Holy Spirit or Christ's soul. I say it means the Holy Spirit.

The second thought is: "being put to death in the flesh, but made alive by the Holy Spirit." His body that was put to death was revived by the Holy Spirit, made alive, in which Holy Spirit he went (in past tense) and preached to those that are now disembodied spirits and in prison. But when he preached to them, they were not disembodied. Christ preached through the Holy Spirit to the antediluvians while the ark was preparing, as Genesis 6:30 says, "My Spirit will not always strive with man." Through the Holy Spirit, Christ was preaching to those people while the ark was preparing. The very same Holy Spirit, when Christ's body died, made it alive in the resurrection. So in answering the question: "To whom did he preach?" I say that he preached to the antediluvians. When did he preach to them? When they were disobedient, in the days of Noah. How did he preach to them? By the Holy Spirit. Where are those people now? They are in prison, shut up unto the judgment of the great day; they are the dead now, and in the next chapter he will say the gospel was preached to them that are dead for this cause. They are dead now, but when they were living they had the gospel preached to them, but they rejected it.

The theory of the translation before us is open to these insuperable objections:

(1) It fails to explain how he was "made alive in his own spirit when his body died."

(2) It teaches a probation after death which is opposed to all the trend of the Scriptures.

(3) It provides a work for Christ's disembodied soul contrary to the work elsewhere assigned to him in that state, namely, his going to the Father (Luke 23:46) to make immediate atonement by offering his blood shed on the cross (see Lev. 16; Heb. 9:24ff.). He was elsewhere and on quite a different work.

(4) It fails to explain why, if his disembodied soul went on such a mission, it was limited to antediluvians only.

(5) It robs him of his Old Testament work through the Holy Spirit.

(6) It leaves out the making alive of Christ's dead body by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:4), so powerfully described by Peter elsewhere (Acts 2:22-36).

I believe that Jesus entered into hell, but when? Not as a disembodied soul between the death and resurrection of his body, nor after he arose from the dead. We have clearly before seen what he did while disembodied, and what he did after his body was raised. He entered into hell, soul and body, on the cross, in the three hours of darkness, when he was forsaken of the Father, and met the dragon and his hosts, and triumphed over them, making a show of them openly.

To show that the Spirit here is the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit made alive Christ's body that was put to death in the flesh, he is now going to bring in the subject of the resurrection. The Holy Spirit made Christ's body alive in the resurrection, and the illustration used is the waters in the flood – that the waters of the flood, in a certain sense, saved a few. The very waters that destroyed man saved a few; that is, those that obeyed God and got into the ark, eight of them, they were saved by the water. Now he says in like figure, or the antitype of the flood, is baptism, and that baptism now saves us; that is what it says. The only question is how does it save us? He answers both positively and negatively. .Negatively he says it does not put away the filth of the flesh. That is what it does not do. It doesn't mean that. There, flesh means the carnal nature, and not the dirt that is on the outside of the body. If we take the word, "flesh," and run it through the New Testament, we will see what he refers to there, that baptism does not cleanse the carnal nature. So the salvation referred to is not an internal, spiritual cleansing of the nature. When we talk about baptism saving us, we must be sure that it does not accomplish that salvation. Well, what salvation does it

accomplish? It accomplishes a salvation by answering a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Well, what is that?

Let us get at the precise thought. We want to see how baptism saves. It saves us in a figure, not in reality. It does not put away carnal nature. It saves us in a figure – the figure of the resurrection. Now that is exactly what it does. It gives us a picture of salvation, a pictorial, symbolical resurrection. In baptism we are buried, and in baptism we are raised. Now through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which that baptism memorializes – that is salvation. Not a real one, but a figurative one – that pictorial representation of salvation. That as we have been buried in the likeness of Christ's death, so shall we be in the likeness of his resurrection. It is likeness, not the thing itself – a picture. It is true that baptism washes away sin, because Ananias says to Paul, "Arise, and wash away thy sins." But it does not actually wash away sins, because it is the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin. It does wash away sin symbolically and in no other way. Baptism saves, not actually, by change of the carnal nature, but in a figure. It is the figure of the resurrection. That is the way it saves.

The literature upon that passage in Peter is immense, and there are a great many people in the Church of England today who hold that in the interval between the death and the resurrection of Christ he spent the time visiting lost souls and preaching to them. We have already shown what he was doing between his death and the resurrection: that his spirit went to the Father; that it went with the penitent thief into the paradise of God; that he went there to sprinkle his blood of expiation on the mercy seat in order to make atonement, and then he came back. And when he came, there took place what this text says, "He who was put to death in the flesh and made alive by the Holy Spirit," as to his body. The Holy Spirit raised his body. The text has not a word to say about what Christ's spirit did between his death and his resurrection – not a thing. But this text does say that in the Holy Spirit, before he ever became manifest in the flesh, he used to

preach, but not in person. In other words, he is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, and that through the Holy Spirit the gospel was preached in Old Testament times. That Abraham was able to see Christ's day and rejoiced; that Abel was enabled by faith to take hold of Christ. All these people back yonder in the old world had the gospel preached to them. They had light, and it was spiritual light.

## QUESTIONS

1. On the thought in 1 Peter 2:2, that the soul needs a healthful and nutritious diet as well as the body, what things must be put away as poisonous, and what must be used as nourishing?
2. In the figure of a spiritual house (2:4-10), show what is the Christian temple, what the foundation and chief cornerstone, what the priesthood, what the sacrifices, what the object, contrasting each point with the Jewish type.
3. In Matthew 16:18 Christ says to Peter, "On this rock I will build my church," and evidently here (2:4-7) there is a reference to our Lord's words, hence the question: Who is the foundation rock on which the church is built as Peter himself understood Christ's words, and who the rock as Isaiah understood it (Isaiah 28:16), which Peter quoted, and as Paul understood it (1 Corinthians 3:9-16)?
4. In 2:9 state the points of contrast between Israel after the flesh and the spiritual Isaiah.
5. In 2:11-3:7 are exhortations to Christians as pilgrims, as subjects of human government, as slaves, as husbands, and wives, parents and children. (1) Show, how by the exhortations Christianity is not revolutionary in its teachings on citizenship, slavery and society, and how they correspond with other New Testament teachings on the same points. (2) Show the meaning of such Hebraisms as 3:3-57.

6. What the force of "bare our sins in his body upon the tree," or in other words, what the scriptural meaning of "to bear sins"?

7. What Peter's rule of a happy life?

8. On 3:18-21, with 4:6, answer: (1) Does "spirit," the last word of verse 18, mean Christ's own human spirit, or the Holy Spirit? (2) How did Christ preach to the antediluvians, i.e., in his own person or by another, and if another, what other? (3) When did he so preach, while the antediluvians were living and disobedient while the ark was preparing and by the Holy Spirit (Gen. 6:3), or to them in prison after death, either between his death and resurrection, or between his resurrection and ascension, and if to them after their death and imprisonment, what did he preach? (4) Did Christ, as the sinner's substitute, enter the pangs of hell, when, in the body or out of it, and what the proof? (5) On 4:6, was the gospel preached to the dead before they died, or afterward? (6) Show the difficulties and heresies of interpreting "spirit" in verse 18 as Christ's own spirit and his preaching to men after their death, either between his own death and resurrection, or between his resurrection and ascension. (7) On 3:21, what the meaning of "filth of the flesh," is it dirt of the body, or the defilement of the carnal nature? And then how does baptism now save us?

## **XXI. SANE THINKING ON THE SECOND ADVENT AND OTHER THINGS**

1 Peter 4:7 to 5:14

This section commences with 1 Peter 4:7: "But the end of all things is at hand." It is an important thing to notice how every apostolic writer dwells upon the second advent, the end of the world, and the Judgment as contemporaneous. Some people place the advent a long ways this side of the end of the world and of the general judgment. But it is not so placed in the Bible. Certain things come together – Christ's advent, the resurrection of the just and the unjust, the general judgment, the winding up of earthly affairs.

Peter, like all others, makes an argument upon the end of all things as at hand, so that our next thought is: What does he mean by saying "at hand"? To teach that there is but a little period of time from his utterance of this saying until Christ comes again? We can't find that to be his meaning, because in his second letter, where he discusses this subject elaborately, he shows that it will be quite a long time, so long that men will begin to say: "Where is the promise of his coming?" What he means, then, by "at hand," and by "a little time," is not in our sight, but in God's sight. As he explains it in his second letter, a thousand years are with the Lord as one day and one day is as a thousand years.

Having established his meaning of "at hand," we see how that form of expression is used elsewhere in the New Testament. Paul says in precisely the same way in Philippians 4:5: "The time is at hand," and James 5:8 says: "It draweth nigh." And we have already seen in Hebrews 10:37 it says: "Yet a little while and he that cometh shall come and will not tarry." When we get a little further on, we will see that 1 John 2:8 says: "It is the last hour." And yet in his book of Revelation he shows a long series of events that must precede the advent, the end of the world, and the judgment.



But on the second advent Peter says, "Therefore, be ye of sound mind." If any theme on earth calls for sanity of mind, it is the theme of the second advent. That is the very theme upon which people become unsound of mind. Take for example the church at Thessalonica. Paul preached there and spoke of the coming of Christ, and of that coming drawing near and how they should watch, whereupon they went wild, and were so sure that it was only a few days until Christ's coming that it was not worth while to attend to the ordinary affairs of life, so they quit work and went around discussing the second advent. He had to rebuke them in his second letter, and tell them they misunderstood. We know that in the Reformation days the Mad Men of Munster became of unsound mind in regard to the doctrine of the second advent. They went to such extremes that the government of Central Europe called out their forces and almost destroyed them in what is known as the Peasant War. A similar case of affairs arose in the days of Oliver Cromwell and the English revolution. They were called Fifth Monarchy Men. Going back to Daniel's prophecy about the four monarchies, and then the monarchy of God following it, they took up the idea that the time was at hand for establishing the Fifth Monarchy here upon earth. They were great enthusiasts and fanatics, and did a vast deal of harm.

In the United States there have been several periods of that unsoundness of mind upon the subject of the second advent – the Millerites, for example. Eggleston wrote a great romance, *The End of the World*. He vividly portrays this great excitement. They set the day when the world was coming to an end, and made all their preparations for it. Many gave away their property, some beggared themselves, wives and children, deeding away everything they had, and according to an old saying, "Got their ascension robes ready." Nothing to do but put on their white robes and glide up to heaven. When the predicted day came, a crowd of them assembled to go up together, but Christ did not come, and they went down just as fast as they had come up, and of course a wave of infidelity followed. They said, "You can't believe anything that is said in the Bible upon the

subject." And so from fanaticism in one direction they turned to infidelity in another.

Peter says, "Be ye, therefore, of sound mind." In every community there are excitable people whose thoughts lead them to despise the common everyday things of life and seek out novelties; they bite at things of this kind. The Seventh Day Adventist drops his hook among them and catches some; the Mormon comes along and catches others. About the second advent of our Lord, the important things are its certainty and purposes, not its time. We are sure it will come, but it cannot come until all the antecedent things shall take place, and our attitude toward it should be to be sure in our hearts of the fact that it will come, and not that the power of the advent consists in its suddenness.

He shows in what respect this soundness of mind should be manifest: "Be sober unto prayer." "Drunk" is opposite to "sober." One can be drunk unto prayer as well as he can be sober unto prayer. I remember once that an old lady came to me during a meeting I was holding, and said, "You will never get a feeling in you in this meeting, until you appoint a sunrise prayer meeting." I said, "It is certainly a good thing to have prayer at sunrise or sunset, but you don't mean to say that it is essential to the outpouring of the power of God that we should lay special stress upon any particular hour?" She said, "Yes, I do. You appoint a prayer meeting at midnight, another at sunrise, and you will see that the blessings will come." That is superstition. God is ready to hear his children at any time.

I have seen the same fanaticism manifested with reference to prayer in a preacher insisting that one could not be converted, that his prayers would not be answered, and that God would not answer the prayers of his people for him, if he did not come up to the "mourner's bench." Whenever people make a fetish out of anything they are sure to go to the extreme. I believe very heartily that it does good in a meeting to call for expressions from the people, to take some step of some kind, and I have seen cases of those who

came up to be prayed for and be instructed and were benefited by coming together, coming out of the congregation and taking a front seat (they may call it a mourner's bench if they want to; it makes no difference), but whenever one takes the position that salvation is limited to a special spot, or to certain conditions, then he is getting fanatical. I would say to the man who limits God's mercy to arbitrary conditions prescribed by himself that he had better surrender those conditions, and every other condition. One can go to an extreme in that way. "Be of sound mind, even in prayers, and above all things, be fervent in your love among yourselves."

Christian sanity is manifested in brotherly love as well as upon any other point. A man who goes off half-cocked, at a tangent, upon some particular subject, and yet shows that he has no love for the brethren, has already advertised that he is a crank. The modest, most humble, and sweetest everyday Christians are the best. This applies to Christians as stewards of the manifold grace of God. One man has the gift of speaking with tongues. If he gets mentally unbalanced, he will want to be all the time speaking with tongues without any reference to the propriety of the case. Paul gives an account of that kind of people in 1 Corinthians 14, where they turned the assembly into a bedlam. He says, "What is this, brethren? Everyone of you hath a tongue, a psalm, hath an interpretation," which was well enough if exercised to edification. But all commence at once, here one speaking in Aramaic, another in German, another in Latin, and another in Greek, one singing a psalm, one offering a prayer, and the whole becomes a jumble of confusion. But "God is not the author of confusion." Nothing that promotes discord is from God. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracle of God. You show your sanity as a Christian. When you speak, let what you say in the name of God harmonize with the teaching of God's Book." There are many people who want to be "new lights." They have gotten an entirely new theory about a great many things, and they are very anxious to put off these particular things upon an audience. "Remember," says Peter, "to be of sound mind, and if you speak, speak as the oracle of God." Let what we say be not noted for its novelty, but for its

conformity to the general rule of the Scriptures, interpreting one scripture by another scripture.

In a previous chapter I have already discussed 1 Peter 4:12-19 in connection with sufferings, but call attention to verse 18: "If the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" It has oftentimes been the theme of sermons. The old Dr. T. C. Teasdale, a great revivalist in his day, made that one of his favorite texts, that the righteous man is barely saved – just saved, not a thing over. Peter's thought here is that Christians are judged in this world and sinners in the world to come, and that on Christians in this life, in this world, God visits the judgment for sins, and the judgment is so heavy at times, that even life itself passes away under the afflictions of the judgment. It is a good deal like our Saviour said, that if these things be done in a green tree, what shall be in a dry one? If the fire is so hot it will make a green tree blaze, how quickly will it kindle a dead tree? Judgment, he says, must commence at the house of God; it commences there, but it does not end there. The preceding verse says, "And if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" The thing is this, that our salvation comes through our Lord, so that we ourselves are full of faults, infirmities; we commit sin, we have to be chastised for it, and this judgment comes on us in this world. This is precisely Peter's thought.

I will give an incident originally quoted by a great author in his book on infidelity. An old man, a very pious, true Christian, was deeply concerned because his two boys were infidels, and all through his life he had tried to illustrate the truth and power of the Christian religion before those boys, and it seemed to have no effect on them. They would not heed his precepts, nor follow his example. Finally, he got the idea in his head that he ought to pray God to make his death powerful in leading these boys to Christ, so when the time came for him to die, to his surprise, instead of everything being bright and he as happy as an angel and singing like a lark, he was in the most awful distress of mind. It was all dark to him. Promises,

which, when he was well, seemed as bright as stars, were now darkness, and instead of being able to show his children the triumphant glory of a dying saint, he was showing his children that he was groping as he came to pass away, and so he died. The boys observed it very carefully. They had expected the old man to die a very happy death. They thought he was entitled to it. But when they saw a man that lived as righteously as he had, who when he came to pass away, had to go through deep water, one said to the other, "Tom, if our father had such a time as that, what kind of a time do you reckon we are going to have?" And it influenced their conversion. They had the thought of Peter: "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?" If he had died very happy, they would have taken it as a matter of course, and would not have been disturbed in mind at all, but when they saw him go through such an ordeal as that, it began to shake them as to what would become of them.

He gives directions about how to shepherd the flock (5:1-4). His exhortations are to those who have charge of the church. Let us look at every point, commencing with verse 2: "Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint." The first thought is to give attention to the flock. "If you are the pastor of the church, no one else is under such an obligation. Take care of that flock." The shepherd that does not take care of his sheep, will find them scattering. I don't care what the cause is, if he is so continually away from them and his mind upon other matters that he does not thoughtfully consider the needs of his congregation, then he has failed to attend to the flock. In Ezekiel 33 what is meant by tending the flock is fully explained. If any have wandered away, they should be brought back; if any are weak, they should be protected from the strong; if any are wounded, they should be healed; if any are sick, they should be ministered unto. That is attention.

I sometimes read over again a book that is a romance, and which is worth anybody's reading. I regard it as one of the greatest books ever

written – *Lorna Doone*. In that book there is an account of the greatest cold spell that had come within the knowledge of men up to the year 1640. The frost was terrific. Every night from the middle of December, or near the end of December, to the first of March, was a hard freeze. It froze until the trees would burst open with a sound like thunder. Millions of cattle died, and birds and deer. Deer would come right up to the house and eat out of the hand. In showing how to take care of the flock in such weather as that, we have a very felicitous account. John Ridd gets up and finds the whole world snowed under, and he goes out and can't even find his flock of sheep at all. He goes to where they were placed and begins to dig down into the snow. He has his sheepdog looking for his lost sheep, and as he gets away down under the snow, he hears a sheep, "baa I" and he digs until he uncovers the whole flock, and he carries one under each arm, sixty-six times, carrying two at a time, through that deep snow to a place of safety. Now, that is tending the flock. That kind of concern must be in the heart of the pastor. If one has charge of a church and there come dangers to the congregation when they are likely to be swept away, then he ought to be there at the time, moving among his people, ministering unto them. As our Lord said to Peter, "Lovest thou me? Then, if you do, shepherd my sheep; take care of my sheep." So Peter hands down the advice. He says, "The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder, a witness of the sufferings of Christ, also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, tend the flock."

His next thought is: "exercising the oversight." From that word, "oversight," we get bishop, overseer, *episcopos*, bishopric; exercising the bishopric, or the oversight, not by constraint. When I was in Paris, Texas, holding a meeting, a Methodist preacher said to me, "You seem to be a good man, and just because I am a Methodist preacher, you won't refuse to advise me?" I asked him what the trouble was. "Well, it is this: I am forced on this congregation. I know I ought not to stay any longer, and they don't want me any longer, and they won't pay me any longer, and my family is actually suffering. Now, what would you do under those circumstances?" I

said, "Well, beloved, I wouldn't be under those circumstances. You are put over these people by constraint. You don't want to stay and they don't want you to stay, and the Bishop is mad, and in order to show them that they nor you have a voice in things of this kind, he has sent the same man back over the double protest to show his authority." I went among the Methodists and took up a collection for that preacher. I told him that if I had the power to correct his position, I would.

In other words, when we take charge of a flock, we should not go by constraint; never go except willingly. That is a thing above all others in the world, that calls for voluntary action. I had a Baptist preacher once, to bring this trouble to me. He says, "I feel impressed of God to do so and so, but I am just simply impelled to go home." I said, "Who is compelling you?" "Well," he says, "the people." I said, "Who is the greater, the people or God?" and I quoted this very scripture to him and said, "Don't take the oversight anywhere by constraint. If you go, go with your will, because you are willing to go there, only see to it that your will coincides with God's will, and not the people's will. Not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

We have the same thought presented from another point of view. First, it is an external constraint; now it is an internal constraint: "I don't want to go to that place, but I have a very large family and they are at an expensive stage just now, and that church pays twice as much as this other place." I said to him, "Which place now do you feel the easiest in when you get up to preach? In which place does your mind act more readily?" He answered, "That place, yonder." "Well," I said, "don't go to the other place for filthy lucre's sake." I don't say that one can't have a ready mind in going to the church that pays him what he ought to have, but I do say that whenever two places are before him, and on the one side the argument is the amount of salary, and on the other side is the readiness of his mind, he might as well be constrained by a Methodist bishop as by the almighty dollar.

"Neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock." When we take the oversight, we don't take it as a lord, as we are not boss and master. That is opposed to the principle of Christian logic. Some preachers are imperious in disposition, impatient at suggestions from anybody else, wanting to run things with a high hand, and revolting against any mind but their own mind, in the way a thing is to be done. Peter says, "Don't do it that way. God made you the leader; no other man can be the leader but the pastor. You are the leader, but don't you lead like an overseer of slaves. Be sure to lead by a good example."

Now comes the reward of the pastor: "And when the Chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." The Chief Shepherd is the Lord himself: "I am the Good Shepherd." He has gone up to heaven, and he is coming back. When he shall appear, we will receive our reward. We won't get it until then, but we will get it then.

In verses 5-7 is the exhortation to humility. Here the question is asked: What is the difference between "ensamples" and "examples"? None, materially. Those words are used interchangeably. Let us read over at least what he says about humility: "All of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another." That carries us back to the foot-washing lesson. "For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you." It is not very difficult to become humble before God. Sometimes I am proud, but I get down off that ladder mighty quick. But here is a hard thing for me to do: "Casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you." The thing that eats a man up is anxiety. It seems to me to be the hardest precept in the Bible: "Be anxious for nothing; be not anxious for the morrow; be not anxious what ye shall eat or what ye shall wear, in everything he careth for you." That is a very hard thing to do. Some people can do it beautifully.



I have already called attention to verse 8: "Be sober, be watchful; your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom withstand steadfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world." Now, Peter, after that sifting process, never doubts about a personal devil. There are some people who think there is no such thing as a personal devil, and just as long as the devil can make one think that, he has him just where he wants him. He has his goods, keeping them in peace, but it is when one begins to get out from under his influence that he stirs himself and lets him know he is there.

The most beautiful thing in the letter is verse 10, which I have discussed under the question of suffering.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. On 1 Peter 4:7, what the meaning of "the end of all things is at hand," comparing with other New Testament passages?
2. Cite historical examples of "unsound mind" on Christ's final advent and the end of the world.
3. Cite examples of the necessity of being "sober unto prayer."
4. What the meaning and application of: "If the righteous scarcely be saved...."? Illustrate
5. State Peter's several points of exhortation on shepherding the flock, Explain and illustrate each.
6. When, and from whom, does the faithful under-shepherd receive his reward?
7. What Peter's lesson on humility? Illustrate.
8. What Peter's experience with the devil and what his lesson here?

# 2 PETER

## XXII. THE BOOK OF 2 PETER: AN INTRODUCTION, OUTLINE, AND EXPOSITION

2 Peter 1:1-15

An introduction to 2 Peter. First of all, I call attention to the fact that from the middle of the second century to the end of the fourth century certain New Testament books had not attained so wide a circulation and general acceptance as others. Generally speaking, these were the smaller books, including the letter of James, Peter's second letter, the letter of Jude, the two short letters of John, and the two longer books, Hebrews and Revelation. These were called Antilegomena, that is, some people somewhere expressed doubt as to the place that these books should have in the New Testament. The book which more than any other was doubted was this second letter of Peter. I mean to say that the historical evidence for the canonicity of this letter is less satisfactory than that of any other, so that if it can be shown that the evidence is sufficient for this book, we need not question that of any other.

I next call attention to a well-known fact of history which accounts for the lack of more evidence than is obtainable. This fact was the persecution under the emperor Diocletian, which extended from A.D. 303 to 311. The decree of Diocletian was universal, that all church buildings should be razed to the ground and all the Holy Books burned.

We have in Eusebius, the father of church history, who lived from A.D. 270 to 340, two books, Vols. 8 and 9, devoted to this persecution. The famous sixteenth chapter of the *Decline of the Roman Empire*, by the infidel Gibbon, tells much of the rigor of this persecution. This decree was executed with great rigor in the Roman provinces of Africa, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Italy, and

Spain. Thus thousands of manuscripts of the New Testament, or parts of it, were destroyed under this decree.

In this connection I wish to commend to the reader McGarvey's *Text and Canon of the New Testament* as an exceedingly able but terse presentation of the main facts of historical introduction, from which as a matter of convenience I cite most of the testimony below.

The first testimony is the catalogue of the New Testament books, and the declarations concerning them, issued by the council of Carthage in the Roman province of North Africa. This council was held A.D. 397. They issued a catalogue of all of the New Testament books as we have them, accompanied with two declarations: First, "It was also determined, that besides the canonical Scriptures, nothing be read in the churches under the title of divine Scriptures." Second, "We have received from our fathers that these are to be read in the churches."

The oldest manuscript we now possess of the New Testament is the Sinaitic, discovered by Tischendorf in the convent on Mount Sinai. He estimates the date of this manuscript at A.D. 350, and thinks it to be older than that. This manuscript has the entire New Testament in it – every book.

I next cite the testimony of Athanasius, who lived between the dates A.D. 326 and 373. He also gives a complete list of all our New Testament books, and says, "These books were delivered to the fathers by eyewitnesses and ministers of the word; I have learned this from the beginning, and that they are the fountains of salvation; that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the oracles contained in them. In them alone the doctrine of religion is taught; let no one add to them, nor take anything from them."

The next testimony is that of Cyril, a noted pastor of the church at Jerusalem, living from A.D. 315 to 388. In one of his catechetical lectures to candidates for baptism he gives a list of the books to be

read as inspired Scriptures. This list includes all our New Testament books except the book of Revelation.

The next witness is Eusebius, the father of church history, who lived from A.D. 270 to 340. He passed through the Diocletian persecution, which destroyed the church buildings and burned the sacred writings. He recites by name every New Testament book that we have, but calls attention to the fact that some have questioned Hebrews, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Revelation.

The next witness is Origen, whom Dr. Broadus classes as the greatest Christian scholar of the fathers, the man who prepared the Hexapla, or six-column New Testament. He himself suffered martyrdom, living from A.D. 185 to 254. In his Greek works he cites the New Testament books, but like Eusebius, refers to certain questionings of some of them. In the Latin version of his Homily on Joshua, he distinctly attributes two letters to Peter, and gives all our New Testament books.

The next witness is Clement, of Alexandria, who was Origen's teacher, living from A.D. 165 to 220. His testimony is much the same as that of Origen's. The next point that I make is that every book in the world must be older than any translation of it into other languages. We have two translations into the Coptic language, one for lower Egypt and one for upper Egypt. These translations, called the Memphitic and Thebaic translations, or at least portions of them, were made before the close of the second century, and both of these versions contain all of the books of the New Testament, including 2 Peter. Revelation, however, is usually in a separate volume.

So far the evidence has been virtually a testimony of catalogues, whether in manuscripts, versions, decrees of councils or authors, and this evidence for the New Testament books to the last quarter of the second century, two full centuries, always includes 2 Peter.

Another kind of evidence is derived from quotations. The extant writings of the early Christian authors bear testimony to Bible books

by quotations, direct or indirect, or by allusions. This evidence is not nearly so strong for 2 Peter as for other New Testament books. Many citations, pro and con, are given by modern Christian scholars. What one considers a quotation or evident allusion others question. The author has read them all. Those that in his judgment have evidential value are the following:

Origen, A.D. 185-254, whose catalogue testimony has been cited, quoted 2 Peter 1:4 with the formula, "Peter said," and 3 Peter 2:16 with the formula, "As the Scripture says in a certain place." (See Westcott, Canon of New Testament.) Melito, bishop of Sardis, A.D. 170, in the region addressed by Peter, in writing of both a water flood and a fire flood evidently alludes to 2 Peter 3:5-10.

Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, A.D. 168-180, in a treatise, and Hippolytus, bishop of Portus, A.D. 220, both allude to 2 Peter 1:20-21.

Firmilian, bishop of the Cappadocian Caesarea, in a letter to Gypuian of Carthage referring to Peter and Paul as blessed apostles, says that in their epistles they "execrated heretics and warned us to avoid them," but it is in his second letter alone we find Peter's "execrations of heretics and warnings to avoid them."

Irenaeus, A.D. 135-200, born about forty years after the death of John, the last apostle, in two instances uses almost the exact words in 2 Peter 3:8: "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years."

Justin Martyr wrote about A.D. 146, and as in Irenaeus above, uses Peter's words of "the day of the Lord as a thousand years." In another place commenting on the delay to send Satan and those who follow him to their final punishment assigns the precise reasons given in 2 Peter 3:9.

Clement, pastor at Rome, a man of apostolic times, in his epistle to the Corinthians, twice refers to Noah as a preacher: (1) of "repentance," (2) of "regeneration to the world through his

ministry." But nowhere in the Bible is Noah called a preacher except in 2 Peter 2:5.

We now must consider what the writer of the letter says of himself.

1:1: He expressly calls himself Simon Peter, the apostle, using the Aramaic name "Symeon" as James does in Acts 15.

1:14: He claims that the Lord Jesus had shown him how he was to die. This is confirmed in John 21:18-19, which gospel was written after this letter.

1:16-18: He claims to have been an eyewitness of the transfiguration of our Lord recorded in Matthew 18; Mark 9; Luke 9, and gives the clearest import of the transfiguration to be found in the Bible.

3:15-16: He claims acquaintance with all of Paul's epistles, classes them as Scriptures, and says that Paul wrote to the Hebrews whom he is addressing.

Making these claims the letter is a barefaced forgery if the author was not the apostle Peter. There is no escape from this conclusion. Hebrews may be canonical, even if Paul did not write it – but not so this letter if the apostle Peter did not write it. But, utterly unlike the many forgeries attributed to apostolic authors, there is nothing in the subject-matter of this letter unworthy of an apostle and out of harmony with indisputable New Testament books.

The author accepts 2 Peter as apostolic according to its claims.

## **OUTLINE**

1. The Address, 2 Peter 1:1 and 3:1: "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us. . . . This is now, beloved, the second epistle I write unto you," evidently referring to these words of 1 Peter: "Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion in

Pontus) Cappadocia, Asia, Galatia, and Bithynia." In this address he calls himself "Symeon," the Aramaic form of which, "Simon," is Greek. We find the same Aramaic form used by James in Acts 15.

2. The Greeting, contained in verses 2-4 inclusive: "Grace to you, and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord." The third verse tells how the multiplication takes place: "Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness through a knowledge of him that calls us through his own knowledge and virtue, whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lusts." The grace and the peace, these are to be multiplied through the promises.

3. The Heavenly Progress by Additions (1:5-11) with the abundant entrance.

4. The Need of Remembrance (1:12-15).

5. The Prophecy of the Manner of Peter's Death (1:14).

6. The Import of the Transfiguration of Jesus (1:16-18).

7. The Surer Word of Prophecy, how it came, and how to interpret it (1:19-21).

8. The Foretold False Teachers, their heresies and condemnation (chap. 2).

9. The Second Advent and Its Lesson (chap. 3). Now let us expound item three, a heavenly progress, or a progress by a series of heavenly additions, and is thus expressed: "Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue, and in your virtue knowledge, and in your knowledge self-control, and in your self-control patience, and in your patience godliness, and in your godliness brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kind ness

love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of I our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never stumble."

Here we have the grace part in the exceeding great and precious promises, and then what we are to add on our part. Peter, no more than Paul, ever had the idea of a converted man remaining a babe in Christ. Both of them urge a leaving of the foundations and going onward to maturity, growing in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I was a school boy at Baylor University at Independence I heard old Father Hosea Garrett, the President of the Board of Trustees of Baylor University, preach a sermon on this heavenly addition of Peter. It was delivered in an exceedingly homely, quaint, and simple style. He commenced by saying: "I am President of the Board of Trustees of Baylor University. I have very little education, but I have been through the rule of three in Smiley's Arithmetic and I do not forget that the first rule in that arithmetic is addition. But in this text we have some spiritual arithmetic, adding one spiritual thing to another, and we have the sum or result in two ways: 'He that lacketh these things is blind, having forgotten the cleansing of himself from his old sins, but if you add these things you reach this sum: Thus shall be supplied unto you the entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.'" Pointing his finger at different persons in the audience, he would say: "Have you faith?" Then, "Have you added virtue or courage? If you have added courage, have you also added knowledge; and if knowledge, have you added self-control, are you able to control your own spirit? He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than one that taketh a city." I sat there and looked at the old man, in his quaint way discussing spiritual multiplication and addition, and witnessed the effect on the audience. The personality of the man stood behind his sermon. It



was very unlike a sermon by a sophomore preacher. A young man wants to scrape down the star dust and cover himself, and gild himself with its glitter, but not so with this preacher.

When I was a young preacher I preached a sermon on that "abundant entrance," and took for an illustration two ships sailing from the same port, and bound to the same port across the ocean. The captain and sailors of one of them added everything that was necessary on their part to co-operate with the ocean winds and tides in reaching their destination in safety. One of them got to the port with every mast standing, every sail set, and with the cargo unimpaired and the passengers all safe. It was welcomed with a salute of the batteries from the shore, and the waving of flags, crowds of people came down to see the ocean voyager reach its destination in safety, with everything entrusted to it preserved.

On the other ship neither the captain nor crew added on their part the things necessary to a safe and prosperous voyage. They did indeed reach the destination after a while, but dismasted, shrouds rent to tatters, towed in by a harbor tug, almost a wreck. "He that lacketh these things is dim-eyed, he cannot see things afar off." Point to a beacon and ask him if he sees it. "No, I cannot see that far." Point to the tall mountains of grace that mark the shore between this world and the next: "Do you see the light on those mountaintops?" "No, I cannot see that far." "Do you see that rift in the eternal heavens through which the light shines down and bathes you in glory? Do you see Jesus standing at the right hand of the Majesty on high ready to welcome you? Do you see the angels poised on wings of obedience interested as to your outcome? Do you see the redeemed who have passed on before, and are waiting and watching for you?" "No, I cannot see any of these."

Faith is the eye of the soul, and its hand, and its heart. It sees things invisible to the natural eye, it apprehends what cannot be touched by the human hand. It feels what the natural heart cannot feel. Yea, faith is the imagination of the soul. Imagination is a painter; it can

create and reproduce; as a divine element it can outline things, and follow up the outline and put in the coloring and make it appear before us with all its blossoms, fruits, and foliage. A man that is dim-eyed has no vision; the powers of the world to come do not take hold upon him; he seems to have forgotten that he was purged from his old sins; he doubts his acceptance with God; he fails in his heavenly additions.

In this connection also is the appeal of Peter to memory. It is that faculty of the mind by which we recall former things. He says, "As long as I am in this tabernacle I must stir you up by putting you in remembrance." Memory survives death. When the rich man in hell appealed to Abraham, that patriarch replied: "Son, remember that in yonder world you had your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things." Indeed, memory united with conscience constitutes the very eternity of hell.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What New Testament books were latest in receiving general acceptance as canonical?
2. Which of these most and longest doubted?
3. Tell about the great persecution which destroyed so much evidence not now attainable and where you find a history of the persecution.
4. Give the testimony of the Council at Carthage and its declarations concerning all the New Testament books.
5. What famous manuscript gives them all and what its date?
6. What early versions give them all and their date?
7. Give the evidences of the Catalogue of Athanasius, its date and declarations.

8. Give the evidence and date of Cyril's Catechism.
9. Give summary of evidence on quotations and allusions.
10. What does the letter itself say of the author?
11. Why is this letter a forgery if the author was not the apostle Peter?
12. Give outline.
13. Give the heavenly "addition."

## **XXIII. IMPORT OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS AND FALSE TEACHERS**

2 Peter 1:16 to 2:21

This discussion commences with 2 Peter 1:16, and the item of the analysis is the import of the transfiguration of Jesus. The reader will find the historical account of the transfiguration in Matthew 17; Mark 8; and Luke 9, and he should very carefully study (the better way is as it is presented in Broadus' Harmony) the account of the transfiguration.

I will refer very briefly to the history. Just after the great confession of Peter recorded in Matthew 16, when Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," he began to show plainly to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and be put to death, whereupon Peter protested. He was not yet ready to accept the idea of Christ dying. In order to fix the right view of the death of Christ upon the minds of these disciples that were still clinging to the Jewish notion of the kingdom, Christ took three of the disciples, Peter, James, and John, and went upon a mountain. Before he went he stated that there were some of them standing there who would never taste death until they should see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

It has always been a difficult thing with commentators to explain how it was that he could say that some people that heard him would never taste of death until they saw him coming in his kingdom. The transfiguration, according to Peter, was the fulfilment of that promise. Peter says here in this connection, "We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there was borne such a voice to him by the majestic glory, (This is my beloved Son) in whom I am well pleased. And this voice we ourselves heard borne out of heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount." Mark it well, Peter says that when he preached the

final advent of Christ, he was not following cunningly devised fables. He was preaching something of which he had, in a certain sense, been an eyewitness. The question, then, is in what sense was the transfiguration a second coming of Christ? The answer to it is that it was a miniature representation, or foreshadowing, of the majesty and power of the second advent. In other words, there passed over Christ's person a transfiguration, a manifestation of his glory, such glory as he will have when he comes again. That glory radiates from Christ. It was the kind of glory in which he will come to judge the world.

In the next place, when he comes he will come exercising two great powers: One will be resurrection power, and the other will be the changing of the living saints in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and so that transfiguration scene presented those two thoughts in miniature, in that, Moses appeared to them, who died, and Elijah appeared to them who did not die but was changed in a moment. So that Moses represents the class who died and who, at the second coming of Christ, will be raised from the dead; and Elijah represents the class at the second advent of Christ, who will, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed and fitted for their heavenly estate.

It is remarkable that, while Peter looked upon the death of Christ with abhorrence, Moses and Elijah appeared there to talk with him about his death. It was the most significant event of the world, the death of Christ. Moses was the lawgiver, and Elijah the prophet. Now, in that sense the transfiguration represented the final coming of our Lord, and Peter quotes it for that purpose.

Now we come to verse 19: "And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in & dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts." That describes the nature and value of prophecy. Prophecy foreshows a coming event, and its value is compared to a lamp shining in a dark place and to the morning star which heralds the coming dawn. That lamp is a long ways better

than nothing. If one were, in the night, in an unknown country, he would like very much to have a lantern. The lantern would not illuminate the whole landscape, but it would illumine a small space right near about. It would not illumine all the course at one time, but would show the one how to take the next step. And as the lantern moves with him would guide him step by step. So the morning star, while not the day itself, foretells its speedy approach and only pales in the brighter light of the dawning. Now, as that lamp ceases to be valuable after the day comes, so when the fulfilment of the prophecy comes, then what was dimly understood is thoroughly understood.

Peter's precise thought seems to be this: "I was an eyewitness of the majesty and power of the final advent. But prophecy is surer than sight, though its light be but as a lantern in the night, or as the daystar. You do well to take heed to prophecy." It is on a line with the thought of Abraham, in speaking to the rich man: "Moses and the prophets are better testimony than Lazarus, risen from the dead."

In other words, Peter's idea was this: "It is true I saw the second advent unfolded in the transfiguration, but you are not dependent on what I saw. You have for your guidance the unerring word of God. Prophecy now holds the right of way. It is all the light we have. But its fulfilment is coming, which is perfect light. Then you will not need my testimony of what I saw, nor prophecy itself. The dawn is better light than lanterns and morning stars."

In verses 20-21, the closing paragraph of this chapter, he sets forth the reason of the present value of prophecy and how alone it is to be interpreted.

1. It never came by the will of man.
2. Men wrote or spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
3. It is not of man to interpret it. Only the illumination of the Holy Spirit, its author, can bring out its meaning.

This is one of the best texts in the Bible on inspiration. We have already seen that the prophets, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, foretold things to come, and then would search what time or manner of time these things would be, the date of it, and the circumstances of the date. They were moved to tell it just that way. They did not thoroughly understand it. It was a subject of their own contemplation and investigation, and was so to the angels. They can't interpret the promises and the prophecies of God. They can only look into them, and as the church, in carrying out the will of God, unfolds his purposes, they can learn them by the unfolding, but they cannot know them beforehand.

Chapter 2 of this letter is devoted to false teachers. The teachers here referred to are the Gnostics, and in the letter to the Ephesians and Colossians I have already explained the Gnostic philosophy; that, as a philosophy, it attempted to account for the creation, and for sin; that it claimed to have a subjective knowledge and was more reliable than the written word of God. That it made Christ a subordinate eon or emanation from God, and that inasmuch as sin resided in matter, one form in which this philosophy shaped itself was that there was no harm in any kind of sensual indulgencies. That the soul could not sin, and that the body was just matter, and so it made no difference if one did get drunk, or if he did go into all forms of lasciviousness and sensuality. Inasmuch as he is a child of God, he will be saved. One might do just whatever he pleased to do, since he is not under law at all, but free. Now, that was the philosophy, and, as explained in the other discussions, the method of this philosophy was not by public teaching, but by private teaching. They would come to families or to individuals and say to them: "Gnosticism is only for a cultured few, and we will initiate you into its mysteries at so much a head. Let the great body of common people come together in assemblies if they want to. You don't need to go to church. You don't need anything of that kind." That philosophy started in Proconsular Asia, and Peter is addressing his two letters to that section of the country. He says there were false prophets in the old times, and that there were false teachers among them, and in this

letter and in Jude we have a very vivid description of these teachers and the errors of their teaching, and the most vivid description setting forth their doom. In chapter 2, then, we have these false teachers presented as follows:

1. What they teach is false.
2. In their character they are lascivious or sensual.
3. They are covetous, they are teaching things in order to make money.
4. They despise dignities or dominion. They set at naught the apostolic offices of Paul and Peter; they disregard church government. A pastor doesn't amount to anything; they are just like beasts that have no reason.

In other words, as a wolf follows his own blood lust, these men follow their instincts. They revel in the daytime. Then he sets them forth in pictures. He says they are wells or springs without any water in them. They are mists driven by the storm. They are like the dog that returneth to his vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire. These are very powerful descriptions. Nowhere in the Bible is such language used to describe the false teachers as in 2 Peter and in Jude. He then tells us about their methods. They come in privily. These are the abominable heresies they teach: the denial of the Lord, the subordinate place in which they put him, and his word, it makes no difference how one lives. They come offering liberty, when they themselves are the slaves of corruption. The whole chapter is devoted to them.

He replies to their teaching and of the life that follows such teaching by citing certain great facts. The first fact is that God has demonstrated in the history of the past that whosoever goes into heresy and teaches abominable doctrines shall certainly be punished, and fearfully punished, and he takes as his first example: "If God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell and



committed them to pits of darkness to be reserved unto judgment; if the angels, the bright shining spirits that stand around his throne, cannot escape sharp eternal and condign punishment, how can these men expect to escape?"

The next example that he cites is the case of the antediluvians. These people lived before the flood. They would not hear Enoch, they would not hear Methuselah, they would not hear Noah. They gave themselves up to this world. There were giants among them. The whole earth was filled with violence. There was no purity left upon the earth. Homes were defiled, honor lost. Woman's name was held as an outcast thing, and they lived like wild beasts, and God swept that world away.

The next fact that he cites is the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. We find the account of it in Genesis, and reference to it in a number of the prophets, particularly Isaiah. Sodom and Gomorrah had a preacher, Lot. His righteous soul was vexed by the fearful crimes that he witnessed every day. They paid no attention to his warning. All of the cities of the plains were given up to the most abominable vileness of life, so shameful that I cannot speak about it. It would make a man blush to read it off by himself. It won't do to talk about, even when men are talking to men. He says those cities were swallowed up in the wrath of God, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and on those three great facts – the punishment of the angels, the punishment of the antediluvians, the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah, we do know that God can take care of his people and punish the wicked. He saved Noah, and he saved Lot. The others perished.

There is one other thought in the chapter that needs to be brought out. It is presented in verses 10-11: "Daring, selfwilled, they tremble not to rail at dignities: whereas angels, though greater in might and power, bring not a railing judgment against them before the Lord." Peter seems to refer to this remarkable passage in Zechariah 3: "And he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of

Jehovah, and Satan standing at his right hand to be his adversary. And Jehovah said unto Satan: Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; yea, Jehovah that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before him saying: Take the filthy garments off of him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with rich apparel. And I said, let them set a clean mitre upon his head, etc."

There the high priest, Joshua, and Zerubbabel were endeavoring to rebuild the Temple and the case came up before God. The devil appeared as an accuser, and reviled the high priest, saying that those people were not worthy of restoration. The angel of the Lord says, "The Lord rebuke thee, Satan." He did not bring a railing accusation against him like the devil had brought against Joshua, but he says, "God rebuke thee." Now, says Peter, when the angel would not rail at Satan, not assuming to judge Satan, but said, "God rebuke thee, Satan," these men that he is discussing here, they rail at dignities. Here were these apostles whom God had appointed; here were these pastors of the church whom they disregarded, the discipline of the church that they set aside. They had no reverence for official position of any kind.

## QUESTIONS

1. Where the history of the transfiguration?
2. What Peter's interpretation of its meaning?
3. What thing in. the transfiguration represented the majesty of the final advent?
4. What two things represented its power?
5. Elijah appeared in his glorified body. Did the appearance of Moses imply that he, too, was in a glorified body like Elijah's, i.e., Never having tasted death, or in a risen body, and if neither, why?

6. What does Peter hold as surer and better evidence of the final advent than what he saw at the transfiguration?
7. In our Lord's parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the word of God and prophecy is said to be better than what other thing?
8. In Psalm 19 why is the same word of God declared to be better than the light of nature?
9. What illustration does Peter employ to show the value of prophecy?
10. Did the prophets themselves always understand their prophecies?
11. Why is prophecy not of private interpretation?
12. How alone can it be interpreted?
13. Who the false teachers of chapter 2?
14. What their heresies, (1) about our Lord? (2) about creation? (3) about sin? (4) what the effect of this teaching on the life? (5) what their method of teaching and motive? (6) what did they mean by "knowledge," and how did this supersede the word of God?
15. What great historic examples did Peter cite as proofs that God could punish the wicked and save the righteous?
16. Where alone do you find proof that Noah was a preacher?
17. To what historic occasion does Peter refer in 2:11?
18. What was "the way of Balaam" which these heretics followed (2:15)?
19. With what natural things does Peter compare these heretics?

20. How is their presence at the Christian feasts illustrated?

21. How will you show that 2:21 does not teach the final apostasy of real Christians?

## XXIV. THE SECOND ADVENT AND THE JUDGMENT

2 Peter 3:1-18

We come now to the last chapter of 2 Peter. This chapter is on the second advent and the judgment which follows. Chapter 2 showed that these false teachers, by their doctrine and their disciples in their lives, held that judgment could not come upon men in this life, if they were Christians, by any kind of bad living, their theory being that sin resided in matter and not in the soul and that one could live just as wickedly as he pleased.

Now, men who hold that theory as to this life are very apt to hold the theory that they will never come into judgment, neither in this world nor in the world to come. They have no faith in the coming of the Judge who will summon them before his bar for a final verdict on the deeds done in the body. Their view of Jesus Christ, that he was just a man and that an eon, or emanation, entered him at birth and left him on the cross, would prevent them from having any true faith in the second advent of our Lord, and as they would not believe in his second coming, they would not believe in the certainty and the eternity of the judgment that would follow his second advent.

Now, that is what Peter is going to meet here. He says that he wants to stir up their sincere minds by putting them in remembrance of words spoken before by the holy prophets of the Old Testament and of the commandments of the Lord and Saviour through their apostles. The Old Testament prophets believed in a judgment to come; the Lord Jesus Christ himself preached a judgment to come, and the apostles of Jesus Christ preached a judgment to come. Peter says, "I want to stir up your minds now to remember that," and then he gives the reason: "Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

In other words, men would mock at the idea of human accountability to God at the second advent; that Jesus is dead and gone and there is no coming back. One may go where he is, but he is not coming back here. And they based their argument – what they called a scientific argument – on the course of nature, natural law, the succession of events, i.e., "Since the fathers fell asleep everything continues just as it has done since the world was created." "The order of nature is an argument," says Hume, "stronger than any miracle." "The sun rose yesterday and will rise tomorrow as it has been rising every day since the creation, and this idea of the destruction of the material universe is unscientific and you need not be afraid of any such thing as that taking place."

Now that is what Peter is going to reply to and it is the most masterful argument that I ever heard or ever read. He says, first, that they wilfully forget that the world was created and dry land appeared compacted by the water and yet there did come a cataclysm by which the world that was, perished, a deluge over the whole earth over sixteen hundred years after the creation and those men rebuked Noah, saying, "You talk about the destruction of the world; why since the world was made there has just been a regular succession of events and the ocean has its barriers; 'here shall thy proud waves be staid,' and what is the use to try to scare people by talking about a rain? It is unscientific. There can't be a submersion of the whole world."

Some foolish people tell us that now; that there can be no such thing as a universal deluge. Peter refers to how there came to be an earth. Everything was in a chaotic, liquid state and God separated the waters, the waters above from the waters below by the firmament, that is, the atmosphere. All water turned into vapor, being lighter than air, rose as clouds and before it turned into vapor it was below the clouds. Now, in that way was brought about the appearance of dry land and God brought it about, by which means he says, being reversed or by a reversal of those means, he could bring about the deluge. If, when he stored up the waters in the seas and gathered the

waters above the clouds, causing dry land to appear, by a reversal of that principle he can reduce the whole thing to a liquid mass again and the earth can be submerged as it once was. The whole of the earth was under water originally in the chaotic period.

Now, Peter says that event took place, notwithstanding -the scientific argument based on the law of nature and the continuity of events, i.e., the regular order of events. Peter admits that God promised that it should never any more be destroyed by water, but he says that the word of God that prophesied its destruction by water the first time, prophesied its destruction by fire the second time, and as water was stored up, so that when the time came the windows of heaven were opened and all the water above came down and the fountains of the great deep were broken up and all the waters in the earth's system rose up and submerged the world, so God has stored up fire for the destruction of the earth the last time. And we have the same word of God for the one as we have for the other, and, as there was a universal deluge of water, 60 there will be a universal deluge of fire.

He goes on to show that the elements shall melt with fervent heat; that the ocean itself will be an ocean of flame. God has only to make one chemical change and fire will leap at once out of the bosom of the earth and out of the air and out of the water. Now, there is nothing in the word of God that is more abundantly taught than that this earth shall undergo a purgation of fire. The old prophets taught it. Malachi describes how, at the second advent, when the saints are caught up and God gathers his jewels and there is no longer any salt – spiritual salt – left upon the earth to preserve it, no longer any spiritual light to illuminate its darkness, no longer any missionaries interceding that the wicked may be spared. Just at that instant the whole earth will be wrapped in fire and the wicked shall become ashes under the feet of the righteous and while every living Christian will be changed, every living sinner, at that time, will be burned to death, physical death, but there will be a resurrection. That will be the day that tries by fire.

Now, having affirmed that doctrine he proceeds with his next argument. They say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" They have made their second argument on the time of the second advent. As an Old Testament prophet says, "Because sentence against an evil deed is not speedily executed the hearts of the children of men are set in them to do evil." Or, as a lawyer tells us, that what gives power to human law is, first, the certainty of punishment and, second, the speediness of it. Now, they apply that thought to a divine judgment. When a man first commits an offense he is a coward, he is afraid of a storm. He thinks, perhaps, God has commissioned some bolt of lightning to strike him. If a leaf falls he thinks it is the footstep of an enemy; if a man comes to meet him, he thinks he comes to bear him evil tidings. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth." But after a while when nothing catches him and he just goes on, he begins to draw breath and says, "There is nothing after me. I am all right. Surely if there was a God he would strike a murderer down, he would strike an adulterer down, he would not allow the innocent to be trampled upon," and he concludes from the tardiness of the second advent, the protracting of the time beyond human expectation, that it is not coming at all.

Now, Peter is going to meet that. He admits that the Lord said he would come quickly, and, that humanly speaking, he has not come quickly. Now what the explanation of it? The explanation is that he will come quickly as God means "quickly," and not as we understand "quickly." With God a thousand years are as one day, and one day is as a thousand years. He is not slack about the promise as men count slackness, but there is an explanation of the long-deferred second advent and the general judgment, and he proceeds to give that explanation.

He says that the reason of it is that God willeth not the death of men and desires that all men should come to a knowledge of repentance, and he postpones the day of judgment through his long-suffering, merely to give opportunity for more people to be saved, and that is



the construction one must put upon the long-suffering of God. He must count that the long-suffering of God means salvation.

Here he refers to the letters of Paul. He says, "As brother Paul hath written you." Peter is writing to the Hebrews of the dispersion in Asia Minor and says, "Brother Paul hath written you a letter and as in all of his letters he bears out the view which I am presenting to you) and you must put that construction upon it."

And how profoundly this is brought out in Paul's letter to the Hebrews! There Paul says, "Though he tarry) he will come and not tarry." Because he didn't come to avenge them of their adversaries, some of them wanted to quit and turn loose. Now Peter quotes Paul and includes all of Paul's letters, and some of the letters were written to that class of Jews, and one letter most particularly, namely, Hebrews. He says, "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you," and he admits that in Paul's letter there are some things hard to be understood, and we will agree to that, because he was the most profound philosopher of the gospel dispensation. He considered every aspect of salvation. He carried it out from its incipiency in the love of God before the foundation of the world and in the foreknowledge, predestination, and election of God to its consummation in glorification, and in dealing with these vast mysteries there are some things hard to be understood, which they that are not steadfast or are unlearned wrest to their own destruction.

For instance, in speaking to the Galatians he said, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free." Now, the Antinomian says, "You see that? That means liberty. You are not under bondage to the law. Christ nailed the law to the cross, therefore you can lie and steal and do anything you please." Now that is wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction. Paul spoke of the second advent to the Thessalonians and they concluded that if that was so, it was not worth while to do any more work, just quit work and deed away

all their property. All that anybody would need was about three days' rations and an ascension robe. So they wrested the Scriptures.

We now come to the most important part of the chapter. He says, in verse 10, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God." That is the exhortation and practical application.

But now that climax thought that I referred to is verse 13: "But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Paul takes up the same thing in his letter to the Romans. He says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, being made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected the same in hope," and that on that day of the redemption of our bodies, the earth itself shall be redeemed and out of the fires that burn up the world (not annihilate it any more than the flood annihilated it) there shall come a new world, and new heavens bending above us and upon that new earth no wicked man will ever put his foot and no slimy serpent will leave his trail, but the saints shall inherit the earth and from one end of the earth to the other it shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord and as holy as heaven is holy.

In the book of Revelation we have the account of the condition after the judgment is over, after the fire has taken place. John says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, and I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, as a bride adorned for her husband, coming down," the redeemed people coming down to the new, purified earth to be the abode of the righteous forever, not that they are to be restricted to living upon the earth, but he means to say that this very earth which has been the abode of wickedness and stained with crimes and whose oceans which have engulfed their thousands and millions

shall give up their dead and the earth shall belong to the people of God and the saints shall inherit the earth. God will redeem the physical earth as well as the people upon the earth.

Now he closes this letter by stating: "Therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest being carried away by the error of the wicked, ye fall from your steadfastness. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." That is one of the greatest texts of the Bible: "Grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Spurgeon, in his sermon on that text, says, "You grow in grace as you grow in knowledge. Every new thing you learn about the grace of God, not theoretically, but in your heart experimentally, and apply it in your life, that knowledge enables you to grow in grace."

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What the connection between 2 Peter 3 and the preceding chapter?
2. What the views of the Gnostic teachers which bear on the second advent of our Lord?
3. What appeal does Peter make here and what the teaching of these different authorities?
4. What reason does he assign?
5. What the argument of the mockers and on what did they base their argument?
6. What Hume's statement on this point?
7. What Peter's argument in reply?
8. What theory here advanced as to God's method of bringing the flood?

9. What the Old Testament testimony on this point?
10. What the second argument of these mockers and on what Old Testament teaching may it be based?
11. How does Peter meet it?
12. What Peter's reference to Paul here, what the point involved and what does he say of Paul's writings?
13. Why might we expect Paul's writings to be hard to understand? Illustrate.
14. What the attending events of the second advent according to Peter here?
15. What his exhortation based thereon?
16. What the climax thought of all this discussion by Peter and what the corroborative testimony of Paul and John?
17. What his second exhortation (3:14)?
18. What his final exhortation, what great sermon cited on it and what the line of thought in it?

# JUDE

## XXV. INTRODUCTION TO JUDE

This letter is by far the strangest of the New Testament books, whether we consider the external evidence of it, its canonicity, or the subject matter. It is surprising, not only that the external evidence in its favor is stronger than for the earlier letter of his more illustrious brother James and for the second letter of Peter, which it strikingly resembles, but also that this evidence, unlike that in the case of the James letter, should be so much stronger in the West than in the East.

The strangeness of its subject matter consists of five particulars, all of which must be carefully considered in the exposition:

1. Its likeness to 2 Peter: This likeness is startling enough, without unduly multiplying and magnifying the points of resemblance, as does Canon Farrar in his usual extreme way. There is enough of the indisputable resemblance to raise two questions, both of which must be answered, later, to wit: (1) Which borrowed from the other? (2) Is the borrowing outright plagiarism?
2. Its alleged endorsement of a variant Septuagint rendering of Genesis 6:1-4, making the great sin leading to the deluge to consist of unnatural relations between angels and women, resulting in a monstrous progeny.
3. Its alleged quotation from and endorsement of an apochryphal book, The Assumption of Moses, in the reference to the contention of Michael and Satan for the body of Moses.
4. Its alleged quotation from and endorsement of the apochryphal book of Enoch.

5. In being the only New Testament book containing the word *Agapae*, i.e., love feasts.

The author is frank to say that if the letter clearly endorses the alleged cohabitation of angels and women, and the doctrine of the Assumption of Moses (that the dead body of Moses was raised and glorified without seeing corruption), and endorses the apocryphal book of Enoch, or any one of the three, then it is in such palpable conflict with unmistakable, abundant, and indisputable Bible teachings, that its own claim to inspiration is, in his judgment, nullified. There is a canon, or rule, of faith which tests every doctrine of a book. Bible truths are homogeneous and congruous. A sound doctrine may be run through every book of the Bible without collision with any other doctrine of the system, as all the bones of a human skeleton may be articulated without distortion or displacement of others. But the bones of a brute skeleton will not fit into the human frame. If we try to pass any one of the three teachings named above through the Bible books, we are knocking other teachings over right and left, or lodging in a cul-de-sac, or butting against a wall. This characteristic of Bible books and doctrines is the highest proof of inspiration. A trend proves the course of a river more than a bend here or there.

We now consider, in order, the usual questions on introductions: Who the author? On the face of the letter, the answer is clear: "Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James" (v. 1), but not an apostle: "But ye, beloved, remember ye the words which have been spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they said unto you, In the last time there shall be mockers, walking after their own ungodly lusts" (v. 17-18).

The James here named is doubtless the great first pastor of the church at Jerusalem, and author of the New Testament letter of that name. Then, as the New Testament gives account of only one pair of brothers named "James and Jude" (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3), the brother of our Lord, we ought to be done with this question.

2. But what one purely gratuitous and artificial difficulty has foisted itself upon the otherwise simple problems of identifying this Jude and caused endless complications and controversies? The baseless theory of the perpetual virginity of Mary, the mother of our Lord. Apart from this theory, a mere glance at eight groups of pertinent passages in the New Testament, to be cited below, with the observance of the commonest of principles, grammatical construction and interpretation, would not only suffice to settle the question forever, but to excite amazement that any critic should dare to advocate a different conclusion.

3. What two distinct classes advocate the theory of the perpetual virginity of Mary? Non-Romanists and Romanists.

4. In what way has the first class muddled a simple question? Non-Romanists, on sentimental grounds, have been unwilling to believe that Mary bore children to Joseph after the birth of our Lord. They have felt constrained, therefore, to set aside the prima-facie and common-sense meaning of many scriptures, (1) by a mere conjecture, based on no shred of evidence, that Joseph was a widower with a large family of children when he married Mary. We know the names of four sons besides the sisters, number not given. If, then, we allow for a decent interval between the death of the alleged first wife and marriage with Mary, and for the usual interval between children, this would make James about fifteen years older than our Lord, a condition at war with all the scriptural facts.

Or (2) they have put forward another guess that the brothers and sisters of our Lord were only cousins, children of Clopas and Mary's sister. Just why these children lived with their aunt, instead of their own parents, they fail to explain. But having guessed this much, they must guess more, and identify Clopas with Alpheus in order to number two of these nephews with the twelve apostles.

5. And how do Romanists muddle the question? They, too, advocate the second guess above, and make the perpetual virginity of Mary a part of an extensive Mariology, which develops into a blasphemous

Mariolatry, deifying a woman, and changing the gospel into another gospel. She and not her Son bruised the serpent's head (see their Latin version of Genesis 3:15). Her own conception is declared immaculate as well as her Son's (see decree of Pius IX on the immaculate conception of the virgin Mary, Dec. 8, 1845). In an encyclical letter, February, 1849, preparing the way for this declaration, this Pope writes: "The whole ground of our confidence is placed in the most Holy Virgin . . . God has vested in her the plenitude of all good, so that henceforth, if there be in us any hope, if there be any grace, if there be any salvation, we must receive it solely from her, according to the will of him who would have us possess all through Mary" (quoted in Schaff's Creed of Christendom) . Her assumption into heaven without death, there to be the queen of heaven and mediatrix between men and Jesus, is also affirmed. She must be adored.

6. What sets of scriptural passages bear on these two theories of the brothers of our Lord? Eight groups of passages bear on this matter. That the series may be considered in the time order, they are cited from one of our textbooks, Broadus' Harmony of the Gospels, so far as the gospels cover them, and are so numbered:

(1) Harmony, page 7, Sec. 6, Matthew 1:18-25. The section commences thus: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Then follows the account of the purpose of Joseph to put her away privily, until assured by the angel of the Lord: "Tear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife." The section closes thus: "And Joseph . . . did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took unto him his wife; and knew her not until she had brought forth a Son." All we are asked to do is to put on this passage the most natural construction, and determine for ourselves whether Joseph and Mary lived together as man and wife after the birth of Jesus.



(2) Harmony, page 20, Sec. 20, John 2:12: "After this he went down to Capernaum, he and his mother and his brethren and his disciples." Here observe that Joseph had disappeared from the history, not to appear again. The last notice of him was when Jesus was twelve years old. He and Mary had lived together as man and wife for many years at Nazareth, until he died. Consequently Jesus, the first-born, is the head of the family and following him are his mother and his brothers (Greek, *adelphoi*). The primary and natural meaning of this word is "brothers," in this case, children of the same mother. Where the context demands it, the word may be applied to kindred of a remoter degree, though the Greek has quite a different word for "cousins," never applied in the New Testament to these "brothers." In like manner the word is often applied to those who are spiritual brothers. Yet the primary, natural meaning of *adelphoi*, "sons of a common parent," must be retained unless the obvious context demands another sense. We do well, also, to note that this passage distinguishes his brothers from his disciples.

(3) Harmony, pages 59-60, Sec. 50, Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21. Here his mother and his brothers intrude on his work, seeking to interrupt a public service. Indeed, we may safely gather from Mark's preceding words (3:20-21), that his family, according to the flesh, are but following up what his friends sought to do, i. e., "lay hold on him, for they said, he is beside himself." Their conclusion that he was "beside himself" was drawn from hearing that his spiritual duties were so pressing that "they could not so much as eat bread." The restraint they sought to put on him was almost tantamount to what we would call "serving a writ of lunacy." It was this intrusion that he sternly rebuked by saying, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brothers," sharply discriminating between brothers according to nature and according to the Spirit. The whole lesson not only implies that these were his brothers in the common and natural sense, but also that they were not disciples.

(4) Harmony, pages 70-71, Sec. 54, Matthew 13:54-58; Mark 6:1-5. This is an account of his second reception at Nazareth, his own city, where he had lived for about thirty years, where all the people knew the entire family. And it is the Nazarenes, familiar with every event of the family history who say, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?" Here for the first time we come on the names of his four brothers, including "James and Jude." The people of this village, intimate with the family for thirty years, know nothing of a cousin theory. They know nothing of Mary's having adopted a houseful of nephews and nieces. Neither does the New Testament. Nothing but the pressing need to save a theory could ever have so distorted this simple straightforward narrative from its obvious meaning.

(5) Harmony, page 102, Sec. 73, John 7:2-9. We have only to read this section, describing an event late in his history, to see how far apart in spirit is our Lord from his four younger half brothers. Indeed, the inspired John expressly says, "For even his brothers did not believe in him." If we consider that this incident occurred after the long Galilean ministry was ended, and that his twelve apostles were ordained at the beginning of this ministry, before the Sermon on the Mount was preached, or the first great group of parables were delivered (see Harmony, page 44f.), we see how straitened that theory must be to make his unbelieving brothers, always so far distinguished from his disciples, identical with the two apostles, James the son of Alpheus, and James and Jude, otherwise called Thaddeus and Lebbeus. There is no evidence whatever that any of his four brothers was a believer, until after his resurrection, and usually their conversion is attributed to his appearances after his resurrection (see 1 Cor. 15: 7: "He appeared to James"). We now take up Acts instead of the Harmony.

(6) Acts 1:13-14, telling what followed his ascension forty days after his resurrection, gives by name all the twelve apostles, closing thus: "These all [referring to the apostles just named] with one

accord continued steadfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." Here again they are expressly distinguished from the twelve apostles, though now believers, and who were ten days later, with the apostles, baptized in the Holy Spirit.

(7) 1 Corinthians 9:5. Years later -Paul referred to them as married men, but again distinguished them from the twelve apostles, also married men. No man) with unprejudiced mind, can read these seven scriptures,, in their natural context, and observing fair principles of grammatical construction and interpretation, and avoid these conclusions: That Joseph and Mary, after the birth of Jesus, lived together as any other man and wife; that there were born to them sons and daughters; that after the death of Joseph, Jesus was head of the house, the mother and younger children following him; that none of these younger brothers were converted until after his resurrection; that from their conversion, however, all these brothers were faithful Christians; that two of them became authors of New Testament letters, and James early became pastor of the Jerusalem church, and was held in high esteem; that in the nature of the case, none of them were of the twelve apostles to the circumcision; that there is no evidence at all that Joseph was a widower with a large family of sons and daughters.

(8) As the final scriptural argument, I now submit the four lists of the twelve apostles to the circumcision, which I ask the reader to examine carefully in both the Greek and the English. These lists appear at Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-19; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:13. Neither from these lists nor from any other passage in the New Testament can it be proved that there was among the twelve a pair of brothers named "James and Jude." On the contrary, the preponderance of the evidence is decidedly the other way. It is clear from the lists and other scriptures that Simon Peter and Andrew were brothers, sons of Jonah or John, and that James and John, sons of Zebedee, were brothers, but there the proof stops on the pairs of brothers. To save time, it is conceded that the "Thaddeus" of Mark's

and Matthew's list is the same with the first "Jude" of Luke's list. The "Lebbeus" given in some of the manuscripts of Matthew and Mark. is only a marginal explanation of Thaddeus, both being terms of endearment, which might well be applied to Jude, the real name.

Neither Matthew nor Mark make Thaddeus a brother of James, the son of Alpheus, which is the more remarkable in Matthew's case, since he so particularly notes that Simon and Andrew are brothers, and James and John, sons of Zebedee, are brothers. In neither of Luke's lists are James, the son of Alpheus, and Jude paired; Simon, the zealot, in both lists, pairs with James, the son of Alpheus. Luke's list alone gives the name of Jude, and in neither list is the word "brother" used. In his gospel list, where the construction demands the accusative case, the Greek is *Joudan Jacobou*, literally "Jude of James," or "James' Jude." In the Acts list, nominative form, it is *Joudas Jacobou*, meaning as before "Jude of James," or "James' Jude." But what is more remarkable in the Acts list, we have an exactly similar form, *Jacobos Alphaiou*, which no scholar hesitates to render "James the son of Alpheus." Then why hesitate to render **Joudas Jacobou**, "Jude, the son of James"? This would not mean that Jude was the son of either James in the apostolic list. It is every way improbable that there were a father and son among the apostles, but merely that Jude's father was named James, as John's father was named Zebedee, and Peter's father named Jonah, or John. It is not necessary that we should know that James was Jude's father any more than that John was Peter's father. Accordingly, the American Standard Revision in both of Luke's lists says, "Jude, the son of James," as we find in the textbook. This rendering is not merely defensible, but is the better grammatical rendering where there is nothing in the context or elsewhere in the New Testament that supplied the word "brother."

In verse I of the letter to Jude, we have *Joudas Adelphos Jacobou*, which, of course, means "Jude, the brother of James." But when we come to prove that this Jude, brother of James, The *Adelphos* settles it, as it settles Andrew's relation to Peter. is identical with the Jude in

Luke's list of the twelve apostles, then we confront the Latin proverb: *Hic labor, hoc opus est*. Certainly the Jude of this letter not only makes no such claim, but in verses 17-18 teaches the contrary, clearly distinguishing himself from the apostles. Nor does James, his brother, make such claims in his letter. The whole muddle comes from a strained effort to sustain the baseless theory, the perpetual virginity of Mary.

To all these scriptural testimonies, only two passages can be even seemingly opposed, and they have no real force, but I cite them:

First, it is objected that if Mary had sons of her own, Jesus on the cross would not have commended his mother to the care of John, the son of Zebedee (see John 19:26-27). The reply is obvious. (1) Mary and her sons were very poor. The family had always been poor. Even when Jesus, forty days old, was presented in the Temple as a first-born, holy unto God, the family could offer as a sacrifice only a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons, the minimum offering of extreme poverty. He was only a carpenter, the son of a carpenter, doing common, crude work for a pitiful compensation. Later on, his lifework absorbed his time and labor without compensation, except only that the first Ladies' Aid Society ministered unto him of their substance. Jesus says of himself, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." But John was well-to-do. Jesus wanted his mother to have a settled home. Her sons had nothing.

Second, at this time her sons were unbelievers, and out of sympathy with Jesus and his work. The Lord wanted her to have a sympathetic Christian home where Christian influence would be exerted over her younger children. The provision he thus made accomplished all the objects he contemplated, and thus justified itself.

As far as history throws its light of these brothers of our Lord and their descendants, they remained extremely poor. Eusebius preserves an illustration, a fragment of Hegesippus. The story goes that Domitian was apprehensive of the descendants of David. The

grandsons of this very Jude were brought before him. But when he saw how poor they were, their hands horny with hard labor, and heard their explanation that the kingdom of our Lord was spiritual, he dismissed them in contempt, no longer fearing a rival in any kingdom of our Lord.

The second objection is based on Galatians 1:19, which says, "I tarried with Cephas fifteen days, but other of the apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother." It is claimed that Paul here calls James an apostle, and impliedly one of the twelve.

The reply is: A fair rendering of the Greek is, "Other of the apostles saw I none, but only James the Lord's brother." Which means, I saw Peter only of the apostles, but I saw James, the Lord's brother. Apart from this, a number were called apostles in the etymological, but not official, sense of the word. Jesus himself was called an apostle, and so was Barnabas. In the same way, Jesus was called a deacon, and was one etymologically, though not officially.

The conclusion of the author is that the writer of this letter is Jude, a younger half-brother of our Lord, a son of Joseph and Mary, and a full brother of that James who wrote the New Testament letter of that name and was pastor of the church at Jerusalem) and whose martyrdom, according to Josephus, was one of the causes of the downfall of Jerusalem.

Our next question is, To whom addressed? The letter itself says, "To them that are called beloved in God, the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ," but as its argument so closely follows Peter's letter, which was addressed to Christian Jews of Asia Minor, and as both attack certain phases of the Gnostic philosophy originating and prevailing in Proconsular Asia, we may safely infer that wavering Christian Jews of Asia Minor are addressed. Jude's own statement is indefinite, but the whole argument is Jewish.

What the likeness between 2 Peter and Jude? Second Peter is very much like Jude's verses 4-16 in the following particulars:

1. Both warn against heretics who are denying the Lord that bought them (2 Peter 2:1; Jude 4).
2. These heretics, in both cases, turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (Jude 4; 2 Peter 2:2).
3. They crept into the churches privily, and worked privily (2 Peter 2:1; Jude 4).
4. In both, their motive is covetousness (Jude II; 2 Peter 2:3,15).
5. In both, these heretics despise government, or rail at dignities (2 Peter 2:10; Jude 8).
6. In both, they employ swelling words of vanity (2 Peter 2:18; Jude 16).
7. In both, they are described as ignorant, following neither reason nor gospel, but are like the brutes in instincts and passions (2 Peter 2:12; Jude 10).
8. In both, they are described as marring the Christian feasts, "spots and blemishes revelling in their deceivings while they feast with you" (2 Peter 2:13). "Hidden rocks in your love-feasts, when they feast with you, shepherds that without fear feed themselves" (Jude 12).
9. In both, they are compared to Balaam (2 Peter 2:5; Jude 11).
10. In Peter (2:17) they are "springs without water, and mists driven by storms," and in Jude, "clouds without water carried along by winds" (v. 12).
11. Both Peter and Jude cite three historical examples to show the certain judgment on such evildoers, which in two instances are the same in both, to wit: the punishment of sinning angels, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

These are not all the resemblances, but they are quite sufficient to show that whichever was the later copied much from the other. But this leads to the question: Who wrote first? In the absence of historical proof we have only internal evidence to guide our conclusion. As in all other conclusions dependent on internal evidence alone, anything approaching unanimity is impossible. Criticism on the internal evidence is not a science. Men equally disinterested and scholarly reach opposite conclusions. The historical evidence of two competent witnesses, if we had them, would be worth more than the volumes of criticism based on comparison of the two letters.

Canon Farrar is infallibly sure that Jude wrote first. The author, with all of Farrar's argument before him, and the arguments of even greater men agreeing with him, reaches, but not so dogmatically, the opposite conclusion, viz: that Peter wrote first. In his judgment the heresies denounced are older and riper when Jude writes. There is more expansion of the points common to both in Jude. Peter refers to fallen angels; Jude does the same, and specifies their sin. Peter refers to unfallen angels who rail not at dignities; so does Jude, and adds an example. Peter cites the case of Balaam; so does Jude, and adds the case of Cain and Korah. Peter refers to the evil of the presence of these heretics at the Christian feasts and describes them in vivid images. Jude does the same and names the feasts and adds to the vivid images.

To the author, it seems more probable that Jude would expand the teaching of an apostle, than that an apostle would depend on Jude for his ideas and lines of thought, condensing from an inferior. In verses 17-18, Jude seems to quote from 2 Peter 3:3. This quotation and testimony of Peter's apostolic office amount to a confession of Jude's knowledge of 2 Peter and dependence on it, proper enough in his case, but highly improbable if reversed. The dependence confessed amounts to a defense against the charge of outright plagiarism. There would be no like defense for Peter if he wrote later than Jude. He nowhere even indirectly acknowledges



dependence on another. If Peter wrote later than Jude, he is convicted of plagiarism.

While Jude derives much from Peter, and seems to confess it, the dependence, if confessed, is not slavish. He not only contributes new matter to every fact or thought he copies, but manifests both individuality and originality in his use of the matter copied. He writes with a pen of fire and proves himself a master in rhetorical images.

The reader must note particularly the characteristic which most distinguishes Jude from 2 Peter, to wit: his threes. Not only his three historical examples agreeing with Peter in verses 5-7, but also the three offenses of verse 8, the three evil examples of verse 11, the three characteristics of verse 19, the three-fold remedy of verses 20-21, and the threefold discipline verse 22.

## **OUTLINE**

1. The author and his greeting (vv. 1-2).
2. The purpose of the letter (v. 3).
3. The occasion of the letter (v. 4).
4. The three historical examples to prove God's punishment of heresy and rebellion (vv. 5-7).
5. The three offenses against the light of this history committed by these heretics, which make them unlike holy angels, and like unreasoning brutes (vv. 8-10).
6. Woe denounced on them for following the examples of three great historic sinners (v. 11).
7. The evil influence of their presence at the Christian love feasts (vv. 12-13).

8. The prophecy of Enoch against them (v. 14-16).
9. Their coming foretold by the apostles (v. 17-19).
10. A threefold preventive against becoming like them (v. 20-21).
11. A threefold treatment of discipline prescribed (vv. 22-23).
12. Benediction (v. 24-25).

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What things make this the strangest of the New Testament books?
2. What does the author of the book say of himself?
3. What baseless theory needlessly complicates the question of identifying the author?
4. What two classes advocate the theory and what the grounds of the advocacy in each case?
5. In what two ways, one or the other, do Non-Romanists in advocating this theory account for the brothers and sisters of our Lord in Matthew 9:55 and Mark 6:3?
6. What your reply to the first?
7. Which of the two advocated by the Romanists, and why?
8. Cite in order, the eight groups of passages, with the argument of each, disproving the theory.
9. Cite and reply to the two passages seemingly supporting the theory.
10. What the points of likeness to 2 Peter?

11. Who the later writer and why?
12. What one characteristic distinguishes Jude most from 2 Peter?
13. What the outline?

## XXVI. AN EXPOSITION OF THE BOOK OF JUDE

### Jude 1-25

In the introduction to this letter we have found the author to be, not an apostle, as we see from verse 17 of the letter itself, but to be Jude, the brother of James, a younger half brother of our Lord. And from its general agreement in subject matter with 2 Peter 2, and its evident reference to the Gnostic philosophy of the Lycus Valley, the probable conclusion was reached that it was addressed to Christian Jews of Asia Minor. And as there is no evidence in the Bible or out of it that this Jude, or any of the younger children of Joseph and Mary ever left the Holy Land, it was concluded that the letter was written from Jerusalem, and that it was written before the downfall of that city. Jerusalem was taken by Titus in A.D. 70, and this book was written probably A.D. 68. Indeed, the author regards the book of Jude as the latest book of New Testament literature, except the writings of John – his three letters, his gospel and Revelation, which were all much later than other New Testament books.

The occasion and purpose of this letter, appear in verses 3-4: "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints, for there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."

There are both the occasion and purpose of the letter. We distinguish between the occasion and the purpose in this way: Certain men, whose heresies come under two heads – their denial of Jesus Christ and their turning of the grace of God unto lasciviousness, occasioned the letter. The purpose of the letter is an earnest exhortation to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.

We see from these two verses that Jude was already contemplating writing concerning the common salvation, but before he had put that general purpose into execution, the occasion arose that called upon him to write on a specific part of that common salvation.

Look at certain words in these verses: "The common salvation." Just exactly what does he mean by that? The thought is that the salvation of the gospel is not local, provincial, or divergent, but like its universal gospel applies alike to all its subjects everywhere, whether in Judea, or in the land of the dispersion, and brings them into a common brotherhood. Jude's expression, "our common salvation," is in line with Paul's expression, in his letter to Titus – "our common faith." Common salvation; – common faith. That is, faith which lays hold on salvation is as common as the salvation itself. Saving faith is the same in Judea, in Samaria, and in the uttermost parts of the earth. That is what is meant by common salvation and by common faith. He says that the purpose of his book is to urge that they shall contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints, which is strictly in line with the preceding thought about the common salvation. As to be saved means the same thing all over the world, and as faith which lays hold of that salvation IS the same all over the world, so the faith, or the body of truth proclaimed by our Lord himself, and which was committed to his apostles as a deposit of truth, and which they in turn committed to the churches, is the same everywhere and always. It simply means that this body of doctrine so delivered, was all-sufficient for all time to come without addition or subtraction.

The question arises, where else in the New Testament is this idea of "the faith" as referring to the body or system of truth taught? In Paul's letter to Timothy the same expression is used – "the faith" as standing opposed to Gnosticism, and like Paul, Jude puts over against the teaching of the Gnostics "the faith," the sacred deposit of truth. This faith, or the body of truth, he says, was delivered. It was not originated by man – it was delivered. Paul says, "I have delivered unto you that which I also received," and then he begins to

give his summary. First, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures ; second, that he was buried; third, that he rose again the third day; fourth, that he was recognized as risen. And we find in Paul's letters quite a number of the summaries of the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

In his Gospel, Luke refers to the same thought. He was anxious for Theophilus to know of "the certainty of the things which are commonly believed among us." One of the best books of modern times on this subject is Faith and The Faith, by T. T. Eaton. He distinguished rightly between faith as an act of the man taking hold of salvation, and THE faith, or body of truth that was delivered. Every preacher ought to carefully read Dr. Eaton's little book. It is a fine discussion. What a great pity that all who claim to be Baptists in the United States do not read that little book.

I must call attention just here to the importance of this treble idea. Salvation is common; it is not different in England from what it is in France, nor in Egypt from what it is in Samaria, nor in any one part of the earth from what it is in any other part. In every part of the earth salvation is the same.

Second, the faith which takes hold of salvation, or the exercise of faith, is the same thing. A man does not become a Christian one way in Germany, and another way in France. Whenever and wherever a man is saved, there and then it is a common salvation, a common faith, "like precious faith."

So the things preached in order to salvation are the same. The things to be preached, without any addition, without any subtraction, in their fullness or sufficiency, are the same. Whenever a man claims that he has a new truth to preach, we may know it is false. The truth was delivered once and for all to the saints, and if I never make any other impression than the impression concerning the common salvation and the common faith that lays hold of salvation, the common system of truth that is preached in order to salvation, that is a big lesson. I am hoping and praying continually that there shall

never go out from our Seminary any heretic on any one of these three points.

Here a question arises: Would this mean that no new light is to break out of God's Word? It does not mean that at IB. That old Puritan who entered the emigrant ship in Holland to come to the United States, struck fire from the rock when he said: "Brethren, there is yet more light to break out of God's Word." The light is there; it simply means that we have not yet seen all the light that is in there. It is not a new light, but it is newly discovered by the student. When I say, then, that a new truth is a falsehood, I do not mean that a new interpretation or perception of the truth is necessarily a falsehood. A thousand times since I began the study of the Bible new light has broken out of the gospel to me. We may let down our buckets into the well of salvation 10,000 times, and so may 10,000 people after we are gone, and yet every man may draw up fresh water from the inexhaustible springs of joy in the Word of God. But we do not want any more additions, nor to retire any part as obsolete.

We recur to the occasion of Jude's letter. Those men in the Lycus Valley (it really came from one man, but it spread until it threatened the gospel of Jesus Christ more than any other error that has ever been preached in the world, and it is yet alive), commenced first by trying to account for the universe, and in accounting for the universe, they discounted Christ's part in the universe. They took the position that God would not concern himself with such a thing as matter, and therefore he must shade himself down to eons, low enough to touch matter, that Jesus was one of the lowest emanations from God. This necessarily reflected upon Jesus Christ, as the Creator of the world, and hence all the later letters of the Bible bear on the person of Christ, and on the offices of Christ against this heresy.

They taught that sin resided in matter, that the soul or spirit could not sin, that the escape of the soul from the body at death, or the quickening of the soul in regeneration was the resurrection. There

was no salvation for the body, and inasmuch as the body returned to nothingness when the soul was raised from it, therefore it was immaterial what you did in the body. Hence the turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness. It was a teaching of impurity, and the most beastly, brutish kind that the world has ever known.

The question arises: How could such men get into the church? And Jude answers: "Certain men crept in privily." They did not unmask themselves when they joined the church. They joined the church, but they were not converted men, and they kept secret their real belief. They were the worst of all hypocrites, and having crept in privily, as Jude says, they taught privily. The gospel is daylight work; we preach it on the housetops. These people who sneaked into the church, sneaked in their teaching. They would not dare come up before a public congregation and teach that lust, adultery, disregard of woman's honor, and the sanctity of the family were harmless matters. They would not dare to teach that openly, but they would teach it privily.

The next thing in this heresy was its motive. Its motive was gain. Peter says they followed the way of Balaam, and Jude repeats that statement, "for the wages of unrighteousness." How could they make a gain out of such teachings? They could not do it publicly; men would not pay money for that sort of public instruction. They would go around to people privily and say, "Here, it is respectable for you to belong to the church; we do not want you to quit. But there is no need for you to attend its services. You may forsake the assemblies, but you should belong to a special inner class who know more than the uncultured masses. Let the plowmen and slaves, the common people, respect all these details, but advanced people do not need any such doctrine as that. Pay us so much, and we will initiate you secretly." So there would be separation of classes in the church, but not withdrawals – separations in the body of the church, one class distinguished from another class.



When Jude understood this he saw that the only remedy was to "contend earnestly for the faith, which was once for all delivered to the saints." "You must not let these people sidetrack you from the person and offices of our Lord Jesus Christ. You must not let them creep into your home; you must hold on to the truth of God." Like Peter, he cites three historical examples to show that no matter how secretly a man may work, God brings sure and condign punishment upon the wicked. Who teaches a heresy does a moral wrong. "I put you in remembrance that ye know these things, that the Lord, having saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." He had saved that nation, and yet out of the great body of men able to bear arms, 600,000 that left Egypt, only two of them got to the Promised Land. Why? God destroyed those that believed not. They were willing enough to observe the ritual of religion, willing enough to offer the sacrifices, but were not willing to live the religion. They did not want God to rule in the heart, the imagination, in the life, and hence they were unbelievers, and every one of them died under the judgment of God. When the providence of God executes a half million men for violation of his law, the violation coming through their unbelieving, then these Gnostic teachers certainly may not expect to escape.

The next case that he cites-is this: "And the angels that kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Here Jude tells us of the fall of the angels and the question naturally comes up: How many falls of the angels have there been? Does this refer to the time when Satan, through pride, fell, and certain of the angels followed him, and are called his angels from that time, or his demons? Or has there been since that time two other falls of the angels besides that? There certainly would be a second fall if that variant Septuagint rendering is true, that angels cohabiting with women brought about the flood. That would be a second fall. Then if Nephelim means angels there was a third fall, after the flood. Is this true? Jude refers to only one fall of the angels. He says "they left their proper habitation, kept not their own

principalities." In other words, there is an hierarchy among the angels. They had their place in heaven, each one or each class having its principality and powers. Certain angels did not keep their principality, but left their proper habitation and followed the devil in that great rebellion. That is every thing that Jude says about the angels. We would be curious to know how then some contend that Jude charges that Genesis 6:4 teaches the cohabitation of angels with women, as the occasion of their fall. We find the basis of their contention in verse 7: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these . . ." Look at that word, "these." There is our word – what is its antecedent? The radical higher critics say the antecedent is "angels" in the preceding verse, and they read it this way: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about having in like manner with these angels given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh." Tutois, that Greek pronoun, what is its antecedent? Many commentators think that the antecedent of "these" is the angels that kept not their first estate, and therefore that Jude teaches that the angels committed the same offense that is attributed to Sodom and Gomorrah. And they cite some manuscript of the Septuagint which translates "sons of God" in Genesis 6:1-4 by "angels."

In reply I give my discussion on this subject. There I raised the question: What caused the deluge? The discussion cites two evil theories of the cause of the deluge. The first evil theory answers that the Adamites, or the white race, were guilty of miscegenation with Negroes, the pre-Adamite race. In favor of that evil theory, there is a book circulating all over Texas. I knew personally the writer. But with that first theory we have nothing to do now. The second evil theory gives at) the cause of the deluge miscegenation between angels and women-. According to this theory the sons of God, angels, married the daughters of men because they were fair, and the scriptural arguments on which that theory rests are these: First, the angels in the Bible are often called the sons of God. Second, some manuscripts of the Septuagint have angels in the context of Genesis 6:4, and instead of reading "the sons of God took to themselves

wives of the daughters of men because they were fair," read: "the angels of God, etc." Just here I call attention to the fact that the Septuagint was not made – the Genesis part of it – until about 200 years before Christ, long after the Old Testament revelations had ceased, and the Jews had come in contact with heathen nations where old legends were full of examples of cohabitation between men and goddesses, and gods and women, and that is where the idea originated – it came from the heathen.

Their second argument claims that verses 6-7 of Jude show that the sin of the angels was giving themselves over to strange flesh. That the monstrous men, the Nephilim, of Genesis 6:4 were angels. The monstrous character of the offspring from this unnatural cohabitation is cited in support of the theory. See the latter clause of Genesis 6:4, and also a recent work of fiction, *Man of Seraph*. My reply to that, is as follows:

1. It is conceded that sometimes in the Scriptures angels are called the "sons of God," but never in Genesis.
2. The rendering, "angels," instead of "sons of God" in some Septuagint manuscripts is not a translation of the Hebrew, but an Alexandrian interpretation substituted for the original.
3. The whole argument in Jude is based upon the assumption that the pronoun, "these," in verse 7 has for its antecedent the noun, "angels," in verse 6, though a nearer antecedent may be found in verse 7, namely, "Sodom and Gomorrah." With this nearer antecedent, Jude 7 would read: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, with these," i.e., with Sodom and Gomorrah, not with the angels. Moreover, the offense in Jude 7 is not the offense in Genesis 6:2. The latter is marriage – legal marriage.
4. "Nephilim," or "giants," neither here nor in Numbers 13:33 means angels. This would be to have another offense of the angels after the flood.

5. The offspring of the ill-assorted marriage in Genesis 6:4 are not monsters in the sense of prodigies resulting from cross of species, but "mighty men," men of renown.

6. "Sons of God" means the Sethites, or Christians, men indeed by natural generation, but sons of God by regeneration. In Genesis 4:26, directly connected with this scripture, we have the origin of the name: "Then began men to be called by the name of the Lord." This designation of Christians is common in both Testaments. I cite particularly Psalm 82:6-7, where we have precisely the same contrast between the regenerate and the unregenerate as in the text here. "All of you are sons of the most high. Nevertheless, ye shall die like men."

7. The inviolable law of reproduction within the limits of species – "after their kind" – forbids unnatural interpretation of this second theory.

8. According to our Lord himself the angels are sexless, without human passion, neither marrying nor giving in marriage (Luke 20:35).

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities, about them, having in like manner with these," that is, Sodom and Gomorrah. There were three other cities – at least three of them are named in the Bible. Once when I took this position my critic said, "But you see, the gender of *toutois* does not agree with Sodom and Gomorrah. Angels are masculine – so is *toutois*. Sodom and Gomorrah are neuter. They cannot agree." My reply was *toutois*, dative plural of *toutos*, is either masculine or neuter. So the objection fails. Why should I run over a near-by antecedent, and hook it on to one in the preceding verse? I do not expect radical critics to accept my judgment on the antecedent of *toutois*, but I stand on it. In the case of two possible antecedents, both grammatically possible, I select the nearer one, which harmonizes all the Bible teaching, rather than the more distant one which contradicts the whole trend of Bible teaching. The scripture must be interpreted in harmony with itself

where possible. That nearer and better antecedent does harmonize with all other scriptures. Moreover, Jude has already specified the sin of the fallen angels and has nothing more to say about them. Their sin was "they kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation." There is no hint of "cohabitation with women."

The Bible knows nothing of several falls of the angels, but only one. We must do one of two things: Either reject this theory which makes Jude teach the cohabitation of angels with women, or reject the inspiration of the book. Both cannot stand.

Jude's third historical example is the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah, on account of unnatural sins. They are set forth as an example of eternal fire, that is, not eternal fire, but a shadow looking to or presaging eternal fire, as the valley of Tophet suggests, in a figure, eternal fire. Jesus says it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the judgment than for the cities which heard and rejected him, indicating that the punishment passed upon Sodom and Gomorrah was not the worst punishment man could receive.

In verse 8, "Yet in like manner these," we come to that pronoun again. What "these" is this? It is the teachers of evil in verse 4 who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. "These in their dreaming defile the flesh, and set at naught dominion, and rail at dignities." Three things – defile the flesh, set at naught government, rail at dignities.

We now come to another strange thing in Jude. It is alleged that verse 9 teaches that Jude quotes from an apocryphal book called "The Assumption of Moses." One of the fathers held that Jude got this idea of the contention of Michael and the devil from "The Assumption of Moses." The book is not extant now – nobody living now has ever seen a copy of it, but there are some allusions in writers after apostolic days to such a book. These vague allusions accredit this apocryphal book as teaching that Moses did not die as other men die, or at least was not allowed to see corruption; that his body without corruption was taken up to heaven like Elijah's body.

That is the alleged assumption of Moses which is exactly what some Romanists teach about the virgin Mary. They teach that Mary never died, that she never saw corruption, and that her body was glorified and taken up into heaven. "The Assumption of Mary" means just that. It is one of their Romanist doctrines. But the Bible says nothing about either assumption except to flatly contradict both in its general teachings.

But "Michael, the Archangel," who was he? The name appears first in Daniel 10:21 and 12:1 where he is called the prince or guardian angel of the Jewish nation. Archangel means chief or captain of the angels. The name reappears in the book of Revelation (12:7-9), where as leader of the unfallen angels he wars with and conquers Satan and his angels. In a previous discussion I have called your attention to this distinction between Michael and Gabriel – whenever there is a fight on hand, Michael is sent; whenever it is a mission of mercy, Gabriel is sent. Michael is the fighter. He is the leader, the archangel, the chief angel.

Two questions naturally arise: What was the difficulty between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses, and how did Jude know about it? For there is no reference in the Old Testament to a fight between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses.

Taking the second question first, to wit: In the absence of Old Testament light, from what source came Jude's information? A large class of commentators refuse to consider any source of information but some Jewish tradition. *Hinc illae lachrymae*: Hence their trouble in two directions:

1. Which one of the many Jewish traditions? For there are many prior to the late apocryphal book, called "The Assumption of Moses," some of them very silly, some beautiful in thought.
2. Where does this reliance on and endorsement of variant and uninspired tradition land Jude?

My answer is, Jude's information came from inspiration – the same source from which many other New Testament references come, not given in Old Testament. For example, Paul's giving the names, Jannes and Jambres, to the Egyptian priests who opposed Moses (2 Tim. 3:8). Does inspiration fall unless buttressed by tradition? Why should I assume the unnecessary burden of verifying Scripture by Jewish legend? One of the great offices of inspiration is to guide in the selection of material and to bring to remembrance. It is a characteristic of inspiration that it brings to mind unrecorded things of the past. Jesus speaks of unrecorded things; Stephen does the same. So does Paul. Why not Jude?

This leaves unanswered the other question, What the contention between Michael and the devil about the body of Moses? I don't know. In the absence of scriptural light on it I cannot say. There was a contention we know, just what we may modestly suggest as possible or even probable, but may not affirm.

God himself, according to the record, buried Moses when he died and no man knoweth just where the place of burial. For some wise purpose, not disclosed, God kept that place of sepulture hidden from men. It possibly may have been his purpose to forestall Jewish pilgrimages to the place which might result in deifying Moses. There is a tendency to worship relics. These Jews did worship the brazen serpent until Hezekiah broke it to pieces saying Nehushtan, i.e., "It is only a piece of brass." Romanists today worship relics. Europe went crazy to rescue the empty tomb of Jesus. Knowing this superstitious trend in man, and desiring to minister to it, Satan may have attempted to locate the buried body of Moses and was successfully resisted by Michael, the guardian angel of the Jewish people.

Or, as Moses had sinned, and died, Satan who has the power of death, may have claimed the death-stricken body as his, which Michael resisted, because it was the body of a redeemed man, committed to him till God would raise and glorify it. He would put

his brand on all the bodies of the saints except for the fact that "they sleep in Jesus" and are angel-guarded until the resurrection. I repeat: Moses sinned; Moses as a sinner died. The devil has the power of death. But because his people were partakers of flesh and blood Jesus partook of the same, that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. I have the picture in my mind this way that when Moses died the devil claimed the body – "that is mine; he is dead."

Wherever there is death, though we may not see him, and our friends may not see him, yet he, Satan, is there. He will be in the room when we die, and if we die out of Christ he will claim our body.

But when he went to claim the body of Moses, Michael met him: "You cannot touch the body of a son of God. That is in the keeping of the angels of God until it is raised from the dead." It is certainly a beautiful thought.

Or, yet again, by the body of Moses may be understood his institutions. So, after the downfall of the Jewish monarchy, Satan resisted the restoration and re-establishment of the hierarchy under Joshua, the high priest and Zerubbabel, but was rebuked of the Lord. This supposition has this merit: There is an Old Testament record of its containing the very words which Jude quotes: "The Lord rebuke thee." (See Zechariah 3:1-2).

Consider next verse II, the woe pronounced on a threefold sin. "Woe unto them I For they went in the way of Cain, and ran riotously in the error of Balaam for hire, and perished in the gainsayings of Korah." What the way of Cain, the error of Balaam, the gainsayings of Korah? These three sins are distinct in class, but all heinous. Cain's way was to reject an expiatory gin offering. Willing enough was he to offer thank offerings, but not sin offerings. He denied the need of atonement. Thousands today walk in his way. Balaam's error was to suggest to Balak a way by which Israel could be separated from God, for until separated they could not be cursed. He suggested



that they be corrupted and so alienated from God, through the women of the idolaters. He knew this counsel was evil, but offered for hire the wages of unrighteousness. Thousands today go astray from the same motive. Korah's gainsaying was rebellion against properly constituted authority. God himself had given Aaron and Moses their authority. Korah railed at them as no better than himself. This Lycus Valley heresy partook of all these sins: blasphemy, infidelity, impurity, anarchy, and covetousness.

Verse 12: "These are they that are hidden rocks in your love feasts" – *agapae*, that is the only place in the Bible where that word occurs. But in 2 Peter 2 we find 'feasts – not love feasts. Now a word on those love feasts, of which so much is written in ecclesiastical history. In Acts 2 it is evident there is a distinction between the Lord's Supper and the ordinary meal of the Christians. The Lord's Supper is in verse 42, "breaking of bread" – "they ate their meat from house to house with gladness of heart," the common meal (v.46). In Acts 6 there is evidence of a common fund out of which the majority of the disciples at that big meeting were fed. That money was provided by the richer class; that is, they bought the provisions for the daily ministrations. In the letter to Corinthians, there is evidence of a common meal at which some ate like gluttons and drank like drunkards. That is not the Lord's Supper at all, but the fact remains that they confused these feasts with the Lord's Supper. Peter says that they had these feasts. Jude alone gives the name – love feasts. The author dissents from the published views of Norman Fox. The Lord's Supper was one thing – these feasts were charity feasts. And in those countries where many of the congregation were slaves and poor people, they were marvelous acts of charity – real love feasts, until perverted. The Methodists have experience meetings which they call "love feasts" – not food for the body, but food for the soul.

Jude says, "these heretics are hidden rocks in your love feasts." Any man who comes to a Christian love feast having eyes full of lust is a hidden rock in that love feast: "Shemherds that without fear feed

themselves"; "clouds without water carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; wild waves of the sea foaming out their own shame." These vivid illustrations show that this man had rare descriptive powers.

The last thing that I call your attention to is in verse 14: "And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying: Behold, the Lord came with ten thousand of his holy ones [that is past tense but prophetic future] to execute judgment upon all, and convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." This is claimed to be a direct quotation from the Apocryphal book of Enoch. What about that book?

About three years before the Revolutionary War the book of Enoch was found. It was translated into the Coptic language, and three years before I was born it was translated into English. I have a copy in English. So from 1773 to the present the modern world has had the book. There are references to such a book that extend back to the third century, but none of them go back as far as Jude goes, and there is no historical evidence as to when the book was written, but the statements in the book show to my mind as clear as a sunbeam that it was written after Jude was written. It was written by a Jew, and the Jew, whoever he was, was either a Christian, or was so imbued with the ideas of the Messiah and of the general judgment as taught in New Testament, that the Jews rejected the book and won't claim it. In no Old Testament book is there such a vivid description of the general judgment. Its judgment ideas and Messiah ideas are borrowed from New Testament writers. One sentence only in the book of Enoch to some extent parallels Jude (v. 14-15). The last clause of Jude 15 is not in the book of Enoch, to wit: "and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." The question is: Which quoted from the other? If indeed either quoted from the other. There is no historical evidence whatever that the author of the book of Enoch wrote before Jude. The development of

late Jewish ideas on angels, on the judgment, on the Messiah found in the book of Enoch, all point to postapostolic times. There was much similar Jewish literature after the apostolic days.

The author believes that Jude was written before the book of Enoch. It is quite probable that whoever wrote the book of Enoch got his conception from Jude and not Jude from the other. Some say that this book was written at different times by different authors – that the first part of it was written about seventy years before Christ, and the latter part was written in the middle of the second century. While they bring no historical evidence, they base their idea upon their internal criticism. The author has little respect for the assumed power of higher critics to dissect a book, relegating its fragments to different authors and different ages. Their exploits on many Old Testament books and on 1 Corinthians do not incline him to accord them the infallibility they assume in partitioning books.

Before we concede that Jude quoted from that book let us wait until they prove when that book was written. Where then did Jude get his information that Enoch prophesied? He got it from the same source that informed Peter that Noah was a preacher and of Lot's state of mind in regard to the iniquities of the Sodomites and informed Paul of the names of the Egyptian magicians – from inspiration.

The other matters in this letter are not difficult of interpretation.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. What the occasion of the letter?
2. What its purpose?
3. Explain "common salvation."
4. Explain Paul's "common faith."
5. Explain Jude's "The faith once for all delivered to the saints."

6. Combine the three ideas and show their importance as related.
7. Cite other New Testament references to "the faith."
8. Who wrote a valuable book. Faith and The Faith?
9. What the teachings of the heretics against whom Jude writes?
10. What three historical examples showing that God punishes heresies and sins?
11. What the sin of the angels as given by Jude expressly?
12. Give the argument against "The sons of God" in Genesis 6:1-4, meaning angels.
13. When was the Septuagint translation made?
14. What the rendering of "sons of God" in Genesis 6:1-4 in some Septuagint manuscripts?
15. From whom did the later Jews get their idea of heavenly beings mating with human beings?
16. What the antecedent of the pronoun "these," Greek toutois, in Jude 7?
17. In what books of the Bible appears the name of Michael, and how do the Scriptures distinguish his mission from Gabriel's?
18. What three possible explanations of the contention for the body of Moses, and which, if any, do you prefer?
19. Distinguish between the sins of Gain, Balaam, and Korah.
20. Distinguish between the Lord's Supper and love feasts.
21. What do you know of the Apocryphal book of Enoch?

22. What one sentence of that book parallels Jude 14 and the first clause of 15?

23. Is there any historical evidence of the date of the writing of this book?

24. Was there a considerable Jewish post-apostolic literature similar to this book?

25. What things in this book point to a post-apostolic date of composition?

26. Why is it probable that its author quoted from Jude?

# 1 JOHN

## XXVII. FIRST LETTER OF JOHN: AN INTRODUCTION, ANALYSIS, EXPOSITION

1 John 1:1 to 5:21

We now come to the writings of John, the last surviving apostle, having already considered his gospel in connection with Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The work before us is his three letters and Revelation. The author believes that John wrote nothing before the fall of Jerusalem and the death of all the other New Testament writers. Certainly Peter, Paul, and James, the Lord's brother, have all suffered martyrdom. Of all the mighty hosts, upon whom the Spirit of God rested in attesting and inspiring power, John stands alone. It is his office to supplement all their inspired writings and to close up forever the Bible canon. For more than fifteen centuries, from Moses to John, men have been moved by the Holy Spirit to speak and write for God. This man's writings put the final seal to the faith once for all delivered to the saints. As I have said before, new light may indeed break out from that word, but when this man died the word itself receives no more additions. In John the language of Paul is fulfilled; prophecies are done away; tongues have ceased; authoritative knowledge ends. And the words of Daniel are fulfilled, the vision is sealed up, and all that will be needed henceforth until Jesus comes will be the illumination of the Spirit to enable us to understand what is written, no word of which is of private interpretation.

John himself is now an old man. We have considered his New Testament history in the introduction to his gospel. His writings are varied: Gospel, Epistles, and Apocalypse. The variety appears even in the epistles. The first one is general and is an epitome of theology. The second one is addressed to a Christian woman concerning her children, and the third one to a Christian brother concerning

missions and the strife in the church between the antimissionary and the missionary.

So this first letter of his is his first New Testament book. Its date is not earlier than A.D. 80, and may possibly be as late as A.D. 85. He writes from Ephesus, the scene of Paul's labors, the scene of the Gnostic philosophy which originated in the Lycus Valley, in the same Roman province, and not very far from Ephesus, and which is now more developed than when it called forth the later letters of Paul and the second letter of Peter, and Jude.

There has never been a serious question of the authenticity or the canonicity of this first letter. We call a letter authentic when it was written by the one to whom it is attributed, whether the name is given or not; we call it canonical when the evidence shows it to be the word of God. Polycarp, one of his own disciples, Ignatius, Papias, Irenaeus, all living close to the apostolic times, with abundant North African testimony, including Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, and Athanasius, so witness to this book that the historical evidence, apart from its inclusion in manuscripts and versions, it is not worth our while just now to consider the matter further. The subject matter of the letter is all congruous with what we know of the writer, and with all his other writings. Evidently whoever wrote this book wrote the Gospel. So that apart from the historical or external evidence, by the internal evidence alone the question of the authenticity and the canonicity of this letter is settled.

The persons addressed are evidently, from the context, the Christians of Asia Minor. The occasion of the letter is the prevalence and development of the Gnostic philosophy, which now contests both the humanity and dignity of our Lord, and contests all of his offices and all of the New Testament doctrines concerning sin. The letter is a standing witness to the Holy Trinity, the personality of Satan, the nature and origin of sin, and of the conflict between the

powers of good and evil for the supremacy over man and over the world.

From the most ancient Christian times, John is called the theologian, and in no other document on earth of the same space is such profound theology as is in this letter. So if the reader does not like deep water, he had better get in his little boat and seek the shore. We strike deep water in this letter of John.

To the integrity of this book, there is only one exception. The integrity of a book is established when it comes to us in the shape it was originally delivered, it has not lost anything out of it, and nothing has been added to it. Now, as to the integrity of this book, there is one exception. In the King James Version, John 5:7-8 reads: "For there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." Now look at verse 8, two words of the second line, "in earth" – "there are three that bear witness in earth." Let us take out of the King James Version all verse 7 and the words, "in earth," of verse 8. They are unquestionably an interpolation. They do not appear in any of the ancient manuscripts, and our Standard Version leaves them out. So our Standard Version reads: "For there are three who bear witness" – it does not say anything about any three in earth or in heaven – "the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood, and the three agree in one."

With the exception of verse 7 and the words "in earth" of verse 8 of the common version, which certainly are an interpolation by a much later writer (probably a copyist put them in to fill out his ideas), – they do not show in any reputable authentic text – the book is strictly authentic.

It is somewhat difficult to construct an orderly outline of this letter, but we give this as a substantial analysis:

## **OUTLINE**



1. In John 1:1 to 3:3, arguing from the nature and offices of the three persons of the Holy Trinity as exhibited in the plan of salvation, the apostle exhorts to a holy life as the purpose of redemption.
2. From 3:4 to 9:4 and 5:15-18 we have a definition of sin – that the devil is its author, and that he opposes the work of the Trinity in the salvation of man, and we are told when sin is unpardonable.
3. In 3:10-24 and then 4:7-21 and 5:12, we have the evidences which distinguish between God's children and the devil's children.
4. In 4:1-6, we have the evidences which discriminate between God's preachers and the devil's preachers.
5. In 5:13-21 we have the purpose of the letter, "that we may know" – in other words, that we may distinguish between the gospel knowledge and the *gnosis* of the heretics, and between the gospel knowledge and the *agnosis* of the modern heretics.

That is a very fair analysis of the book. There is, however, another way to analyze this letter, and I will follow this other plan in the exposition of the letter that will not follow the order of its words. So we will commence the analysis of 1 John according to my second analysis, which will reveal itself as it progresses.

## **EXPOSITION**

1. The first item of this second analysis is a view of a lost world. Let us see what that view is. In 5:19, we have this picture: "We know . . . that the whole world lieth in the evil one." We commence on theology right there, that the whole of this world lieth in the evil one. In some way he has pushed aside the man God made, the ordained ruler of this world, and has usurped the dominion which God originally bestowed upon man. That takes a leap back to Genesis, and when we go to preach it, we must not exempt any part of this world that is under the dominion of Satan.

The world under Satan's dominion is in spiritual darkness and death. Over and over again in this letter we have these words: "darkness and death." Of course it means spiritual darkness; it means that there is a privation of spiritual light; that its inhabitants are blinded; it means that they are in a state of spiritual death or privation of any part of the true life. They are dead, and they are in darkness. Let us recall in connection with this thought the commission of Paul: "I send you to the Gentiles to turn them from darkness into light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive an inheritance, among them that are sanctified by faith in me." The whole letter of John is based upon this deplorable view of the condition of the lost world as being under the power of Satan.

Let us consider 2:16: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." That gives us the spirit which is rampant in the world: everything that may be summed up under animal appetite – the lust of the flesh, and flesh means much more than that in the Scriptures. Flesh is not confined to the body, but is the entire carnal man. It includes enmity, hate, malice, evil thinking, evil imagination. Let us never forget that the dominating lust of the world, speaking with reference to the physical or inner man, is of that kind. We may whitewash it, and civilization does whitewash it; we may make it look respectable, but inwardly it is full of rottenness and dead men's bones.

Look at the second item: "Lust of the eyes." That refers to covetousness or the desire for the things seen. James, in his letter, refers to it when he describes the development of sin thus: "Each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lusts, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin, and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death." Or, as Achan expresses it: "I saw a goodly Babylonish mantle and desired it and took it," or, "When Eve saw that the fruit of the tree was good, or seemed to be good, she desired it and took it." That is the lust of the eyes.

He adds: "Vainglory of life"; everything that ministers to human vanity; the ambition to be a ruler; the desire to have a more excellent automobile than our neighbor; that our wife and daughter shall have prettier spring bonnets; that our floors shall have more elegant carpets; that our house shall be more palatial. Just think of that world that lieth in the power of the evil one! It is in spiritual darkness and death, and raging through it is the lust of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the vainglory of life.

This world necessarily adopts its own maxims of pleasure, of amusement, and of business according to its spirit or genius. It is away from God, away from righteousness, and away from the right. It does not mean in its business to look after our interests, but its own. We have to be wide awake to keep from being crushed. The men in Wall Street, or in Fort Worth, or Galveston, or Dallas, or San Antonio, following their business interests, will run their juggernaut over every other interest to promote their own.

Now when we look at that view of a lost world the question comes up: Who did it? Who brought about all this? We do not have to go far to find out. Let us look at 1 John 3:8 in which we get at the author of a lost world: "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." There he is, the devil. The whole world lieth in the evil one, that is, the devil.

This evil one has several names in the Bible, and each name has a special import. The name here given, devil – diabolis – means slanderer, accuser. He slanders God to man, and he accuses man to God. He went to Eve and said, "God did not say you should not eat this fruit," and then when he gets the poor woman into trouble, he goes to God and says, "Just look at that woman; she is violating your law and deserves death." He is an accuser. He is the one that entices to do wrong. He tells us that God is not love; that God hates us; that God is a long way off from us, and when he gets us to hating God he goes straight up to God and accuses us. After we know that to be so, why on earth do we give way to him? In another place, James says,

"Resist the devil." It is the devil who brings evil to us and to the world.

How was the loss of the world brought about? This letter answers it in every chapter. It was lost by sin. Then, according to this letter, what is sin? Whenever one masters the doctrine of sin as taught in 1 John, he is a theologian on this subject. Let us look at John's definition of sin.

What is sin? Just one word in the last clause in 3:4 tells us; the Greek, *anomia*, English, "lawlessness." "Sin is lawlessness." Sin is anything that does not agree with *nomos*, "law." Lawlessness is the privative "a" put before the word *nomos*. That expresses the thought of sin. Sin is lawlessness. In preaching on salvation, I always commence with a definition of sin and of law. If sin is lawlessness, what is law? At the last analysis, law is that intent or purpose in the mind of the Creator when he brought beings into existence. That is the inherent law of the Creator. Whether it is ever expressed in statutes or not is immaterial. What God intended when he brought a being into existence is the law of that being, and lawlessness is anything that fails of the original intent of God.

A certain Methodist preacher defined sin thus: "Sin is the wilful transgression of a known law." But there can be sin without any wilfulness; there can be sin without transgression. Transgression means to go across the law. But we may sin without going across the law. We may sin by doing nothing, or by failing to do. We can sin by falling short of the law, or sin by going beyond it. "Who hath required this at your hands?" We may sin, not by transgressing the law, but by deviating a hair's breadth to the right hand or the left hand.

Sin in its deepest form is not the overt act, but the state of the mind and heart out of which the overt act proceeds.

Sin is lawlessness. To illustrate: I once found a den of rattlesnakes. Some of them were no longer than my hand. They had no fangs, no

rattles, no poison. If I had taken one of the little fellows away from his parents and environment and carried him home and fed him on the milk for babies, before long his rattles would have grown, his fangs would have formed, his poison would have secreted, and if I should have taken him up to heaven he would have thrown himself into a coil and struck at an angel passing by.

But we are not done with the definition yet. The last clause, 4:6: "By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error," Greek, "plane." Sin is whatever is opposed to truth, i.e., error, falsehood, in whatever form. Again 5:17: "every unrighteousness is sin." There we have another Greek word: *adikia* – every act of unrighteousness. Righteousness is a law term. Whatever is in conformity with the law is right; whatever does not quadrature with law is not right, and every case of unrighteousness is sin. We thus have a definition in three words: lawlessness, as opposed to the law; error, as opposed to truth; unrighteousness, as opposed to righteousness – that is sin.

The next question is: What is the spiritual relation of every member of this lost world to the devil? See 3:8-10: "And whosoever doeth unrighteousness is of the devil," and then in verse 10: "children of the devil." So the members of the world are children of the devil.

Now the next item: What is the characteristic of the members of the world? It is the opposite of what God is, and since God is love, the chief characteristic of the world is hate, that is, hate toward God, hate toward anything that is godlike – God's standard, God's people. Hate toward these is the characteristic of the citizens of this world.

Thus I have given a view of the lost world, who caused it to be lost, what the means by which he brought about its loss, and what the import of that means.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the place, time, and conditions of John's first letter?

2. What the object, as to other writings and the canon?
3. What the variety of his writings?
4. Tell about the canonicity of this letter.
5. Who addressed?
6. What exception to the integrity of this letter?
7. Give an outline.
8. What kind of analysis followed in the exposition?
9. In the letter's view of a lost world, answer: (1) Who caused the loss? (2) Through what means? (3) Give the letter's definition of sin in three words (4) State the condition of the world as lost and its dominant passions.

## **XXVIII. FIRST LETTER OF JOHN: EXPOSITION – (CONTINUED)**

The last chapter closed with giving a view of a lost world, who brought about this ruin, how he brought it about, and what is the essence of sin through which he brought it about. Now, this chapter is to continue the thought by showing a world saved, who saved it and how it was saved. I commence by giving a view of each person of the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the three parties involved in the salvation of the world.

So far as this first letter of John is concerned, what is the view of the Father? "God is light" (1 John 1:5). We saw the world when it was lost, wrapped in darkness. But "God is light." "God is love" (1 John 4:15). We saw the world under the dominion of hate. We advance in this view, and show how that love and that light are manifested in the salvation of man. In 1 John 4:14 the record says that the Father sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world; sent his Son to save that world which was lost through Satan; that the Son is to save the world by being its light; he is to bring the dark world in touch with God and light, and hence in his gospel and teachings Jesus Christ is said to be the "true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

This leads us to the next question in the view of the Father: How was his Son to save the world, since he sent him to be the Saviour of the world? He certainly has some plan of salvation. What is it? "Herein was the love of God manifested that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9). See the state of the world: It was in darkness; it was also in death, death the penalty of sin. He sent his Son into the world that we might live through him. "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

That is a strong word, "propitiation." It is that word which is used to describe the mercy seat, and it is the blood sprinkled upon that

mercy seat that propitiates – makes atonement. He sent his Son into the world to save the world by becoming a propitiation for the sins of the world. That was his object in sending him.

I note that many modern teachers say that he saves by his example, and not otherwise. Or, that he saves by living and not dying. But a propitiation is a sacrifice that has been offered unto death, in order to placate the wrath of God against sin. He sent his Son to be a propitiation. That is a vital doctrine. We should not receive a man into the church, nor ordain a man to the ministry, who denies the expiation of sin through the propitiation of Christ.

We are now looking to see how this world is saved. We have seen that back of it is the Father's love, and that this love prompts him to send his only Son to be a propitiation, or, as Paul puts it: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood" (Rom. 3:24-25). That is the precise thought of John here.

We continue our study of the view of the Father in 3-1: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God." We have found the world's inhabitants to be the children of the devil. God's love proposes to save them by sending his Son to be a propitiation for their sins, and to make a propitiation by the application of which these children of the devil shall become the children of God. John does not go on here to discuss the adoption, as Paul does, that we are to become the children of God by adoption. I will show directly how we are to become his children, but just now let us get a view of the Father, in relation to the salvation of the world, as presented in the first letter of John.

We next consider the view of the Son, the second person in the Trinity. Let us see what is said about him in verse 1: "That which was from the beginning." What was from the beginning? The last part of the verse answers: "The Word of life." That is the first view we have of the Son. That in the beginning, that is, before there was



any world – "In the beginning," as John says in his gospel, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." What Word? The Word of Life. It is easy to see that whoever wrote the first verse of this letter wrote the first verse of the Gospel of John.

That Word of life, existing from the beginning, invisible to the world centuries after it was created, is at last manifested. Manifested means to make plain – to make visible. How was that done? Let us look at 4:2: "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." That is the way he was manifested. This parallels chapter I of the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was manifested and became flesh." This one now, that God sends into the world to be its Saviour, must take upon himself human nature; he must come in touch with the people whom he is to save.

That leads to the next question in the view of the Son: How was his coming in the flesh manifested? Let us look at that first verse again: "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we have handled." When Jesus was manifested in the flesh he was so manifested that the natural senses took hold of him. "He was audible, for we heard him; he was visible, for we saw him; he was palpable, for we touched him, handled him." So that manifestation was real and recognizable by the senses and not merely apparent.

The Gnostics taught that Jesus Christ in the flesh was not a reality, but was a mere appearance, something that looked like a man, but it was not really a man. Jesus met that very doubt in the minds of one of his apostles when he said "Thomas, reach hither thy fingers and put them into the prints of the nails in my hands. Reach thy hand here and thrust it into my side. A spirit hath not flesh and bones, such as you see me have; handle me and see." John, therefore, in this letter, teaches that the incarnation of Jesus Christ was not a mere appearance, but was something actual. He could see him, hear him,

eat with him, handle him, every possible proof that the human senses can determine.

The incarnation is a vital, fundamental doctrine without whose acceptance one cannot be a Christian.

The Son was sent into the world in such a way that we can know by the senses. But for what purpose? Why did he come into the world? I have shown that the Father sent him to be the Saviour of the world. He was manifested in the flesh that he might become the Saviour of the world. How does his incarnation save men? "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (2:2). He is to save the world by becoming a propitiation for sin, and thereby taking sin away.

How else was he to save the world? "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (3:8). There are two things he must do if he is to save the world. "The whole world lieth in the wicked one", so he must overcome that wicked one some way and destroy his works. "The whole world lieth in sin"; he must in some way take away sin. As Jesus himself explained: "When a strong man armed, keepeth his goods, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he is come, he strips him of his armor in which he trusted and despoils him of his goods." The devil is the strong man armed keeping his goods in peace; they cannot recover themselves from the snares of the devil. But God sends Jesus to be the Saviour of the world; he saves the world by destroying the works of the devil. As Paul puts it in Hebrews 2: "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise partook of the same, that through his own death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

The conflict between the devil and the incarnate Son of God was the most personal and real battle ever fought in the world. Indeed, Jesus calls its culmination the crisis of this world. Men talk about a crisis in very little things) but that was the world crisis when for the redemption of the world, the seed of the woman bruised the serpent's

head. Hence Paul writes that on the cross "He overcame principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly." When I preached my sermon on the "Three Hours of Darkness on the Cross" in Richmond, Virginia, some people said that the thoughts in it were too horrible, that it was too realistic. It is an exceedingly real thing that the world lies in the evil one, in darkness, and in order to save the world Christ had to enter into that realm of darkness, and fight and overcome the principalities of darkness, else the world would never be saved.

We are not theologians if we do not have correct views of a personal devil, between whom and our Saviour occurred the conflict of the ages on the cross.

See further 3:5: "And ye know that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is no sin." This sinless one was manifested to take away sin. John the Baptist, on seeing Jesus approaching, pointed at him and said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" A lion could not take away the sin of the world, but a Lamb could take it away, because the Lamb was the propitiation for sin. We are still considering a view of the Son, as presented here, and we have gone to the cross. We have seen how he conquered the devil on the cross, and we have seen his life laid down as a propitiation for sin. How is that propitiation to be further secured to us after justification? The answer is in 2:2: "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Here he comes before us, not as a sacrifice, but as an advocate – a high priest to make intercession for us, having died as a sacrifice. As a high priest he enters heaven and pleads the merits of his own sacrificial blood, and makes intercession for us on the strength of it.

We are tracing the process of salvation, but the salvation is not yet complete. In 2:28 we have another view of the Saviour: "Now, my little children, abide ye in him that if he shall be manifest, that we may have boldness and not be ashamed at his coming." This is a second manifestation of him. This is not his incarnation. It is his

manifestation at his second advent. He is to come a second time, not as a sin offering, but as a judge, and at his coming he will raise the dead and glorify their bodies, and he will change the living. In 3:2 we have an added thought: "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be; we know that if he be manifested we shall be like him, for we shall see him even as he is." So at his second advent there takes place a change in our bodies that makes them like his risen and glorified body. But how is his incarnation and propitiation attested? "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ. Not with water only, but with water and with the blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness because the Spirit is the truth. There are three who bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three agree in one" (5:6). Whatever one testifies, the three testify. Now, what does that mean? What the testimony of that coming by water, and the testimony of that coming by blood, and the testimony of the Spirit, all to a single fact, the testimony to agree in one? How was the incarnate one to be identified? John the Baptist answers. See John 1:30-34. Evidently his coming by water refers to his baptism by John. In his baptism he was identified by the Father and the Holy Spirit.

How did he come by blood? He came by blood on the cross. How did his baptism, and his crucifixion, and the Spirit witness all agree? His baptism symbolizes his death, burial, and resurrection; his blood was his actual death, followed by his burial, and resurrection, which the baptism symbolized. The Spirit's testimony agrees with both in this, that when he was baptized, with that mapped out before him as his mission, the Spirit of God descended upon him in the form of a dove. The descent of the Spirit upon Christ just after his baptism is the witness of the Spirit to the fact that he came to save the world by his death, burial and resurrection, which are symbolized in his baptism.

Now, let us get to the blood, and the Spirit witness on that, and see if it agrees with the blood. Paul says, "Who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself as a sacrifice for sin." When the blood was offered

as a sacrifice for sin it was offered through the Spirit. And when the church was commissioned to preach salvation through the blood, it was the outpoured Spirit that endued it with power. And when the blood is applied by the Spirit to the individual, the Spirit bears witness of its efficacy with our spirit. Now, here we have three witnesses: Not only the baptism of Christ as it actually took place, but its perpetuity. Christ was buried in baptism. We were buried in baptism with Christ. And so water still speaks. Wherever a creek or a river flows, wherever are pools, lakes, gulfs, bays, or oceans, their yielding waves are parted in baptism. This witness still stands.

How does the witness of his death still stand? He instituted a memorial of that death in the Lord's Supper. He said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood shed for the remission of sins. As often as ye do this ye show forth my death until I come." That witness is still standing. And inasmuch as the Holy Spirit was sent to abide with us forever, that witness is standing. So right now the three witnesses are speaking – the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit. Such the view of the Saviour as presented in this letter. The titles given him in the letter are, "The Word of Life," "Jesus Christ, the Son of God," and "Jesus Christ the Messiah." We have seen him in this letter as the sacrifice, the priest, the judge. What a marvelous piece of theology is this letter!

The letter's view of the Holy Spirit is the salvation of the lost world. In general terms the office of the Spirit is to apply and make efficacious to the individual the salvation wrought by the Son for the world. This is done in such a way as to bring the lost sinner into saving touch with Christ, through faith, thereby in justification overcoming the guilt of all sin, and by the application of the atoning blood cleansing him from the defilement of all past sins; renewing his nature, thereby overcoming his love of sin and bringing him into filial relations with the Father and securing him forever from Satan's power to destroy; anointing him, thereby giving him assured knowledge of his acceptance with Christ and consciousness of availing prayer; perfecting his Spirit in holiness, thereby destroying

the dominion of sin and fitting him for his heavenly estate and its associations and service, and completing his spiritual likeness to Christ; raising and glorifying his mortal body, thereby completing its likeness to the glorified body of the Lord.

These general views of the Spirit's work appear particularly in the following passages of the letter:

1. Deliverance through faith from the guilt of sin (1:9), first clause.

2. Cleansing from the defilement of sin (1:9), last clause.

3. Renewing of his nature, delivering from the love of sin and bringing him into filial relations with the Father and securing him forever from Satan's power to make him commit the unpardonable sin (3:2, 9; 5:1, 18). The nature imparted at this new birth is imperishable because it comes from an indestructible seed, as Peter also explains it. See 1 Peter 1:23-25.

It disposes to obedience of all God's commands, and imparts new affections of love toward God and man. Its faith is a fighting force conquering the world (5:4).

4. Through the Holy Spirit the regenerate man is led to repentance and confession of all sins committed after justification, and to commit them to the intercession of the Advocate or high priest (1:9; 2:1). Concerning these sins also, none of which is unto death, God is pleased to grant forgiveness at the intercession of his people (5:16). The sin unto death – that is the unpardonable sin – no child of God can commit. So far as that sin is concerned it is a case of *non posse peccari* – not able to sin (5:17-18).

5. The Spirit's anointing of the Christian, conferring assured knowledge of acceptance with God and consciousness of power in prayer appears in the following passages: 2:20, 27; 5:9-10, 13,15,19.

6. The Spirit's sanctifying power perfecting the soul in holiness unto complete spiritual likeness to our Lord, appears at 3:3. This is a progressive work, going on from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from glory to glory, even as Paul so graphically put it. See 2 Corinthians 3:18.

7. The Spirit's work in the glorification of our bodies at the final advent, completing the likeness to our Lord's glorified body, appears at 3:2.

### **THE VIEW OF THE SAVED MAN**

1. He was a sinner: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1:10). The Bible knows nothing of a man who never sinned except our Lord himself.

2. He is a pardoned man: "I write unto you, my little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake" (2:12). Every Christian is a justified man. He is also a regenerate man. The great blessing of the New Covenant is the forgiveness of sin. That comes to us the very moment that, by faith, we accept Jesus Christ as our Saviour. That is justification.

3. Yet this regenerate man, this justified man, will sin until sanctification has perfected him in holiness.

Now, here is a regenerated man and a forgiven man. "If we say (1:8) that we have no sin" that is different from "if we say we have not sinned." "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," that is, in the regenerated man there is sin of some kind; there are remnants of depravity; so when a man in this life says, "I am perfect, I am sinless," he contradicts God. What, then, is the remedy for sins committed after justification and regeneration? Let us look at chapter 2: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous." Then at verse 9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." The sins committed after justification, what about them? We confess

them. We put them in the hands of the advocate, the great high priest. They are not the sins of the unconverted man, of a lost man, or the sins of a child of the devil, but are the sins of a child of God. So we confess them and put them in the hands of the advocate, and he makes intercession for us, and through the intercession of Christ we receive forgiveness for the sins committed after justification. Even Paul said this of himself. See Philippians 3:12-14.

In confirmation of this point I appeal to the Christian experience. We know how we felt when we were first converted, that all our sins were taken away and that we would never sin again. After awhile we did something wrong, and whatever is wrong is wrong – our conscience told us it was wrong. We said, "I know I have sinned." Yet that was after justification. If a man has never had that experience, then I do not believe that he has ever had any experience. Sometimes, perhaps, it took a long while to get ready to do the right thing, but ultimately we do get off to ourselves and say, "Father, I have sinned against thy love, against thy grace. My sins pain me; I am distressed. I confess my sins. God forgive me for Christ's sake," and peace comes to us. Not the peace of justification, but the peace of a forgiven child.

4. But this saved man progresses to a goal of perfection (3:3).

I have now presented so far five views in order to an understanding of this letter, as follows:

1. The view of the lost world.
2. The view of the Father, and what he does in saving the world.
3. The view of the Son, and what he does in the saving of the world.
4. The view of the Spirit, and what he does in the saving of the world.
5. A view of the saved sinner himself.



That far only have we gone, and yet we have gone to the very heart of the letter.

## QUESTIONS

1. On this letter's view of the Father, answer: (1) What two words express his nature? (2) How was his love manifested toward the lost world? (3) In what way did he intend his Son to save the world? (4) What relation, toward himself did he provide for sinners?

2. On the view of the Son, answer: (1) What was his name in eternity before the world was? (2) How was he manifested to the world? (3) Was this a real assumption of human nature or only an appearance? (4) How was this incarnation demonstrated to human sense? (5) What, the importance of this doctrine of his incarnation? (6) In his incarnation in what 2 ways did he effect salvation of the world? (7) In what one act were both accomplished? (8) Explain "This is he that came by water." (9) Explain "This is he that came by blood." (10) Show the Spirit's witness that he came both ways. (11) Show how the witness of the Spirit, the water and the blood do now agree in their testimony to the one act of salvation. (12) How is that propitiation made available for sins after justification? (13) In what way is it made available at the end of the world in the perfecting of salvation?

3. On the view of the Holy Spirit, answer: (1) What in general terms is the office work of the Spirit in salvation? (2) In seven distinct particulars show what the Spirit accomplishes, citing passages in the letter for proof.

4. On the letter's view of the saved man, cite at least four distinct stages of this man, citing passages from the letter for each.

## **XXIX. FIRST LETTER OF JOHN, EXPOSITION – (CONCLUDED)**

So far, in the logical, not chronological, exposition of this great feat of theological discussion, we have considered:

1. Its view of a lost world – the agent, means, and condition of its downfall.
2. Its view of the Father, in the salvation of the lost world.
3. Its view of the Son, in the salvation of the lost world.
4. its view of the Holy Spirit, in the salvation of the lost world.
5. Its view of the sinner after his salvation, and in what the salvation consists.

We now consider:

6. Its evidences which discriminate between a child of God and a child of the devil. The legal, or external, difference has been considered somewhat, and consists of two particulars:

(1) The child of God has been forgiven for all past sins on account of the Saviour's propitiation, or vicarious sacrifice, accepted by faith.

(2) Forgiveness of his sins after justification is secured by confession, and putting the case in the hands of the advocate, or high priest, who makes intercession for him on the ground of the same propitiation which avails for sins after justification as well as for sins before justification. The legal ground for forgiveness is the same in both cases. On the same meritorious ground it is provided that sins after justification may be forgiven at the intercession of the saints, here on earth.

The spiritual, or internal, difference has also been considered somewhat in the work of the Holy Spirit, which consists:

(a) In the new birth which gives a holy disposition to the mind, and makes its subject a child of God by regeneration.

(b) In the cleansing from the defilement of sin by the Spirit's application of the atoning blood.

(c) In the progressive work of the sanctification of the soul after the new birth.

(d) In the redemption of the body into its final likeness to our Lord's body at his final advent.

But we are now to consider the discriminating evidences subjectively and practically, i.e., the evidences as knowable to the man himself in his own experience, and as manifested to others in his life. If a man be acquitted in God's sight, and if he be forgiven time and again after justification, and if he be born anew, and if he be cleansed from the defilement of sin, and if the progressive work of the sanctification be going on in him, we may expect to find some consciousness and realization on his part of these great changes, and we have a right to expect some differences in his life, observable to all men acquainted with his life.

These are the matters discussed, not exclusively, but particularly in 1 John 3:10-24; 4:7-21. While the two distinct things are mingled in the apostle's discussion, yet because of this distinction we consider them separately.

Subjective knowledge of salvation. "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren" (3:14). Love is an affliction of the heart of which we may be conscious. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Or, as expressed in 4:7-8: "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." This love is set forth in opposition to the passion of hate. "Cain was of the evil one, and slew his brother." "Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer." Love is unselfish. The Father's love was manifested in sending his only

begotten Son into the world that we might live through him (4:9). The Son's love was manifested in that he laid down his life for us (3:16). So if we love God in his Son, in his people, in his cause, it will manifest itself, not merely in profession, but in deed and truth (3:18).

How easy to understand the apostle's question: "But whoso hath this world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion for him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" And how unequivocal the declaration: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God whom he hath not seen."

That love is a matter of consciousness is further evident from its effect on our consciences. Conscience is the inward monitor which passes judgment on matters of right and wrong. This judgment is according to the light it has. Even in the case of the heathen with only the light of nature and of dim tradition, it accuses or else excuses. Its verdict against us is very painful; its verdict of acquittal gives peace.

The standard of our letter will not accept mere words, but deeds: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth. Hereby we shall know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him, because if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Again, faith differentiates between the child of God and the child of the devil. This letter says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God; and whosoever loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten."

One convicted in conscience of sin realizes "a sense of guilt and condemnation," but when justified by faith, there comes instead peace and rest. This is a matter of consciousness. Moreover, under conviction of sin we fear – we are conscious of that fear – but this letter says, "There is no fear in love: perfect love casts out fear

because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love" (4:18).

But another question arises: It is true I may know that I have passed out of death into life if I love the brethren) but how may I know that I love the brethren? "Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do his commandments. .For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." In other words, we know it by being conscious of the spirit of obedience. "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." The saved soul puts itself under divine orders: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The concern is not: Why must I do this thing? nor, may not some other thing do just as well? but simply to know what God has commanded.

The spirit of faith, the spirit of love, the spirit of obedience, felt in our souls) approved in our consciences attest the Christian to himself. And there is yet another test: "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself even as he is pure." This is the progress of grace in the soul; we call it sanctification. It is the doctrine taught also by Paul: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." We ought to be able to know whether we are making progress in holiness.

There is also a final test in relation to the world. We have seen in the preceding chapter a view of the whole world lying in the wicked one, and opposed to grace. This furnishes us an additional double test. If we love God in his Son and people and cause, then it follows that we cannot love the world as dominated by Satan and swayed by its worldly passions, but will conquer it. Hence this letter declares: "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. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. . . . For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

But there is a practical side attesting the Christian to the outsider. The outsider cannot know our inner experiences of faith, hope, love, joy, and peace. He hears our professions, and holds them credible only so far as manifested in the life. Our Lord himself fixed that standard: "A tree is known by its fruits." So, of professed children of God it may be said, "By their fruits shall ye know them." Hence our letter says, "My little children, let no man lead you astray. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous; he that doeth sin is of the devil. . . . Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever that doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Evidences which differentiate God's preachers from the devil's preachers. As God is light, and the devil is darkness; as God is love and the devil is hate; as God would save the world which the devil has destroyed; as God sends a Saviour of the world to be a propitiation for sin and the devil resists him; as Father and Son send the Holy Spirit to make effective the propitiation; we ought to be able to discriminate between God's preachers and the devil's preachers. We would naturally expect the devil to influence his agents to deny the incarnation by which the Son is manifested, his being a propitiation for sin in that incarnation, that propitiation effected by his vicarious death on the cross, the miracles which attested him, the witness of the Spirit, and the necessity of the Spirit's work of regeneration, sanctification, resurrection, and glorification.

And quite naturally we would expect God's preachers to be influenced to preach and insist on all those vital things which the devil's preachers deny. The great issue would necessarily center on the nature, person, and offices of the Saviour. Knowing also the wiles of the devil, we would expect him to influence his preachers to creep privily into churches, and into the ministry, and into professors' chairs in Christian schools, instructed from headquarters to praise Christ as a man, while denying his deity and pre-existence, throw bouquets at his morality while denying his vicarious propitiation, command his example while denying his expiation; in other words, as saving us in any other way than by his death on the cross.

On this point this letter says) "Little children, it is the last hour: and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now hath there arisen many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us. And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; he that confesseth the Son hath the Father also. . . . Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." God became incarnate. The highest object of the incarnation was to expiate sin as a propitiatory offering. On these two points we may expose the antichrists. To the bitter end they fight the doctrine that God, the preexisting Son, was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. See John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Luke 1:31-35; 1 John 1:7; 2:2, 22; 3:16; 4:10; 5:6-8.

This letter stresses the incarnation, the propitiation, the blood, the obedience, and it is precisely by these that we are to test all professors of the Christian religion, showing who are for Christ and who are antichrists. If preacher or teacher hold not these vital doctrines, whatever other merit, they are not of us and should go out from us. Hence the injunction:

Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits.

1:1-2: "From the beginning was . . . the Word of life, and the life was manifested." This attests his deity and incarnation.

4:2-3: "Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesses not Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist."

3:22: "Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son."

4:14-15: "The Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him." This attests the purpose of his coming.

4:9-10: "God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. . . . God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

2:21: "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." This attests the way he saves.

3:5: "He was manifested to take away our sins."

3:16: "He laid down his life for us." This attests the way propitiation is accomplished.

5:6: "This is he that came by water and blood."



5:8: "There are three who bear witness – the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one."

1:7: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

3:2, 7-8: "If he shall be manifested [second advent] we shall be like him . . . and every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure . . . Let no man lead you astray; he that doeth righteousness is righteous. . . . He that doeth sin is of the devil."

4:18-19: "Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth. Hereby shall we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our heart before him."

3:10: "In this the children of God are manifest; and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

The author would most solemnly impress these passages on the reader's heart. They constitute the touchstone which exposes all lying spirits, false prophets, false preachers, false teachers in Christian schools, false professors of religion. From these passages it is evident that no man should be fellowshipped as a preacher, or even retained as a church member, who denies the essential deity of Jesus Christ, his incarnation, his vicarious death as a propitiation for sin; nor one whose profession of these doctrines does not bear fruit unto love and holiness.

A mere verbal orthodoxy is hypocrisy, and is more hateful to God and more hurtful to man than avowed infidelity. I am quite sure that a strict application of this test would empty thousands of pulpits, hundreds of professors' chairs in Christian schools, and deplete thousands of church rolls. This emptying and depleting would not be deplorable but helpful. It would amount to a great revival. As they depart from us, we could say with this letter: "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would

have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us."

Knowledge of the Holy Spirit vs. the Gnosis of the Lycus Valley philosopher, and the *Agnosis* of the modern philosopher. This letter is the secret of certain positive knowledge, and attributes the subjective knowledge or assurance of our acceptance with God, and all other positive knowledge of theological matters to the witness and unction of the Holy Spirit: "And as for you, the anointing which ye received abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as is taught you, ye abide in him. . . . And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness – the Spirit, the water, and the blood: and the three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for the witness of God is this: that he hath borne witness concerning his Son. He that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning his Son. And the witness is this: That God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. These things have I written unto you that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God."

It is written against the Lycus Valley Gnosticism. That philosophy ignored the word revealed and inspired by the Holy Spirit, and denied any illumination by him for its interpretation and claimed instead an intuitive subjective human knowledge that claimed to serve all the purposes of a portable Bible. Each man became his own standard, and found in himself an answer to all questions of life and doctrine. All concerning Christ and salvation that appealed to his inner man he accepted – all else he rejected. While he might admit some temporary educational good in the Spirit's illumination, yet all this would become antiquated as man progressed into a new religion. In modern times the philosopher affects agnosticism, which

rejects all supernaturalism, and accepts nothing not demonstrable by unaided human science. The vital elements of the gospel they declare unknowable.

It was the precise object of this letter to lead its readers out of all misty incertitude, and into positive, definite, assured knowledge. "I know," "we know," "that ye may know," is its distinguishing mark. And this knowledge extends into the realm of prayer, and unto the unpardonable sin: "These things have I written unto you that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the boldness which we have toward him: that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him. If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; not concerning this do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.

"We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that was begotten of God keepeth himself, and the evil one toucheth him not. We know that we are of God, and the whole truth lieth in the evil one. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

The source of the knowledge is unmistakable: "And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things. . . . And as for you the anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but as his anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as is taught you, ye abide in him."

These passages are in full accord with our Lord's words, as reported by this same John in his Gospel: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever,

even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, for it beholdeth him not) neither knoweth him, for he abideth with you and shall be in you. . . . But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. . . . But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me. . . . Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things ever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come."

And now before we pass away from this great letter we must answer a very serious question, not without difficulty. What is the exact meaning of 3:9, "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God?" Or, as expressed in a preceding verse: "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him?" Or, in other words, does the apostle mean that every regenerate man is absolutely impeccable, not *posse non peccari*, i.e., "able not to sin," but *non posse peccari*, i.e., "not able to sin"?

Those who adopt the view that the regenerate man is absolutely impeccable must take one or the other of the following positions, none of which is satisfactory to the author:

(1) When a man accepts Christ, he is no longer under law, but under grace, and where there is no law there is no sin. This is antinomianism, it hides behind a fallacy. Christians are not indeed under the law as a means of life, i.e., by a perfect obedience. But the Christian is under law to Christ. To violate any rule of right is sin, no matter by whom committed.

(2) The Christian united to Christ stands sinless in him. As Christ stood for the sinner, all his offenses are charged to Christ's account.

This explanation is foreign to the apostle's whole line of thought. He is not discussing the imputation of righteousness.

(3) A much more plausible explanation is borrowed from Romans 7:17-21. The explanation is that the renewed nature does not and cannot sin, but this man in the renewed life possesses another nature, from which the Christian's sins outflow. There are two "egos" – the "I" that would not, and the "I" that yet does. The author is quite sure that the apostle John has not in mind this refinement.

(4) Some who reject the absolutely impeccable interpretation understand the word thus: "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not as a rule of life – sinneth not habitually." This view is better expressed by Sawtelle in the American Commentary on 1 John 3:6: "Now, what is the interpretation of John's language? We answer by saying that in this and in similar cases he looks to an ideal or principle. He presents what the divine union involves in its fulness that will be when our union with Christ shall be developed in experience and actual life to its normal and perfected state. Abiding in Christ in its fulfilled degree will involve a partaking in full of the holiness of Christ. This ideal had not yet been fully reached by John, and his brethren, though the union had richly commenced and was going on. But he looks forward to their perfected union with the Lord, and predicates of it complete purity; nay, he even speaks of it as if it were present, since the beginning in all grace involves the ending, the germ, the full unfolding; as the New Testament calls every Christian a saint, not because he has reached that ideal, but with reference to the perfection which is yet to be. John gives us the law or principle of union, -with Christ. Purity characterizes this union, and so far as the union is realized and fulfilled, so far there will be purity, until the ideal becomes fully real, and then by the very law of the -union, there will be utter sinlessness. The union is a holy principle, and the more it is developed the more it bears personal holiness with it. The Christian, therefore, by the very law of his union with Christ, is one who is reaching on to moral purity; and if

not approaching the ideal, he may doubt his spiritual state. Purity is the law, the tendency of divine union."

The author has much respect for this view of Dr. Sawtelle, but it fails to meet the words "doeth no sin." Hence he submits:

John's own explanation (3:6, 9), must be interpreted in harmony with the rest of his letter. He must not be interpreted as inconsistent with himself and put in square contradiction with both previous and subsequent statements. Let us look at some of these statements:

In 1:8 he says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." This is said of the Christian He is not referring to our state before regeneration, for that is separately expressed in 1:10: "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." He is telling what to do with sins committed after justification. "If we confess ours sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. . . . My little children) these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

We have already seen his treatment of the progress in sanctification (3:3). In 5:17 he declares every act of unrighteousness to be sin, no matter by whom committed) regenerate or unregenerate. And he specifically exhorts us to pray for the forgiveness of a sinning brother (5:16).

It would contradict every book in the Bible, and the experience of every Christian that ever lived to affirm that no regenerate man ever sins at all. It would deny the need of the continuous intercession of the high priest, our Advocate with God. It is suggested for due consideration that John explains himself in 5:13-18. Here we have the object of the whole letter, that we may know we have eternal life. While every act of unrighteousness is sin, not every one excludes from eternal life. A Christian may sin, but not unto death, the opposite of the eternal life. These sins are pardonable, and are

pardoned even at the intercession of the saints. There is a sin unto death. It is unpardonable and not the subject of intercession.

And now to put the matter beyond doubt, he repeats his former words: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not," i.e., sinneth not unto death, as the context demands. Which is further evident from what he continues to say: "but he that was born of God keepeth himself, and the evil one toucheth him not."

This is the author's answer to the question raised. It means that no regenerate man sinneth in a way, or to the extent, that his eternal life is disturbed. He sinneth not unto death.

John's idea of the unpardonable sin agrees with our Lord's teaching at Matthew 12:32; Mark 3:29-30, and Paul's teaching in Hebrews 10:26-29. It is rejection of the Spirit's witness to our Lord, 1 John 5:8-11.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Give the legal grounds which distinguish the child of God from the child of the devil, and why and how attained in three particulars.
2. Give the spiritual grounds in four particulars.
3. What parts of this letter discuss the difference as apprehended by the Christian in subjective knowledge and as evidenced to an outsider in practical life, i.e., How may he know and how may they know?
4. Subjectively, then, how may a Christian know that he has passed out of death into life?
5. How is this known through his conscience?
6. How may a Christian know that he loves the brethren?

7. How may the Christian know his state by applying this test to the world?
8. How is the Christian's salvation evident to an outsider?
9. Why should we naturally expect a discernible difference between Christ's preachers and the devil's preachers?
10. In trying the spirits whether they be of God, cite the passages in this letter which constitute the test.
11. What should be our attitude toward preachers, teachers in Christian schools and church members who fail under this test?
12. What would be the result of a faithful application of this test?
13. Which the more hurtful, hypocrisy or avowed infidelity?
14. How would this console us if the test were rigidly applied when we saw such members leaving us?
15. Who the source of all the Christian knowledge?
16. What question is raised by 1 John 3:6, 9, and what four unsatisfactory answers, and then what John's own explanation?



# 2 & 3 JOHN

## XXX. INTRODUCTION AND EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND AND THIRD LETTERS OF JOHN

### 2 and 3 John

We take up now the second letter of John, and follow with the third letter of John. By way of introduction to both books. I have these few words to say:

First, what does the author of these two books say of himself? In both he calls himself "the elder" (Greek – *presbuteros*), which is a designation of office; and not *presbutes*, meaning an old man. All of the apostles were elders. Peter calls himself an elder. He says to the elders: "I, who am an elder, write."

Second, to whom do some attribute these two letters? To a "John the Presbyter," who is said to have lived in the second century at Ephesus.

Third, what the reply to this?

(1) There is no trustworthy evidence that there was any such man as John the Presbyter living in the second century at Ephesus; it is very doubtful.

(2) The historical evidence is in every way sufficient to show that John the apostle is the author of both of these letters. I will not cite this historical evidence, but I will include among those who refer to it, Irenaeus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John, and Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian of Africa, and quite a number of others all testify that the apostle John wrote both these books.

(3) The internal evidence is equally conclusive. In these letters are these expressions: "Live in the truth," "walk in the truth," "love one another," "and this is love, that ye walk in his commandments," every word of verses 7, 9, and others equally characteristic in the third letter are all Johannine, that is expressions of John. Certainly whoever wrote 1 John wrote both of these letters.

(4) It is characteristic of the apostle John to refer to himself indirectly. Even in his Gospel he says, "That disciple whom Jesus loved." In his first letter he does not mention his own name. Here he says, "the elder," and that is just like him. Only in the book of Revelation does he give his own name.

(5) There is a clear reference in 3 John 10 to the power exercised by the apostles only – the judgment power.

(6) It is quite natural that short letters addressed to individuals about local or personal matters should more slowly receive general recognition.

## **THE SECOND LETTER OF JOHN**

To whom is this letter addressed? This answer consists of four parts:

1. The author confesses himself unable to appreciate the mystical sense imported by some into the very plain language of a letter not apocalyptic on its face, so as to render the Greek word "*kuria*" in verse I, as "lady," and then claim that "lady" means a church. And then construe the Greek word *tekna* "children," as members of the church. And yet again at the end of the letter to so construe the Greek word *adelphes*, "sister," to make it mean "church," is to him too farfetched for serious consideration. And yet all through the ages, and particularly among our Hard-shell brethren, is this theory held. They say, "The elder to the elect lady," meaning some elect church called lady, but it all sounds silly to me.

2. The word *Kuria*, English "Cyria," is a proper name like "Gaius," "Timothy," "Titus," "Philemon," and so this should be rendered, "The elder to the elect Cyria." That is a woman's name.

3. While *kuria* literally means "lady," yet, etymologically, every Bible name means something: "Jacob" means "supplanter," "Israel" means "One who prevails with God," "Jesus" means "Saviour." All the proper names of the Bible have literal meanings, yet we would be foolish to render these proper names by the etymological meaning of the word.

4. It is utterly foreign to New Testament usage to call a woman "a lady." The Bible does not call a woman "a lady." We do not find this word *kuria* anywhere else in the New Testament, but we find "woman" in many places. And the Bible never calls a church a lady. Now, in the book of Revelation a woman (not a lady) symbolizes the church. That is an apocalyptic book, confessedly symbolic) but in the Bible the females are women – not ladies. This good sister's name was Cyria. "*Kuria*" and "Cyria" mean the same thing.

So this letter is addressed to a good woman, and her name is Cyria, and I am glad that one book of the Bible is addressed to a woman.

5. What is the occasion of this letter? The apostle seems to be stopping with the children of Cyria's sister. The sister is supposed to be dead, and from her children he gets some information about Cyria, who was one of his converts, and hence he was well acquainted with her. She did not live at the same place, of course, but he gets some information from these children about Cyria, and the information is mixed. He says, "I have found that certain of thy children are walking in the truth." Now that implies that certain others of them are not walking in the truth, so it is mixed information. Apparently from these Christian children he hears a good report of some of Cyria's children, and this gives him great joy, and prompts him in love and courtesy to write a note to their aunt Cyria, sending greetings from the nephews and nieces. I have done that many a time. I have gone to a place and found people that were

acquainted with some old friend of mine, and from them I learn the latest information about that old friend, and as a matter of courtesy, while in their house, I write a letter or note to that old friend, and extend the family greeting.

In this note he commends her fidelity and the righteous walk of some of her children. But this letter is not merely a formal courtesy. Cyria seems to be living where the Gnostic philosophy prevails. Its traveling advocates claim to be preachers of the gospel, and he solemnly warns her not to receive them into her house, nor to bid them God-speed, lest she become a partaker of their sins. Their method was not to propagate their heresy from the pulpit) but by private household visitation, and this danger was real and great to Cyria's household. Hence his words in verses 7-8) which are as follows: "For many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." The letter assumes that the present Christian attainment of herself and family is the result of his labors: "Lose not the things which we have wrought." I taught you certain things and you accepted them. These deceivers come around, these antichrists, and deny what I so plainly taught, that Christ was come in the flesh." This implies a personal acquaintance with Cyria on John's part, and accounts for the familiarity, tenderness, and earnestness of his letter.

As I have said before, there is a possible implication that some of her children are already affected by this error – certain of her children were not walking in the truth, for if he had meant all of her children he would not have put it that way. It implies that others of them did not walk in the truth, and that implies a situation that accounts for the earnestness and solemnity of the letter. The wolf has already been prowling around that family fold. It is very probable that these antichrists in the guise of Christian preachers have already been guests in Cyria's house. He says, "Do not receive them into your house." And already there are premonitions of a

divided household, and the danger of a further lapse from what the apostle had taught.

Verse 9, when taken with verses 5-6, throws additional light on the situation. It declares that the very plea of these heretics is that they seem to have assured Cyria that she need not give up her love for her old teacher, nor break away from what the apostle had wrought, but only to go on somewhat beyond it follow new commandments, not denying the old, but confirming the new ones – new interpretations, new light. They were "progressives." Hence the earnest words: "I beseech thee, Cyria not according to any new commandments which these people give you, or any new interpretations about love, but according to the old commandments, I beseech thee let us love one another. The old commandments interpret and identify love as walking in God's commands, and not in any new orders. That is love that you walk in his commandments. If you do follow the new, you do surrender what we apostles have taught, and you do lose your reward."

And now comes the greatest text against the progressives in the whole Bible: "He who abides not in the teachings of Christ, but goes onward into something new, hath not God. Even to receive into your house these deceivers, and bid them God-speed, makes you a partaker of their sin." I say that this verse 9 is a golden text, a New Testament jewel against the progressives, who seek to reinterpret or go beyond the faith once for all delivered to the saints. I preached on it once for a solid hour. My heart was never more inflamed. I first quoted Jude's words: "The faith once for all delivered to the saints," and then took up newspaper notices from men esteemed great that these old notions are obsolete – we need a new religion, we need to go on. Now, says the apostle: "Whosoever abideth not in the teachings of Christ, but goeth onward, he hath not God." If there is any fire in us, we ought to be able to preach a sermon from that text. And here let me say that all of the short books of the New Testament are exquisite gems that justify their insertion in the canon. Verse 9 justifies putting this letter in the Bible. We do not get that thought

anywhere else. The fact that this is written to a woman, a hospitable woman, who has unwittingly received into her house as guests men claiming to be preachers, but who undermine the faith of some of her children, and who tell her: "You need not give up what you believe, you can go on loving your apostle John, but we have a new interpretation of love, according to new commandments, and you can stand on what he taught and what he wrought, but do not stay there, take a step farther; there are new things to be received," renders it all the more remarkable. Why, I imagine I 'can hear them. They are the children of the devil. President Eliot, of Harvard, is nothing but an atheist and is worse than Tom Paine, for Tom Paine was at least a deist.

John says, "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote to thee new commandments, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another." It is love that we keep his commandments, and not walk after new commandments.

### **THE THIRD LETTER OF JOHN**

It is evident from the comparison of the characteristic expressions common to this and the first letter, that one man wrote both, and it is equally evident that whoever wrote the first paragraph of the first letter wrote also the first paragraph of John's Gospel.

It is further evident from verse 10 of this letter that its author possessed the apostolic power to punish by extraordinary judgment resistance to inspired authority. We may accept it, therefore, without hesitation, that the apostle John wrote this letter.

Though written to an individual about local matters concerning a particular church, it is of permanent kingdom value, because of the light it throws on New Testament missionary operations, and because of its revelation of the subjection of a New Testament church to the evil domination of one ambitious and unscrupulous man – a prototype of thousands since his day.

There cannot be a clearer teaching on the evil possible to a particular church, under bossism, and on the invalidity of church decisions which violate fundamental New Testament law. This is at least one clear, authoritative, apostolic decision that such outrageous church action is entitled to no respect within the kingdom.

A church is under law to Jesus Christ, and never independent of his paramount authority. Mere church authority cannot set aside the authority of our Lord. It is true that what a church decides on matters of discipline binds or looses in heaven (Matt. 18:17-18), but only when Christ is with them (Matt. 18:19-20), and his will is followed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It was Christ's law that his apostles be received as himself (Matt. 10:40), but here is a man who rejects an apostle, maliciously slanders him and rebels against his authority. It was Christ's law that missionaries should be sent to all the nations (Matt. 28:18-19), but here is a man who rejects them coming in Christ's "name," and duly accredited by apostolic letter. Christ prescribed the steps of procedure in the disciplining of a brother by the church who sins, and who will not yield to either private labor or church authority (Matt. 18:15-17). But this man counts obedience to Christ a sin, and utterly disregards our Lord's own words as to methods of procedure in discipline, and forces the subservient church to reject his accredited messengers, and to arbitrarily exclude those whose only offense was obedience to the Lord. It was a glaring instance of devilish usurpation of power, of unmistakable high treason and rebellion. A thousand times in ecclesiastical history has this great lesson, nowhere else so clearly taught as here, been needed to show that merely getting a majority of a particular church to vote a certain way is not per se a righteous verdict in God's sight. This one great lesson alone forever justifies the incorporation of this short letter into the accepted canon of the Holy Scriptures.

But let us analyze the great little book, presenting an order of thought both logical and chronological:

## ANALYSIS

1. In verses 5-8 we find the New Testament law of foreign missions:

(1) For the sake of the name they go forth.

(2) They take nothing of the Gentiles, who are as yet unsaved, and so not appreciating labors in their own behalf, may not be counted on to pay the expenses of their own evangelization.

(3) Those already evangelized, whether individuals or churches, should welcome, entertain, and set forward these men worthily of God on their way to their field, and sustain them there until the heathen field becomes itself not only selfsustaining, but a new center of support to the fields beyond. This was Paul's method of taking wages of other churches to preach the gospel in heathen Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8), and as he says, "Having hope that, as your faith groweth, we shall be magnified in you according to our rule unto further abundance, so as to preach the gospel to the parts even beyond you" (2 Cor. 10:15-16).

(4) In this co-operation, in aid to the missionary, the helper shared the honor of the missionary's labor, becoming a fellow helper to the truth.

(5) It needs to be particularly noted that it was not the plan for each church to send out its own missionaries, limiting its obligations to only its own missionaries. If this had been the plan, the particular church to which Gaius and Diotrephes belonged was within its rights in refusing to receive and help these missionaries sent out by the Ephesian church.

The churches of Macedonia that helped Paul preach at Corinth did not send him out, but the far-off church at Antioch in Syria. All the churches are equally related to the kingdom, and are bound, as opportunity offers, to co-operate in kingdom activities, without



regard to the fact that only some one particular church ordains a man and sends him out.

This is exceedingly important law of New Testament missions. The whole New Testament condemns the idea that obligation on a particular church to help missions is limited. to the missionaries sent out by itself. Thus in five distinct particulars this short letter gives us the law of New Testament missions.

2. In accordance with this law, certain missionaries are sent out from Ephesus to go to the Gentiles. To accredit them and provide help on the way to their field the apostle John writes a letter to a church situated on the way to their field.

3. Unfortunately this church is (1) under the domination of an ambitious, unscrupulous, anti-missionary, one Diotrephea, Whether he was a preacher, or long-horned deacon, or merely an unofficial boss is immaterial. There have been thousands like him, eager for pre-eminence in the church, insisting on having his own arbitrary way, following "a rule or ruin policy." Cursed is the church that is ridden by such "an old man of the sea." (2) This man forced the church to reject the apostolic letter, "prating against the apostle with wicked words." (3) He forced the church to refuse to receive the missionaries apostolically accredited. (4) This did not content him; he forbade any individual member of the church to receive them. (5) Gaius did receive them in spite of this unlawful interdict. (6) The missionaries came before the church and bore grateful testimony to the loving hospitality of Gaius. (7) Whereupon Diotrephes forced the church to exclude Gaius and his sympathizers. (8) Brethren who knew all the facts reported the case to John, bearing witness to the fidelity of Gaius.

4. Whereupon John writes this letter to Gaius, thoroughly endorsing his course and condemning the course of Diotrephes, and sends it by Demetrius, whom he highly commends: "Demetrius hath the witness of all men arid of the truth itself; yea we also bear witness; and thou knowest our witness is true." Demetrius doubtless goes to the scene

of the strife as an apostolic delegate, with full powers to dispose of the case, just as Paul sent Titus to Crete to set in order irregularities there (Tit. 1:5), and as he exhorted Timothy to tarry at Ephesus (1 Tim. 3, 3:14) to regulate affairs there. In this letter, as Paul did to the Corinthians, he threatens to come with apostolic judgment in case Diotrephes refuses to yield to the authority of his accredited delegate. It would gratify our natural curiosity to know positively the issue of the case in the hands of Demetrius, as we do know the issue at Corinth in the hands of Titus. Judging from other New Testament cases we may infer a favorable issue here, that Diotrephes was divested of power to do further harm, that Gaius and his friends were restored to the church fellowship, that the missionaries were worthily helped on their way. We may even charitably hope that Diotrephes, like the incestuous man at Corinth and the rebels there against apostolic authority, repented of his sins; yet seldom does a man repent who goes to the lengths this man did. He was perilously near to the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is an eternal sin, and hath never forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come.

5. Apart from the valuable law of missions and the history of this remarkable case, which is a priceless legacy to the churches, there are yet to be considered three valuable lessons:

(1) This letter answers clearly a great question, to wit: Just how rich does the New Testament allow a Christian to become? Or, what is the New Testament's limit to the amount of wealth a Christian may lawfully acquire?

In my early pastorate at Waco I put this very question to my Sunday school, to be answered the following week. There chanced to be present a millionaire from Newark, New Jersey, who had made his money in Texas, Morgan L. Smith. He approached me when the school was dismissed saying that the question interested him personally, and as he would leave before the following Sunday, would take it as a favor if I would give him the answer in advance. I

read to him this passage from 3 John: "Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth," which I thus interpreted: John would not pray for unlawful things. He did pray that Gaius might prosper financially just as far as was consistent with his prosperity of soul. Therefore, it was lawful to acquire a million, ten millions, any number of millions, if the acquisition did no harm to the soul. But in many cases wealth as gained or as used starved and sickened the soul. To them any amount was unlawful that worked such result. It was good for such men that God kept them poor; if he allowed to them an increase of wealth at the expense of the soul, it was in anger and as a judgment. Prosperity makes fools of many. The same law applied to health. Some could be well all the time and the soul the better for it. Others, like Jeshurun, kicked when they waxed fat. Many may echo the Bible statement: "Before I was afflicted I went astray." An old mother said: "You have to break the legs of some children to raise them."

(2) The second lesson is one of solemn warning to church bosses. A church is the temple of God: "Him that destroyeth the temple of God, will God destroy," quotes Paul to the Corinthians. Along the shores of history lie the wrecks of many once useful churches: along the same shores are the wrecks of their destroyers.

(3) There remains the lesson arising from the emphatic use of the word "name" in verse 7: "For the sake of the name they went forth." Already that word stood for all that Christ was and taught and did. It went into ecclesiastical history just as John here starts it. In the dark ages it was the Christian's password in dangerous places, acting as an introduction and a protection, like the Masonic grip and password. When the hounds of persecution pursued the martyr, and when heathen or papal interdict closed against him the door of sympathy, shelter, and help, he would knock at doors and say, "In the Name." The brother Christian within, though a stranger, and it may be of another nation, would recognize the password, and give

shelter and help at the risk of his own life. In this way also they safely distributed their literature.

"For the sake of the Name" should be our watchword and motive.

## QUESTIONS

1. What does the author of these letters say of himself?
2. To whom have some attributed their authorship and your reply thereto.
3. Who the author according to historical evidence?
4. How does the internal confirm the historical?

## 2 JOHN

5. Why not render *Kuria*, "lady," and then construe lady to mean a church, and "sisters" a church and "children" church members? Give the argument of the author.
6. To whom then addressed?
7. State the occasion of the letter.
8. What words of the letter indicate John's previous knowledge of Cyria?
9. What words may imply that some of her children were not walking in the truth?
10. What, from the implications of the letter, was the plea of these heretics?
11. How does the letter reply?
12. What the golden text of the letter?

### **3 JOHN**

13. Why this letter a valuable part of the inspired canon of Scripture?

14. Quote and apply the New Testament law as violated by Diotrephes.

### **ANALYSIS**

15. What the New Testament law of foreign missions in verses 5-8?

16. Prove the violation of New Testament law and precedent when a church limits its foreign mission obligation to missionaries sent out by itself.

17. What Texas plan recommends this error?

18. State the history of this case conforming to that law.

19. Give, in eight particulars, the reception of these missionaries by the church of which Gains and Diotrephes were members.

20. How does John answer the appeal of the case to him?

21. Show from similar cases under Paul that Demetrius was sent as apostolic delegate, with the threat of the apostle's own coming in judgment, if the delegate be not heard.

22. What great question does this letter answer and how? Illustrate.

23. What the second lesson?

24. What the third?

25. What two great texts in this letter?