THE BIBLE CLASS TEACHER

2 Tim. 2:1,2; Eph. 3:10

Introduction.

The greatest work one can do is to teach lost souls how to be saved. Every Christian should be a teacher--Heb. 5:12. Some teach in a private capacity and some teach in a public manner. It is our purpose in this lesson to study about the public Bible class teacher by noticing:

Discussion.

I. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BIBLE TEACHERS.

A. James 3:1--"be not many masters (teachers AS).

1. James is not trying to discourage us from being teachers because James 5:19,20, seems to indicate he wants us to be teachers.
2. He is attempting to discourage those that are filled with worldly ambition from tampering with the sacred word of God; desiring to be teachers merely to fulfill a personal ambition.
3. He discourages such by saying "we shall receive the reater condemnation." (Greater in this life and greater in the world to come.)

B. The responsibility of the Bible teacher is further emphasized when the teacher realizes that that which he teaches:

1. Deals with souls--Matt. 16:24-26. (The public school teachers deal with teaching men how to live here, but the Bible teacher not only is teaching how to live here, but eternity.)
2. Brings men to Christ--John 6:44,45.
3. A means of spiritual growth--1 Pet. 2:1,2.
4. Means of keeping Christians saved--Matt. 28:19,20.

cf. Jer. 18:1 Rom. 9 (Illustrate: use a piece of clay to show that every teacher is a moulder of lives. Be careful how you mold.)

C. The future destiny of the world lies in the hands of the Bible Class Teachers.

II. PREPARATION BIBLE TEACHERS OUGHT TO HAVE--EZRA 7:10.

A. Preparation of heart to seek the law of the Lord.

B. Willing to do it.

D. It is said of the Lord. A. 1:1.

C. Willing to teach it to others.

III. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE BIBLE TEACHER.

A. Must be a sincere, genuine Christian--1 Tim. 4:16. ("If he does not know the way, he is unprepared to teach others; if he knows and will not walk there, he is unworthy to lead.")

B. Must be sound in doctrine--Titus 2:1.

1. Teach the word of God and not one's opinions and views.
2. Firm believer in the power of the word he teaches-Rom. 1:16; Isa. 55:11.

1 Tim. 4:16; cf. A. 20:28-

C. Must be an example. (The pupil may not remember much you say, but they'll remember you.) The teacher must be an example:

1. In your attitude toward God's word--Psa. 119:97. (If the teacher doesn't love God's word the student can soon detect it.)
2. In practicing what you teach--1 Tim. 4:12; Rom. 2:1; 17-24. (The preacher preached on "Honesty" on Sunday morning; on Monday morning he rode a streetcar and the driver gave him a dime too much; he returned it and the driver said, "I heard you sermon yesterday; Waht if he dhan't returned it?)
3. In regualr attendance. Heb. 10:25. (Little Johnny listened attentiverly as his teacher emphasized the importance of attending every service of the church, determining never to miss again. Sunday evening he looked and looked for his teacher, but she could not be found. Little Johnny went away a disbeliever.)
4. In your personality. Since your pupils will be just like you, you ought to be true, thoughtful, thorough; you ought to govern your time, tongue and temper.
5. In enthusiasm.

D. Must be a prayerful individual. (No teacher will succeed without much prayer to God. Every member of the church ought to pray for the teacher--Eph. 6:18,19.)

E. Must have a passion for lost souls.
   1. Jesus--Matt. 11:28; 23:37.
   2. Paul--Rom. 10:1,2.
   3. The teacher that has a passion will teach in such a way that the student can see your are interested in him.

F. Must be willing to prepare to teach--One cannot teach what he does not know himself.
   1. Wrong way.
      a. Read your lesson about 30 minutes before you try to teach it.
      b. Have the attitude, if you teach the little ones, that they won't know any better so it doesn't matter how you prepare.
      c. Prepare merely to take up the alloted time.
   2. Right way.
      a. Read your lesson at the beginning of the week and think about it all the week. If time permits study it a little every day.
      b. Try to anticipate the questions your students will ask and be ready with an answer.
      c. Make application of the truth learned to your life and the life of your students.

G. Be Tactful--To be tactful means to have the ability to know what to do or say in dealing with others so as not to unnecessarily offend.

H. Be Firm, frank, sincere and gentle. 1 Thess. 2:11.

IV. THE REWARDS OF THE BIBLE CLASS TEACHER.
   A. Invisible Rewards.
      1. Teacher is paid in the knowledge he gains. (Knowledge of God's will)
      2. The help he does and gives the student. (Teachers sometimes discouraged because they don't seem to be doing any good, but if you are doing your best, the results will be seen later.)
   B. The visible rewards.
      1. Seeing one you have taught obey the gospel. (What joy? What a reward)
      2. The eternal reward at the end of the road. Jesus to Peter-Matt. 19:29.

V. WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO MAKE THE BIBLE TEACHER'S WORK EASIER.
   A. Help and be sure your child has his or her lesson each time. (I notice several study lesson after you get to church. You're cheating yourself)
   B. Visit the classes and encourage the teacher.
   C. Tell the teacher often how much you appreciate their work.
   D. Don't talk about the teachers.

Conclusion.

Beloved, a great responisbility rests upon the Bible teacher, but the rewards, both visible and invisible, are enough to cause each teacher to work harder and encourage others to become teachers. Will you work harder in the future? Will you be a better teacher?

SURPRISING THE SAVIOR

Mark 6:1-6; Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read or have someone read the texts.
2. Do people sometimes surprise you? In fact have you made the statements, "I'm surprised" or "I'm not surprised."
3. The word surprise carries with it the idea of astonishment, marveling, an emotion excited because something occurs unexpected, sudden, or different from what one had expected or anticipated.
4. There are only two recorded instances where our Lord marveled or was surprised at people.
5. We purpose to notice them under the heading (1) Surprising the Savior Sadly and (2) Surprising the Savior Gladly.

DISCUSSION:

I. SOME PEOPLE SURPRISE THE SAVIOR SADLY. Mk. 6:1-6.
   A. Read the verses and give background and brief comments on them.
   B. Why was the Lord surprised? "Because of their unbelief." Mk. 6:6.
   C. Why was he surprised at "their unbelief?"
      1. He was surprised at their unbelief despite his great interest in them.
         a. On an earlier occasion the Lord had come to Nazareth, taught in their synogogue and told them the truth, but they thrust him out of the city and tried to throw him over a cliff. Lk. 4:16-32.
         b. Now the Lord has returned to teach in their synagogue again and to do mighty works but they still can't accept him.
      2. He was surprised at their unbelief despite their great advantages over many others.
         a. They enjoyed the Lord's presence and teaching.
         b. They had heard about and admitted his mighty works.
   D. There are many today that must still surprise the Lord because of their unbelief in view of our many advantages.
      1. The Lord must be surprised at those that hear the gospel time after time and refuse to obey it.
      2. The Lord must marvel at the unbelief of the church in doing what he has commanded many times.
      3. The Lord must be surprised at people that have so much done for them and then show such great ingratitude at times.

II. SOME PEOPLE SURPRISE THE SAVIOR GLADLY. Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10.
   A. Read the verses and give background and brief comments on them.
   B. Why was the Lord surprised? "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Mt. 8:10.
      1. The Lord was surprised at such great faith because of who it was that had it.
         a. The man was a Gentile - he was "not in Israel"
         b. He was a centurion in the Roman army.
         c. If some Jew had manifested such faith, the Lord would not have been as surprised.
      2. The Lord was surprised because of the quality of his faith - "so great faith."
         a. The Jews believed the Lord could perform mighty works but they thought his presence was necessary.
            (1) Mary at death of Lazarus. Jn. 11:21.
            (2) The nobelman at Capernaum. Jn. 4:49.
         b. The centurion believed that all that Jesus had to do was just speak the word. Lk. 7:7-9.
      3. The faith of the Centurion was great for several reasons:
         a. It was based on facts he had learned about Jesus. Lk. 7:2,3.
         b. It overcame great obstacles:
            (1) The prejudice of the Jews.
            (2) The pride of one in his position.
         c. It was unselfish. He thought about his servant.
         d. It was a faith that worked.

(1) He had built a synagogue for the Jews. Lk. 7:5.
(2) He went to Jesus about his servant.
d. It is faith in God and in His Son.

C. The Lord is still gladly surprised by many today.
1. The Lord must still be surprised when he sees the great faith of some in heathen lands today.
2. He must be surprised when he sees the great devotion of some that seemly have the least ability.

CONCLUSION:

Every individual is before the Lord today, We are either "gladly surprising" him or "sadly surprising" him.

"The Power Of A New Love"

2 Cor. 5:13-15

INTRODUCTION:

1. "At some time in almost all of our lives, we have known some young man who was rather irresponsible or reckless in youth, but who surprised us a few years later by being very dependable and very successful in some business interprise. It may be that you said something like this. 'Why, I used to know him when..." and you described him as reckless and undependable, almost worthless. You mentioned how he raced the family car through the streets, and that he was rather careless about obedience to his parents' commands, and then you said, 'I'm amazed that he has become such an outstanding business leader. It's just a change from night to day.' Well, it is not really so vast a change. It is a change, of course, and on the surface it looks like he is an entirely different man, but actually it means only that he changed his goal. When he was an undependable, reckless boy, his goal in life was having a good time and he did not let anything get in the way. Then a few years went by, he matured, he married, he settled down, he began to earn a living and his goal changed. Now his goal is being a respectable husband and building a profitable business. Having changed his goal he follows the new goal with the same intensity that characterized his youthful pursuit of the other. His present desire has crowded out the old desire, and the irresponsibility is all gone because he has a new love, a new first devotion."
2. Thomas A Edison in his early days of school was a surprisingly poor student. Most of his teachers despaired of ever making anything useful out of him, yet he became one of the world's greatest inventors. He spent 18 hours a day in his laboratory carrying out experiments which resulted in great inventions. His new devotion, new purpose had crowded out the irresponsibility of earlier days.
3. Most of us can look back and in our early lives remember time when we were aimlessly moving about wasting time and energy. When a freshman in High School, I read 59 novels, particularly Zane Grey. But somehow these have been crowded out with more important reading now.
4. All of this reminds us of a sentence by the Apostle Paul. 1 Cor. 13:11. "The greater, deeper devotion, and the deepening and maturing of thought crowd out many things in our lives." This principle is of tremendous value in tackling one of the biggest problems we face.

DISCUSSION:

I. OURS IS A WORLD TO BE REMADE.
   A. We live in a wicked world in which there are a great many wicked people.
      1. There are people who give themselves to their passions.
      2. There are those who hate.
      3. There are those borne down with greed.
      4. There are those with which profanity is common.
   B. The way to get rid of these sins is simply to find a new love.
      1. The noted British preacher, Thomas Chalmers, a number of years ago, preached a sermon called "The Expulsive Power of a New Love."
      2. One grows out of uselessness into usefulness largely in terms of discovering a new love and devotion.
   C. There are two ways of trying to remake our world and the individuals in it.
      1. One way is to describe sin in all its viciousness.
         a. The newspaper account show the ugliness of sin.
         b. Yet when it is described realistically those engaged in it find it hard to give up because:
            (1) It is deceitful. Heb. 3:13.
            (2) It is enticing. Jas. 1:13-15.
            (3) It is pleasant. Heb. 11:25.
      2. The better way, more lasting way is to plant some higher and nobler love in the heart which will crowd out the love of evil.

a. One cannot get rid of the old without putting in the new. Eph. 4:22-32.
b. Convincing a man of the folly of sin may cause him to leave it a little while, but he'll soon go back unless it is replaced with something greater.
(1) Solomon tasted everything that could be tasted and even though they were wrong he kept going back. Eccles. 2:11.
(2) Jesus spoke of such a power when he spoke of the empty house and unclean spirit in Mt. 12:43-45.
c. It is essential that the ugliness of sin be replaced with something more beautiful and lasting.

II. EVIL MUST BE OVERCOME WITH GOOD OF WHICH THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES.
A. Moses at the time he made the greatest decision of his life. Heb. 11:24-26.
1. On the other hand was Egypt with all its glamour, its wine, its women, its songs, its power, etc.
2. But his love for God and his people crowded out the love he might have had for Egypt.
B. The man who became the apostle Peter.
1. There was a time when Peter loved fishing and earned his living thus.
2. But the day came when the deeper love of being a fisher of men crowded out his former love. Mk. 1:17,18.
C. Take the man who loves the drink and let him visualize himself two ways:
1. On the other hand he is a slave of a vicious habit.
2. But let him view himself sober, self-control, etc.
3. He comes to hate the one and it crowds out the other.
D. Here is a man who cuts corners in business.
1. On the one hand is a dishonest man.
2. But look at the self-respecting, honest man.
E. The love of God crowds out the love of evil.

III. THE BIBLE AND ITS USE IN THE POWER OF A NEW LOVE.
A. We need to fill out lives with that which is worthy.
1. We need to fill it with pictures of inspiring lives hanging on the walls of our heart.
a. Abraham and his great faith.
b. Job and his devotion to God.
c. Joseph and his purity.
d. Daniel and his courage.
e. Ruth and her loyalty.
f. John and his love.
g. Paul and his zeal.
2. We need to fill our lives with inspiring passages of scriptures.
a. The 23rd Palms, inspires us to live closer to God.
b. When we are tempted to read that which is not pure. Phil. 4:8,9.
3. We need to fill our lives with Christ.
a. Focising our lives on Christ often enought we become like him. 2 Cor. 3:18.
b. Christians are to be transformed into likeness of him. Rom. 12:1,2.
B. The writers of some of the world's greatest literature recognized that we become like that with which we fill our lives.
1. "Nathaniel Hawthrone in his little story, "The Marble Faun," tell about a man who came to be like what he lived with.
2. His other story "The Great Stone Face," tells of a boy who grew to look like the granite face on the mountainside because he looked at it so often.
3. Then there is George Elliot's "Silas Marner" which tells the story of an old miser whose life was changed by the coming of a little child into his life.

Conclusion:
1. "Robert Louis Stevenson relates a story of a young traveler who visted for a time in a house surrounded by beautiful scenery. In the room where he slept there was hanging the wall the picture of a licentious, but beautiful woman. The young man was conscious of the evil in the face, but the picture had the powerful fascination for him. It was the last thing he saw before he wne to

sleep and the first thing on which his gaze fell when he awoke. He soon realized that the woman was gradually absorbing his thought throughout the day.

Then one day, the daughter of the family, who had been away from home, returned. The man and the young lady passed on the stairs, and it was love at first sight. When the young man went to his room that night he looked at the picture and smailed. It had lost its power and inluence. He had found a new and pure love."

2. The apostle Paul put it in plain language in Gal. 2:20.
3. I urge you to let the love of Christ and his kingdom come into your heart that ye May be born again (Jn. 3:5,) and become a new creature. 2 Cor. 5:17.

3. One cannot get rid of the old without putting in the new. Eph. 4:22,32.
4. Convincing a man of the folly of sin may cause him to leave it a little while, but he'll soon go back unless it is replaced with something another.

"Christianity vs. Communism"

Eph. 5:14-17; 6:10-18; Jude 3

Introduction.

1. Why preach on Communism will be a question immediately asked by many? Objections to such preaching will come from many:
   a. "Our business is to preach Christ (1 Cor. 2:1,2) and we ought to leave Communism to the government."
      (1) Communism is more than a matter for the government as you will soon see.
      (2) Communism is a philosophy of life which challenges Christ on every basic position.
   b. "There are others who do not think one should preach on it because they 'refuse to accept the fact that danger exists."
      (1) Despite the tremendous evidence which confront them on every hand they continue to hide their heads in the sand like the "proverbial ostrich."
      (2) To refuse to believe Communism is a danger is to reject the testimony of law enforcement agencies like J. Edgar Hoover and others.
   c. "Then there are others who adopt what is called the 'middle of the road' philosophy."
      (1) This is based on the fallacious assumption that patriotism is equally as bad as Communism.
      (2) The "middle of the road" philosphy reminds me of the practice of the American Indians who tied a prisoner between two horses and stampeded the horses.
   d. Still others, in the face of so many threats to Christianity and freedom, tend to despair.
      (1) "As we look at the first century Christians, living under oppression and tyranny and realizing that 'the end of all things is at hand' we are struck with the fact that theirs was not a "gloom and doom" philosophy. They were confident, yes, cheerful, not because of world conditions, but because they knew by faith that their destiny was in the hands of a victorious God." (20th Century Christian, Feb., 1962, p. 3)
      (2) In this same cheerful confidence the Christian can, with faith in God, and love for his fellowman, go forth to meet the challenge before him.
2. In this lesson we purpose to (1) Define Communism and Socialism, (2) Define Christianity, and (3) Give Scriptural Reasons for opposing it.

Discussion.

I. WHAT IS COMMUNISM AND SOCIALISM?

A. Communism:

1. "COMMUNISM IS A WORLDWIDE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION ADVOCATING: (1) THE ABOLITION OF ALL FORMS OF RELIGION; (2) THE DESTRUCTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE ABOLITION OF INHERITANCE; (3) ABSOLUTE SOCIAL AND RACIAL EQUALITY; (4) REVOLUTION UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL; (5) ENGAGING IN ACTIVITIES IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO CAUSE STRIKES, RIOTS, SABOTAGE, BLOODSHED, AND CIVIL WAR; (6) DESTRUCTION OF ALL FORMS OF REPRESENTATIVE OR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING CIVIL LIBERTIES SUCH AS FREEDOM OF SPEECH, OF THE PRESS, AND OF ASSEMBLAGE: (7) THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF WORLD REVOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE SO-CALLED PROLETARIAT INTO A UNIVERAL UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS WITH ITS CAPITAL AT MOSCOW; (8) THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THESE ENDS THROUGH EXTREME APPEALS TO HATRED." (House Report 2290, House of Representatives, January 1931)

2. "IN REALITY, COMMUNISM TODAY IS A MARX INSPIRED, MOSCOW DIRECTED, INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF CIVILIZATION BASED ON A GOD-DENYING PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE, SUSTAINED BY FAITH IN THE DIALECTIC, BACKED BY THE DEVOTION OF ITS FANATICAL BELIEVERS AND TO AN UNCERTAIN EXTENT BY THE ARMED MIGHT OF RED ARMIES." ("A Dictionary of Communist' English, Bales, p. 38)

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

3. "In brief, communism is the dogmatic worship of a self-righteous idol derived from logical absurdity and deceit, and sustained on fanaticism, power, and blood." (Possony W, 17, Quoted in Dictionary by Bales, p. 38)

4. COMMUNISM IS A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND ENDEAVORS TO EXPLAIN THE UNIVERSE, LIFE, HISTORY, AND THE FUTURE. IT EMBRACES ATHEISM, DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM AND CLASS STRUGGLE AS INTEGRAL PARTS OF ITS EXPLANATION. ITS CONCERN IS NOT ONLY WITH THEORY BUT ALSO WITH ACTION. THUS MAR X EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS NOT INTERESTED SIMPLY IN UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD, BUT IN CHANGING IT. AS A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE COMMUNISM ENDEAVORS TO DOMINATE AND TO CONTROL THE OUTER AND THE INNER LIFE OF ITS DEVOTEES WHO ACCEPT ITS DISCIPLINE IN EVERY PART OF THEIR PRIVATE AND PRO* FESSIONAL LIVES. THUS IT HAS BEEN CALL ED A RELIGION OR A RELIGION-SUBSTITUTE BY SOME. IN FACT, BERTRAND RUSSELL LABELS COMMUNISM, AS IT HAS DEVELOPED IN RUSSIA, AS A "POLITICAL RELIGION ANALOGOUS TO ISLAM." (Bales, Communism, p. 18)

B. Socialism:

1. Socialism is not communism (although they are bed partners) but it is the transition stage from Capitalism to Communism.

   a. Khrushchev had this to say about Socialism: "We CANNOT EXPECT THE AMERICANS TO JUMP FROM CAPITALISM TO COMMUNISM. BUT WE CAN ASSIST THEIR ELECTED LEADERS IN GIVING AMERICANS SMALL DOSES OF SOCIALISM, UNTIL THEY SUDDENLY A-WAKE TO FIND THEY HAVE COMMUNISM." ("I Dare YOu", Smith, p. 38)

   B. Nikolai Lenin said: " WE ALSO SAW THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH COMMUNISM AS THE IMMEDIATE SUCCESSOR TO CAPITALISM. IT IS, ACCORDINGLY, PROPOSED TO ESTABLISH SOCIALISM AS SOMETHING WHICH WE CAN PUT IN THE PLACE OF OUR PRESENT DECAYING CAPITALISM. HENCE COMMUNISTS WORK FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIALISM AS A NECESSARY TRANSITION STAGE ON THE ROAD TO COMMUNISM." (Ibid, p. 38)

2. Harold MacMillian of England said: "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM EXCEPT THIS: SOCIALISM IS SOFT, COMMUNISM IS HARD; SOCIALISM IS PINK, COMMUNISM IS RED. SOCIALISM GETS YOU DOWN BIT BY BIT BY A KIND OF ANESTHETIC PROCESS. IT MIGHT BE CALLED MERCY KILLING. COMMUNISM JUST KNOCKS YOU ON THE HEAD." (Ibid, p. 38-39)

C. Look at the platforms of Socialism and Communism:

1. Socialist Platform:

   a. Socialism advocates Government ownership of industry, Railroads, Banks and land.
   b. Government planning of production.
   c. Government control of prices and wages.
   d. Heavy, progressive income tax.
   e. Extremely heavy inheritance tax.
   f. Full employment and government control of medical services.

2. Communist Platform:

   a. Factories owned by the state.
   b. Centralization of communication and transportation by the state.
   c. National bank control.
   d. Abolition of private land ownership.
   e. Central planning of production.
   f. Heavy, progressive income tax.
   g. Abolition of inheritance.

II. WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

A. Christianity is a philosophy of life planned by God, revealed by Christ and inspired by the Holy Spirit. It includes the whole of man.

B. Christianity involves belief and acceptance of certain vital truths.

1. God is the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, Creator, and Father. Gen. 1:1; Acts 17:25ff; 2 Cor. 6:17,18; Heb. 8:10.
2. Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, the Son of God. Mt. 1:21; Acts 4:12; Jn. 3:16.
3. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are fundamental facts to be believed. 1 Cor. 15:1-4.
4. Man is a sinner and in need of salvation. Rom. 3:23.
5. There are some things right and wrong because God's law had made it so.
6. Heaven and hell are real places. Jn. 14:1-3; Mt. 25:46; Mk. 9:43.

III. SOME SCRIPTURAL REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS MUST OPPOSE COMMUNISM.

A. The Christian warfare is to "casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:4.

1. The Christian then must be against a system that denies the existence of God and seeks to destroy all faith in God.
2. The Christian believe that Christ died to save men and must be against a system that denies Christ is Savior and man is a sinner.
3. The Christian believes that man has an immortal soul of great value (Mt. 16:26) and must be against anything that views man as economic and class animals.

B. Jesus said "the devil is the father of all lies, and the truth is not in him." Jn. 8:44. All sin is of the devil. 1 Jn. 3:8.

1. Communists promise anything and make any agreement which will further communism and break any of them when to their advantage. "A LIE CANNOT BE TOLD BY A COMMUNIST TO PROMOTE COMMUNISM BECAUSE IF IT PROMOTES COMMUNISM IT IS A TRUTH NOT A LIE. 'IT HAS MEAN , ON THE ONE HAND, THAT THE PARTY REGARDS AS WHOLLY CORRECT THE SUBSTITUTION OF FALSEHOOD FOR TRUTH WHEREVER FALSEHOOD PROMISES TO DELIVER MORE USEFUL RESULTS. IT HAS MEANT, ON TH E OTHER HAND, THAT THE PARTY REGARDS ITSELF AS BOUND BY ITS OWN SOLEMNLY AFFIRMED WORDS, WRITTEN OR SPOKEN, ONLY SO LONG AS IT CAN GAIN MORE BY ADHERING TO THESE WORDS THAN BY SCRAPPING THEM." (Dictionary, Bales, p. 61)

2. Communists believe that the right or wrong of a thing is determined by what serves class interest the best.

3. Communists talk of peace, the good life, justice, plenty and personal liberty while all the time they practice slavery, murder, and starvation. Such are false apostles and deceitful workers. 2 Cor. 11:14,15.

C. The Christian must be against any system that seeks to destroy the religion of Jesus Christ.

1. Sometimes Communists claim to be very much in favor of religion and may even use it if it serves their purpose.

a. In 1935, Earl Browder, then national chairman of the Communist Party said: "You may be interested in knowing that we have preacher, preachers active in churches who are members of the Communist Party." (Communism is the United States, New York: International Publishers, 1935, p. 335)

b. By infiltrating religion the Communist hope to accomplish the following:

(1) "To use the names of religious leaders to give prestige to communist front organizationss.
(2) To circulate the idea that non-collectivistic systems are immoral.
(3) To give their opposition to anti-communists the influence of their religious office."

2. The true attitude of Communists toward Christians and Christianity are best reflected by statements from their leaders:

a. "IN 1923 IN A SPEECH BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN RUSSIA, LENIN SAID: 'GIVE US THE CHILD FOR EIGHT YEARS, AND IT WILL BE A BOLSHEVIST FOREVER. WE HAVE STRUCK KINGS FROM THE EARTH: NOW LET US STRIKE THE KING FROM THE SKIES. WE MUST HATE. HATRED IS THE BASIS OF COMMUNISM. CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT TO HATE THEIR PARENTS IF THEY ARE NOT COMMUNISTS. IF THEY ARE, THEN THE CHILD NEED NOT RESPECT THEM, NEED NO LONGER WORRY ABOUT THEM . . . RELIGION MUST BE ABOLISHED. THE BEST COUNTRY IS A GODLESS COUNTRY. IF RELIGION WILL PASS OUT QUIETLY, OUR ATTITUDE WILL BE ONE OF BENEVOLENT TOLERANCE: BUT IF IT RESISTS, WE WILL HASTEN ITS EXIT BY VIOLENCE PROPORTIONED TO ITS RESISTANCE." (20Th Century Christian, Sept. 1955, p. 9, Brewer)

b. LUNACHARSKY, ONE TIME COMMISSAR OF EDUCATION IN RUSSIA, SAID: "WE HATE CHRISTIANITY AND CHRISTIANS: EVEN THE BEST OF THEM MUST BE REGARDED AS OUR WORST ENEMIES. THEY PREACH LOVE OF ONE'S NEIGHBOR AND MERCY, WHICH IS CONTRARY TO OUR PRINCIPLES. CHRISTIAN LOVE IS AN OBSTACLE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVOLUTION. DOWN WITH THE LOVE OF ONE'S NEIGHBOR! WHAT WE NEED IS HATRED!"

c. THE A B C OF COMMUNISM" IS A STANDARD WORK FOR USE IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY SCHOOLS. IT MAY BE BOUGHT FROM THE DAILY WORKER OFFICE IN NEW YORK. IT SAYS "RELIGION AND COMMUNISM ARE INCOMPATIBLE. 'RELIGION IS THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE'. SAID KARL MARX. IT IS THE TASK OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY TO MAKE THIS TRUTH COMPREHENSIBLE TO THE WIDEST CIRCLES OF THE LABORING MASSES. IT IS THE TASK OF THE PARTY TO IMPRESS FIRMLY UPON TH MINDS OF THE WORKERS, EVEN UPON THE MOST BACKWARD, THAT RELIGION HAS BEEN IN THE PAST, AND STILL IS TODAY, ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL MEANS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE OPPRESSORS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF INEQUALITY, EXPLOITATION, AND SLAVISH OBEDIENCE ON THE PART OF THE TOILERS. MANY WEAK-KNEED COMMUNISTS REASON AS FOLLOWS: 'RELIGION DOES NOT PREVENT MY BEING A COMMUNIST. I BELIEVE BOTH IN GOD AND IN COMMUNISM. MY FAITH IN GOD DOES NOT HINDER ME FROM FIGHTING FOR THE CAUSE OF PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION." This train of thought is radically false.

d. In a pamphlet entitled, Questions and Answers to American Trade Unionists, Stalin's interview with the First American Trade Union Delegation to Soviet Russia, Stalin says: "Does that mean that the party is neutral TOWARD RELIGION? NO, IT DOES NOT. WE CARRY ON, AND WILL CONTINUETO CARRY ON, PROPGANDA GAINST RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES . . . THE PARTY CANNOT BE NEUTRAL TOWARD RELIGION, AND DOES CONDUCT ANTI-RELIGIOUS PROPGANDA AGAINST ALL AND EVERY RELIGIOUS PREJUDICE, BECAUSE ALL RELIGION IS SOMETHING OPPOSITE TO SCIENCE."

Conclusion.
1. Today 3% of the Communist world controls 97% of the world.
2. When Jesus Christ lived on this earth 3% of the world controlled 97% of the it, but the principles he taught freed the world.
3. The same principles will free men today. The battle for the minds of men is on and we must fill them with the principles of Jesus Christ.

EXECUTIVE MEETING

OPENING - 1. Welcome

"CAN RELIGION SURVIVE?"

INTRODUCTION:

1. There are a number of scriptures in God's word that speak of the eternal nature of the church and religion. Dan. 2:44; Mt. 16:18; Heb. 12:28.
2. In view of these scriptures it may seem strange that we would ask:
   a. Is the church in our time in really serious trouble?
   b. Is it floundering and losing its way?
   c. Has it outlived its usefulness?
   d. Is it outmoded, and unable to cope with the complex problems of a space age?
   e. Are there cracks in the walls of Zion that indicate they are beginning to crumble?
3. There are many religious leaders who feel they see a handwriting on the wall for religion in our time.
   a. A prominent Jewish sholar, in a recent (1966) issue of Judaism, declared that the Christian era has come to an end. (Christianity Today, April 29, 1966, p. 29)
   b. A Baptist minister in Georgia warns that "the twentieth century may parallel the fifth...as another 'dark age of negligible religious impact on civilization."
   c. Dietrick Bonhoeffer, German minister executed by the Nazis in 1945 contended that the world is coming to the point of being able to get along without religion, and therefore needed a 'religionless Christianity.'" (U.S. News & World Report, April 18, 1966, p. 56.
   d. Surveys reveal that in the 1950's only 14% of Americans felt religion was losing its influence.
   e. Now the figure is 45% and for collegians it rises to 62%.
      1.) Yet 2 out of 3 Americans are church members.
      2.) And 44% reportedly attend each week.
4. At least 3 explanations can account for the extreme and pessimistic views of the church and religion.
   a. People have become sick of the ineffectual efforts of sectarianism.
   b. They have the "social center" view of the church, believing that its primary function is to minister to the social needs of the world.
   c. They never have known the religion of Christ in its purest form.
5. Winthrop Hudson of Colgate University has expressed three conditions necessary to the survival of the church. Because I believe they are scriptural and logical I purpose to study them with you.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE CHURCH MUST PREACH A DISTINCTIVE MESSAGE TO THE WORLD TO SAVE IT.
   A. The world does not need a message that is flimsy, frothy, insipid and compromising.
      1. It must be told in no uncertain terms that it is sick, silly and sinful.
      2. It, along with the church, must quit attempting to excuse sin, apologize for it, and explain it away.
      3. It must be made aware that calling sin by modern sophisticated names - psychosis, mania, illness, emotional disturbance, complex - does not make it anything less than sin.
      4. It must be made to realize that one cannot make heroes of wretched moral perverts
   B. The Apostles had a distinctive message - the gospel of Jesus Christ. Rom. 1:16.
      1. The message preached by the Apostles warned the sinner that:
         a. The way of the transgressor is hard. Prov. 13:15.
         b. The soul that sinneth shall die. Ezek. 18:20.
         c. We shall reap what we sow. Gal. 6:7,8.
      2. The message of the apostles reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. Acts 24:25; Tit. 2:11,12.
      3. The message of the Apostles plainly revealed that one who engages in sin will endure eternity in a devil's hell. Rom. 1:29-32; Gal. 5:19-21; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 21:8.
   C. In a world that is no longer able to define good and evil the church must have a distinctive doctrine - Suprene Court recently said it cannot define obscenity.

II. THE CHURCH MUST POSSESS A STRONG MISSIONARY ZEAL.

A. Mission endeavors are the life-line of the church because there can be no church and no salvation of souls without evangelization.

1. Lyman Beech said, "The greatest thing in life is for one human being to bring another to Jesus the Christ as his Savior."
2. Commenting on the existence and extension of the church, Emil Brenner wrote: "The church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no church."
3. Gladstone wrote: "The supreme task confronting the church is how to bring the truths of the gospel into vital contact with all classes of people."
4. Mott said: "If our gospel is the truth, we are under obligation to propagate it. If it is not the truth, we ought to forsake it."
5. Jesus Christ said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature..." (Mk. 28:19,20)

B. The missionary zeal of the early church.

1. It is described in ~~two~~ verses in the Bible. Acts 8:4; 11:19.
2. It is seen in the results. "Daily additions" (Acts 2:47); "many believed" (Acts 4:4); "multitude both of men and women" (Acts 5:14).
3. It is seen in their sending out preachers. Acts 11:22; Acts 13:1-3.

III. THE CHURCH MUST EXERCISE INTERNAL DISCIPLINE.

A. Discipline is essential to order and constructive achievement everywhere - home, school, factory, army, etc.

B. Worldliness and righteousness are the bitterest of foes and between them there can be no fellowship. 2 Cor. 6:14-17.

1. The church must be compassionate with sinners because of human frality, but never indulgent of evil.
2. The church must be the refuge of sinners seeking redeeming grace, but never the haven for the worldly.
4. The church cannot tolerate the leaven of evil lest the whole be corrupted. 1 Cor. 5:1-13.
3. The church must have a distinct moral conviction in a world of immorality and vice.
5. The church must obey the distinct commands of the Lord to withdraw fellowship from those that walk disorderly. 2 Thess. 3:6.

CONCLUSION:

1. Can the church survive? Will she survive?
2. Yes, the church can survive if she preaches a distinctive message, (2) maintains a missionary zeal and (3) exercises internal discipline.

"CHRISTIANITY VS COMMUNISM"
"The Beliefs of Communism"
No. 2

Introduction.

1. Last Sunday evening we defined Communism, Socialism and Christianity. We also gave some scriptural reasons why Christians must oppose Communism.
2. In opposing Communism the Christian must be guided by Biblical principles. "The Christian who does battle with Communism is pre-eminently the man of a book. His allegiance is to God in Christ; his guideposts are revealed in God's written Word."
3. Some guidlines the Christian must use are:
   a. Serve the truth.
      (1) This first guideline is the spur for our study because we are obligated to know the truth about our enemies.
      (2) The Christian has no right to entertain half truth or lies, even about his enemies.
      (3) The "moral demand upon the Christian is unmistakable: we may not label anyone, or anything Communist until first we know precisely what Communism itself implies; and further, not until we know that this someone or something assuredly merits this classification." ("Communism and Christian Faith", DeKoster, p. 122)
   b. There must be an examination of self. 2 Cor. 13:5.
      (1) Communism is a total threat to our whole way of life.
      (2) Since such is true we need to examine our life and that of our country to see if the threat of Communism may not be God's way of warning America.
   c. Love your enemies. Matt. 5:44.
      (1) A Christian must oppose the principles of evil with all the forces of his being.
      (2) But also recognize that every person, even a Communist, has a soul that needs to be saved.
4. It shall be our purpose in this study to notice the beliefs of Communism.

Discussion.

I. COMMUNISM IS ATHEISTIC.

A. The communist position concerning orgins is atheistic.
   1. "He denies the existence of God and affirms instead the existence of matter.
   2. He "maintains that it is reasonable to believe that matter created life and that life's manifold forms, including man, have evolved without the operation of any force or forces beyond those which we see working in matter today." ("Communism--Its Faith and Fallacies", Bales, p. 36)

B. Karl Marx was an atheist before he developed the philosophy of Communism.

C. Marx made atheism such an essential part of Marxism that it "cannot be conceived with atheism."

D. In 1948 "The Ten Commandments" of Communism were published for the Young Communist League and the League was told "If you are not a convinced atheist, you cannot be a good Communist or a real Soviet citizen. Atheism is indissolubly bound to Communism. These two ideals are the pillows of the Soviet power."

E. Atheism is not laid down as a formal requirement for membership but "a worker who will join the Communist Party, who understands the elementary principles of the Communist Party, must necessarily be in the process of liquidating his religious beliefs and, if he still has any lingerings when he joing the Party, he will soon get rid of them." (Ibid, Bales, p. 37)

F. "Of course not all atheists, are communists, but all indoctrinated communists are atheists, interested in the spread of atheism, since only when people's hearts have been voided of faith in God is it possible to instill faith in Marxism."
   1. God, to the communist, is the symbol of man's self-abnegation. (denial of self-desire.
   2. God is also a reflection of man's enslavement to the economic system.
   3. Thus communists believe that the annihilation of religious consciousness is essential to man's complete mastery of the world.

G. Some ex-communists, who have told of their conversion to Communism, have testified that atheism prepared the way for the acceptance of communism.

   1. "CHARLES DAVID BLODGETT TOLD THE HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE: 'IF YOUNG PEOPLE DON'T HAVE A FIRM FOUNDATION IN GOD ANC CHURCH, THEY ARE COMMUNIST MATERIAL. ONCE I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN GOD, I WAS AN ATHEIST . . . AND THE COMMUNIST GOT ME, THEY WAY THEY GET THE PEOPLE WHO DON'T BELIEVE. . . WHO DON'T HAVE FAITH."

   2. SINCE ATHEISM IS SO ESSENTIAL TO COMMUNISM, WHITTAKER CHAMBERS BELIEVED THAT "THE CRISIS OF THE WESTERN WORLD EXISTS TO THE DEGREE IN WHICH IT IS INDIFFERENT TO GOD."

II. <u>SINCE COMMUNISM IS ATHEISTIC THEN WHAT OF NECESSITY MUST BE SOME OF THE BELIEFS OF COMMUNISM?</u>

A. Effort is made to discredit faith in God by insisting that in our scientific age we must walk by sight. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:7.
   1. This overlooks the fath that atheism itself involves faith.
   2. The man that denies God is affirming, and must believe, that matter itself created our present world order and life.

B. The communist believes that God does not exist.
   1. The communist cannot prove this because he would have to know everything and be everywhere.
   2. The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God." (Psa. 14:1)
   3. Stalin's daughter has recently revealed her past doubts and her present belief in God.

C. The communist finds atheism and materialism so hard to believe that he has created his own God and called it dialectical materialism.

   1. He has taken matter and idealized it into a Creator who is benevolent and irresistible.
   2. Thus the Communist god is an idol, a creation of man. Reinhold Niebuhr said of communism, "Its ostensible atheism is less significant than its idolatry. It worships a god who is unqualified ally of one group in human society against all others." (Bales, p. 40,41)

D. The communist scoffs at the idea of the Eternal God but he must believe in the eternal existence of matter.

   1. Something has always existed for something now exists.
      a. If in the beginning there was nothing there could not be anything now.
      b. Since out of nothing comes nothing.

   2. Therefore, everyone must accept the fact that something has always existed.
      a. Either God (Spirit) created matter, life and mind.
      b. Or matter created mind, consciousness and intelligence.
      c. Which is reasonable?

E. The communist must believe in the spontaneous generation of life from non-life.
   1. Scientists agree that this earth could not always have supported life.

a. Therefore life has not forever existed on this earth.
b. But life is now here so if atheism be true, life must have come into existence by a natural process, yet scientific study shows that life comes from life.

2. "The creation of life, by the non-living and from the non-living would be a greater miracle than a creation by a living Creator." (Bales)

3. Communists live in the hope that scientists will some day create life.
   a. Even so this would not prove that the non-living created life in the past.
   b. It would only prove that an intelligent being, in this case man, can create life.

E. The communist must believe that the order found in nature and in man is the result of chance or of something labeled fate or law, which is non-intelligent and non-conscious.

1. Atheists usually concede that there is at least "apparent design" and order in nature.
2. Since its extremely hard to believe that a non-intelligent force could do this the atheist just crowds it out of his mind.

Conclusion.

1. Its easy to say "How ridiculous" but the Communist believes these things with all the fervor of his being. The following letter from a young communists shows how committed the communist are to an empty hope. (This young man had grown up in a home in the South, had attended Sunday school, and had been surrounded with all of the common experiences of young person in our land. Yet somewhere in the process of his education, he had lost faith in God, the Bible, and the spiritual nature of man and expoused the materialism that is known as Communism.) Here is his letter:

"WhatSEEMS OF FIRST IMPORTANCE TO YOU IS TO ME EITHER NOT DESIRABLE OR IMPOSSIBLE OF REALIZATION. BUT THERE IS ONE THING ABOUT WHICH I AM IN DEAD EARNEST-AND THAT IS THE SOCIALIST CAUSE. IT IS MY LIFE, MY BUSINESS, MY RELIGION, MY HOBBY, MY SWEETHEART, WIFE, AND MISTRESS, MY BREAD AND MEAT. I WORK AT IT IN THE DAYTIME AND DREAM OF IT AT NIGHT. ITS HOLD ON ME GROWS, NOT LESSENS, AS TIME GOES ON. I'LL BE IN IT THE REST OF MY LIFE. IT IS MY ALTER-EGO. WHEN YOU THINK OF ME, IT IS NECESSARY TO THINK OF SOCIALISM AS WELL, BECAUSE I'M INSEPARABLY BOUND TO IT.

"THEREFORE I CAN'T CARRY ON A FRIENDSHIP, A LOVE AFFAIR, OR EVEN A CONVERSATION WITHOUT RELATING IT TO THIS FORCE WHICH BOTH DRIVES AND GUIDES MY LIFE. I EVALUATE PEOPLE, BOOKS, IDEAS, AND NOTIONS ACCORDING TO HOW THEY AFFECT THE SOCIALIST CAUSE AND BY THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD IT.

"I HAVE ALREADY BEEN IN JAIL BECAUSE OF MY IDEAS, AND IF NECESSARY I AM READY TO GO BEFORE A FIRING SQUAD. A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF US GET KILLED OR IMPRISONED. EVEN FOR THOSE WHO ESCAPE THESE HARSHER ENDS, LIFE IS NO BED OF ROSES. A GENUINE RADICAL LIVES IN VIRTUAL POVERTY. HE TURNS BACK TO THE PARTY EVERY PENNY HE MAKES ABOVE WHAT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO KEEP HIM ALIVE. WE CONSTANTLY LOOK FOR PLACES WHERE THE CLASS STRUGGLE IS THE SHARPEST, EXPLOITING THESE SITUATIONS TO THE LIMIT OF THEIR POSSIBILITIES. WE LEAD STRIKES. WE ORGANIZE DEMONSTRATIONS. WE SPEAK ON STREET CORNERS. WE FIGHT COPS. WE GO THROUGH TRYING EXPERIENCES MANY TIMES EACH YEAR WHICH THE ORDINARY MAN HAS TO FACE ONLY ONCE OR TWICE IN A LIFETIME.

"AND WHEN WE'RE NOT DOING THESE MORE EXCITING THINGS, ALL OUR SPARE TIME IS TAKEN UP WITH DULL ROUTINE CHORES, ENDLESS LEG WORK, ERRANDS, ETC., WHICH ARE INESCAPABLE CONNECTED WITH A LIVE ORGANIZATION.

"RADICALS DON'T HAVE TIME OR THE MONEY FOR MANY MOVIES OR CONCERTS OR T-BONE STEAKS OR DECENT HOMES AND NEW CARS. WE'VE BEEN DESCRIBED AS FANATICS. WE ARE. OUR LIVES ARE DOMINATED BY ONE GREAT, OVERSHADOWING FACTOR-THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM.

"WELL, THAT'S WHAT MY LIFE IS GOING TO BE. THAT'S THE BLACK SIDE OF IT. THEN THERE IS THE OTHER SIDE OF IT. WE COMMUNISTS HAVE A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE WHICH NO AMOUNT OF MONEY COULD BUY. WE HAVE A CAUSE TO FIGHT FOR, A DEFINITE PURPOSE IN LIFE.

WE SUBORDINATE OUR PETTY PERSONAL SELVES INTO A GREAT MOVEMENT OF HUMANITY. WE HAVE A MORALE, AN esprit de corps SUCH AS NO CAPITALIST ARMY EVER HAD: WE HAVE A CODE OF CONDUCT, A WAY OF LIFE, A DEVOTION TO OUR CAUSE THAT NO RELIGIOUS ORDER CAN TOUCH. AND WE ARE GUIDED NOT BY BLIND, FANATICAL FAITH BUT BY LOGIC AND REASON, BY ANEVER-ENDING EDUCATION OF STUDY AND PRACTICE.

"AND IF OUR PERSONAL LIVES SEEM HARD OR OUR EGOS APPEAR TO SUFFER THROUGH SUBORDINATION TO THE PARTY, THEN WE ARE ADEQUATELY COMPENSATED BY THE THOUGHT THAT EACH OF US IS IN HIS SMALL WAY HELPING TO CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING NEW AND TRUE, SOMETHING BETTER TO MANKIND."

2. "Where is that devotion, that willingness to sacrifice and that spirit of aggressive action of the first century that carried the gospel to the then known world? Love can conquer hate, therefore Christianity can conquer communism which is based on hate. This battle will not be won or lost on a battlefield, but in the minds and hearts of men. Of the ultimate end of the struggle we need have no fear...<u>If we are really following the example and teachings of Christ our Savior and King.</u>

"HOW MUCH IS LIBERAL"

Psa. 116:12; 2 Cor. 8:7

Introduction.

1. To the thoughtful and sincere Christian the amount of his contribution to Christ is a matter of vital concern.
   a. He understands that what he gives evaluates his relationship to God and measures the depth of his spiritual life.
   b. Many Christians have learned to give, give regularly and in the proper spirit, but many have not.
2. Liberality is the only accepted standard in giving to God.
   a. God has not commanded a donation as though he were and object of charity and we his benefactors.
   b. He has not said give something as thought every man were a law unto himself.
   c. He has declared in distinct and unmistakable terms " He that giveth, let him do it with liberality." Rom. 12:8.
   d. "So until we have given liberally we have not given at all." (Mac Layton)
   e. Some of the beauty of the other Christian graces is missing as long as a Christian does not give liberally. 2 Cor. 8:7.
3. In discussing stewardship there is no more beautiful word in the N. T. Than "liberality."
   a. The word in its various forms appears 11 times in the N.T.
      (1) 4 times it is rendered "singleness."
      (2) 3 times it is rendered "simplicity."
      (3) 3 times it is rendered "liberality."
      (4) 1 time it is rendered bountifulness."
   b. Thayer says it means "singleness, simplicity, sincerity, mental honesty, without a self-seeking, openness of heart manifestingitself in benefactions."
   c. Trench adds "to spread out without wrinkles or fold."
   d. The word "liberality" points in two directions:
      (1) Inwardly to an honest, pure, single heart, without the ugly ~~wounds~~, wrinkles and folds of self-concern.
      (2) Outwardly to generous giving and benefactions.
   e. God's command to be liberal then is not an arbitrary thing, but is wrapped up in the very nature of the Christian life.
      (1) "A man gives liberally because he is a good Christian, not just to become one."
      (2) "Stingness without material means is sure evidence of a shriveled and withered soul within."
4. During the time you've been a Christian you can be proud of your growth in many areas, but "Have you grown in liberality?"
5. Let's consider some questions about "How much is liberal?"

Discussion.

I. "WHY DIDN'T GOD SET THE AMOUNT AS HE DID THE JEWS?"

   A. The first reason is that if God had named a definite amount we would do no more than that.
      1. Every sincere Bible student knows that God is far more interested in what our giving represents ~~than~~ in relation to our ability than in amounts.
      2. God is interested in the development of our larger spiritual life and he has put us on our honor and love to make this possible. (Love knows no limit.)
   B. "The second reason God has not set the amount is that free-will giving, "as each man hath prospered in his heart", was good enough to carry the gospel in the beginningto the entire world, and that in thirty years, and it is good enough today." (Col. 1:23)

II. EVEN THOUGH GOD HAS NOT SPELLED OUT A SPECIFIC AMOUNT, HAS HE GIVEN US ANY GUIDELINES TO HELP US DETERMINE HOW MUCH IS LIBERAL.

   A. The Old Testament can inspire us to an acceptable amount in giving.
      1. The OL.T. Scriptures were written to give us patience and comfort. Rom. 15;4.
      2. Paul used O.T. example to show the amount pleasing to God in supporting those preaching the gospel. 1 Cor. 9:9,10.
      3. Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek. Gen. 14:20.
      4. Jacob vowed to give a tenth. Gen. 28:20-22.

5. Tithes were bound on the Jews as a part of the Law of Moses, besides many free-will offerings. Num. 18:20.
6. On one occasion they gave "more than enought for the Lord's work." Ex. 36;5-7.

B. In the O.T. we gather examples of people giving 10%, 30 to 50%, and more than enough. Which one of these is our standard? Most people say 10%.
1. To bind the tithe or any part of the Law of Moses on Christians is to fall from the grace of God? Gal. 5:4.
2. To bind the tithe on Christians because Christ practiced it is a poor argument because he also kept the other ordinances of the law.
3. Some contend the tithe is a good and far proportion to demand for the support of the Lord's work, but what is lacking in this argument is N.T. authority. "We have been liberated from the tithe, that we may become liberal."
4. To bind the law of the tithe on the Christian may cast a stumbling block to his salvation.
   a. God may require 20,30 or even 50% of his income.
   b. There is danger in even suggesting that the tithe is the beginning place because some make it the maximum insted of the minimum.

III. DOES THE STATEMENT "WE ARE NOT COMMANDED TO GIVE A TENTH" TEACH TRUTH AS WELL AS ERROR?

A. The truth is we are not commanded to give a tenth, but the error inferred is we need not give as much as a tenth.
1. The N.T. nowhere tells us to give less than a tenth.
2. The man who argues for less than a tenth says more about his heart than he intends because he shows his direction to be: "He aims to do as little as he can."

B. There are great, impelling scriptural reason why every Christian should give much more than a tenth, not on the basis of any law, save the law of love, honor and grace.
1. First, that required of the Jews was for the support of a local, temporary ministry, while we give for an eternal (Dan. 2:44), unshakable (Heb. 12:28) and blood-bought (Acts 20:28) kingdom.
2. Second, by no stretch of the imagination can we think the first members of the church at Jerusalem gave less to Christ than they gave to Judaism. Cf. Acts 4:32.
3. Third, Jesus gave an indisputable command that his disciples' righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. Mt. 5:20.
4. Fourth, "It is a blessing to be a member of the Kingdom of God far surpassing citizenship in any earthly kingdom, yet many think nothing of paying far more income tax than they give to Christ. Why they must learn is that both God and Caeasar must have their rightful due. Mt. 22:21.
5. Fifth, most Christians allow more than a tenth of their personal budget for luxury items, by no means necessary to sustain life and often contrary to the will of God. Many men who would consider themselves cheapskates if they didn't give a waitress a 15% tip, never dream of giving to Christ on the the basis of that same percentage.
6. Sixth, people all around us are giving much more than a tenth to sectarian causes and the advancement of error. Can we sit idly by with leass than a 3% in our membership while those in error give with more zeal.
7. Seventh, there is the undeniable truth that those who practice giving much more than a tenth to Christ are the most reliable and devoted workers in the church in other ways. They are the leaders, the teachers, and the soul winners. Apostasy in this precious circle of bountiful givers is virtually unknown.
8. There may be arguments against giving much more than a tenth but they will be by people who have never tried it.
   a. It is dishonest to criticize a man until you give what he is doing an honest try.
   b. The fact those who practice it rarely every quit is convincing proof it is a good thing.

IV. WHEN IS A MAN LIBERAL?

A. Is a man liberal who gives $1, 2, 10, 20 out of an income of $100 per week.
B. If one man gives a tenth, another an ninetieth, and another a thousandth, is one liberal, the other less liberal, andthe other less still.
C. Is each man practicing a virtue, but only in various degrees.
D. God has not set the amount, but he has given us scriptural reasons which lead us to give much more than a tenth, how much more is left to the purpose of our own heart and the depth of our love for God.

V. HOW MUCH IS LIBERAL?

A. How much is liberal depends on how much we have prospered. 1 Cor. 16:1,2.
"Prospered much, give much; prospered little, give little."

B. How much is liberal depends on present needs in the kingdom.
1. Geniune Christians say we are ready to distribute to the necessity of saints. Rom. 12:13.
2. Geniune Christians, according to their ability, send relief to those in need. Acts 11:29.
3. Early Christians considered nothing their own until the need was met. Acts 4:32.

C. How much is liberal depends on the opportunity at hand. Gal. 6:10.

D. How much is liberal depedds on essential principles of scripture.
1. Putting God's kingdom first. Mt. 6:33.
2. Giving up something for Christ. Mt. 16:24.
3. We must show by our giving that Christ is indeed the Lord of our life.
a. Isaiah's ancient story with a modern meansing. Isa. 44:14. By offering of residue he showed his contempt of idol-god.
b. The natives of the New Hebrides roast a pig and eat it, then offer the tail in worship to their gods.

E. How much is li eral depends on ability. 2 Cor. 8:12. (When John Wesley was a young preacher he got 30 pounds; he lived on 28, and gave 2. In his prime he received 60 pounds. He then lived on 28 and gave 32.)

F. How much is liberal depends on how good and example one wants to become.
1. An enthusiastic example can be set more in giving than anywhere else. 2 Cor. 9:2.
2. Words are cheap, but liberal giving proves God is in the soul more thananything else.
3. Bro. Clifton Rogers tells about the giving of a teenager in a congregation where he worked.
"During a Building Fund Drive there appeared in the contribution a check for one thousand dollars with his signature on it. Unusual? In this instance, decidedly so, for the donor was a high school senior who had earned that money working in a grocery store after school, on Saturdays, and during summer months over a period of years. When the mother of the lad was contacted by an elder to see if it were all right for the boy to give that amount, she said simply, 'it is his money. He earned it.' When the young man was contacted to see if perhaps he really meant to give it or meant to buy a bond. He was embarassed that he had to explain his contribution.

Unusual? I deed so. There was a mother, dad and four children in the family, no automobile, an ice box rather than a refrigerator, and this lad planned to attend college. Was he under obligation to give such a gift? Do you think others ought to do the same? Do you need to inquire who watched the bricks going upon that building the most.

Conclusion.
1. We have been enriched that we may be liberal. 2 Cor. 9:11.
2. God makes grace abound toward us. 2 Cor. 8:9.
3. It take "twice as much power to get an airplane oof the ground as it does to fly it, and once it is up, there is still the "sound barrier." To the speed of sound the air in front of the plane creates a drag that increases with its spped. But once the plane exceeds the speed of sound the craft moves on to unhindered freedom and greater and greater speeds. In giving there is also a "barrier" of excuses the devil creates for stingy and niggardly giving. But as one has the courage to begin giving much more than a tenth to Christ he reaches the place where he knows he pleases God and can go on to greater heights!" (Mac Layton)

THE PROBLEM OF ABUNDANT LIVING

Jn. 10:10

Introduction.

1. "Science has been able to add years to life, butthe greatest problem is how to add life to years." (Leroy Brownlow)
2. There are many scriptures which emphasize the abudance of Christianity.
   a. The grace of God has abounded toward us. Rom. 5:15.
   b. He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom. Eph. 1:8.
   c. He has given abundant mercy 1 Pet. 1:3.
   d. He is able to do "exceedingly abundantly above all that ask or think." Eph. 3:20.
   e. We are to abound in the work of the Lord. 1 Cor. 15:58.
   f. We are to abound in the Christian graces. 2 Pet. 1:8.
3. Jesus said he came to give life abundantly or "above the common". Jn. 10:10. Abundant living is an art and we should apply ourselves to the earthly duty of cultivating it.
   a. The art of living isnot necessarily found in many years of existence.
      (1) Methuselah lived 969 years (Gen. 5:27) but so far as we know he never accomplished one worthwhile thing.
      (2) "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
      In feelings, not figures on a dial.
      We should ~~never~~ count time by heart throbs: He most lives
      Who thinks most, feels the noblest, ats the best."
   b. Successful living does not necessarily depend on secular knowledge.
      (1) Solomon was the wisest man of all ages, yet he exclaimed "For in much wisdom is much grief: and hethat increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Eccle. 1:18.
      (2) A knowledge which forgets God leads to sorrow.
   c. Neither is graceful living achieved in the accumulation of wealth.
      (1) Jesus said, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." (Lk. 12:15.)
      (2) One may be successful, yet unhappy, miserable, and die a failure.

Discussion.

I. THE ABUNDANT LIFE REVOLVES AROUND A CENTER.

A. "An illustrative story was told by Admiral Byrd concerning his first expedition to the south Pole. He said that he left his isolated hut one day for a brief trip of exploration, and then in a sudden blizzard he became hopelessly lost. in that barren whiteness there was nothing to give any sense of direction. He knew if he should strike out blindly to find his hut, and if he should fail, the chances are he would freeze in the storm. He had a long pole which he always carried to feel for holes in the ice; and so he stuck it in the snow and tied a scarf to it. he said; "That was my center. If I failed to find my hut, I could return to the center and try again. Three times I tried and failed; and each time I returned to my center, withoutwhich I would have been lost and would have died. In the fourth attempth, I stumbled upon my hut."

B. Every life, to be safe, must have a center, a point of reference.
   1. There must be a home port, a place where we can return.
      a. In mathematics it is found in the decimal point.
      b. In literature it is found in the basis rules of grammar.
   2. In religion the center is found in Christ.
      a. Paul said, "For me to live is Christ." Phil. 1:21. Cf. Gal. 2:20.
      b. He is "the way, the truth, and the life." Jn. 14:6.
      c. We all make mistakes and sin but as long as we have Jesus as our center and return to him for pardon, strength and direction, there is hope for us."

II. THE ABUNDANT LIFE REQUIRES OPTIMISM.

A. The difference in attitude between the optimist and the pessimist makes for success or failure.
   1. The pessimist says, "If I don't try, I can't fail."
   2. The optimist says "If I don't try, I can't win."

B. A Christian should be exceedingly optimistic.

1. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil. 4:13.
2. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. 8:31.
3. "I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Psa. 23:4.
4. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Jn. 14:1.

C. Optimism gives one a sparkle and a magnetic attraction that pulls the world to him.
1. Jesus Christ was an optimist and look how people flocked to him.
2. The world is not going to follow the man that has a gloomly outlook on life.
   a. We like the person who enjoys the doughnut rather then the one that gripes about the hole.
   b. We like the man of lively vitality and is able to instill it in us.

III. THE ABUNDANT LIFE IS HESITANT TO FIND FAULT AND CRITICIZE.
A. The meek and humble person has a consciousness of his own imperfections, which makes him more tolerant of the faults of others. Mt. 7:3.
B. The fault-finder condemns himself through his criticism of others. Rom. 2:1.
C. We should not be discouraged when people find fault with us for even Jesus Christ had his critics.
D. We cannot please everybody but we can do right, and that is all that really matters. 1 Pet. 3:17.

IV. THE ABUNDANT LIFE REQUIRES FORGIVENESS.
A. Forgiveness is a beautiful act---too beautiful for uglypeople.
B. Forgiveness is a big thing----too big for little people.
C. Forgiveness is one thing we cannot receive unless we forgive. Col. 3:13; Mt. 6:15.
D. Forgetfulness is one of the characteristics of true forgiveness.
1. This is the way God forgives. Heb. 10:17.
2. "Wehen the missionaries first went to Labrador they found no word for forgiveness in the Eskimo language. So they had to make a new word which in Eskimo literally meant"not-being-able-to-think-about-it-any-more."
3. Forgiveness which forgets enables one to put behind him all wrongs he has suffered from others and thus find a new life.
   a. Joseph was a man that knew that life is too wonderful to be ruined with hate and bitterness. Gen. 41:51.
   b. We never read of Jospeh saying "I resent", "I'm offended", "I've taken exception", "I don't like", "I've been mistreated."
4. Forgiveness is a matter of mercy rather than justice.
   a. "A mother who knew this sought the pardon of her son from Napoleon. The emperor said it was his second offense, and justice demanded death. The mother replied, "I don't ask for justice; I plead for mercy." "But", said the emperor "He doesn't deserve mercy." The mother cried, "Sir, it would not be mercy, if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask for. "well then, said Napoleon, "I will h have mercy and pardon your son." And He did.
   b. We too need mercy, not justice.

V. THE ABUNDANT LIFE IS UNAFRAID.
A. Fear is one of the greatest adversaries of the happy and successful life. (Whole creation afflicted with fear.)
B. Fear is overcomby faith, hope and love. 1 Cor. 13:13.
1. Our faith in God sustains us. Psa. 27:13.
2. Hope serves as an anchor for the soul. Heb. 6:19.
3. Love casts out fear. 1 Jn. 4:18.
C. Be of good courage realizing that you may lose a few battles without losing the war.

VI. THE ABUNDANT LIFE LIVES ONE DAY AT A TIME. Mt. 6:34.

Conclusion.
1. Is your life what you want it to be? Do you have the abundant life?
2. Isaish said "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount ~~upon~~ with wings as eagles." Isa. 40:31. Jn. 10:10. Marge Green has a book "A Life With Wings."

"Is YOUR GOD TOO SMALL?"

Jn. 16:3; Rom. 1:16-23

INTRODUCTION:

1. All of the ills of the human race can be laid at the door of this one fault: "because they have not known the Father, nor me."
2. The title of our lesson is not meant to imply:
   a. That God is a different character to different people.
   b. That there are as many God's as there are people.
3. Our title is only used to challenge our thinking about the only God there is.
   a. "Our individual thinking about God will vary according to our respective levels of growth and maturity, but whatever knowledge we have of Him must be in harmony with the pattern of His revealed character." (Amich, p. 324)
   b. One of the saddest things about even many that are Christians is that they do not have a satisfactory relationship with God and are sometimes puzzled as to what role He should play - as a result they never get to "know whom they have believed." (2 Tim. 1:12).
4. There are, of course, several reasons why we cannot have a complete knowledge of God:
   a. Our finite minds are unable to grasp a complete knowledge of Infinite ones.
   b. God chooses it to be this way. He does not desire that we see Him face to face in this life, but deems it necessary we have a different relationship.
   c. Another reason our view of God is limited is because of preconceived human ideas which try to "categorize" God.
5. The purpose of this lesson is to investigate some of the limitations we place on our relationship with God and to see, if by eliminating them, we can draw near to Him.

DISCUSSION:

I. SOME HAVE RETAINED A CHILDHOOD GOD.
   A. When the wise men came to the stable where Jesus was born "they fell down, and worshipped Him." (Mt. 2:11)
      1. This sign of a virgin mother and child was all the evidence those men had that "God is with us." (Mt. 1:23)
      2. Their knowledge of God "manifest in the flesh" was then limited to an infant in His mother's arms. (1 Tim. 3:16)
      3. After Jesus had grown to maturity and revealed "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9) it would have been absurd for these same men to have worshipped before the image (mental or material) of this baby in His mother's arms.
         a. In the first instance their knowledge of God was enough to save them.
         b. But after full revelation the "star of Bethlehem" has been supplanted by "the Sun of Righteousness." (Mal. 4:2)
   B. How many professing believers attempt to go through life with only a childhood knowledge of God.
      1. For example, many adults think of God as a grand old man simply because that is the picture they had of God when they were children.
      2. J. B. Phillips in his book, "Your God Is Too Small" tells the story of some Sunday School children who were once asked to write down their ideas of what God is like. With few exceptions they wrote: "God is a very old gentleman living in heaven...."
      3. How many adults think of God as kind, and gentle, and merciful, and completely old-fashioned.
         a. He is completely out of touch with the affairs of the modern world.
         b. He was "a big man in His day" but He has outlived His time.
         c. "To point up this old-fashioned God complex, a group of older adolescents were asked to answer, without reflection, this question: "Do you think God understands radar?" In nearly every case the reply was "No" followed by a laugh, 'of course', as the conscious mind realized the absurdity of the answer." (Amick, p. 325)

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

4. A great multitude of educated and mature minds reject the God of the Bible simply because the god that they see in the attitudes of professing believers is completely inadequate to cope with the problems of adult life.
   a. It has led many moderns to charge that Christianity is nothing more than a regression to the parental protection of childhood.
   b. In some cases adults simply substitute God for their childhood parent.
   c. At one extreme of a long list of childish disturtions is a milk-sop god who would not stand and fight for a principle of right.
   d. At the other end is an overbearing tyrant just waiting to pounce upon his victims for some technical flaw in their behavior.
   e. None of these human-projections is the God presented in the Bible.
   f. "When a mature man or woman is afraid to bring his or her faith in God out into the clear light of honest investigation, then he or she is obviously sheltering a childhood delusion."
5. The apostle Paul instructed the Corinthians "in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." (1 Cor. 14:20) Any person with a mature understanding of God's character is never afraid to pit his faith against the doubt and skepticism of this sceintific age.

II. SOME THINK OF GOD AS A PERFECTIONIST.

A. This idea of God can bring more guilt and unrest than any of the others.
B. Can we be 100% perfect in this life? No!
C. Then what does it mean "the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works?" (2 Tim. 3:17)
   1. This verse emphasizes the perfection of the Scriptures and what they are able to do for us.
   2. It is true God is perfection himself, but he is no perfectionist, in that he asks us to do that which we are unable to do.
D. Jesus reveals the secret of it all when he says "come.....learn of me" (Mt. 11:28,29)
   1. To learn implies:
      a. Growth. 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:2.
      b. Making and correcting mistakes.
      c. A steady, upward progress toward some goal. Phil. 3:13,14.
   2. I can never be 100% perfect, but I can be growing in that direction.
E. If one haunts his conscience with the idea that God demands 100% perfection then one can never be free from guilt because one can never measure up to that demand.

III. SOME THINK OF GOD MERELY AS A "SPOIL-SPORT."

A. The idea of Christianity as a negative religion only is too prevalent to be ignored.
   1. Statisticians tell us we are losing 50% to 75% of our young people to the world and one of the primary reasons is that fact that we have been brought up to feel that life is a list of "thou shalt nots".
   2. There are negatives in God's way, but if we overemphasize these to the neglect of the more numerous positive areas of freedom, we fail.
   3. If our idea of God is limited to his vetoing our pleasure and activities, we cannot begin to have the abundant life.
      a. Some children consider their parents nothing more than hindrances to their pleasures.
      b. Some look upon God and being a Christian as something that stands in the way.
B. One should accept the knowledge that God made us and he surely knows what is best for us. Consider these thoughts:
   1. Name one thing God forbids you to do that is right and good for you.
   2. Why does God forbid: fornication" (1 Cor. 6:18.
      a. Fornication -"Flee fornication" - 1 Cor. 6:18
         (1) It is sinful
         (2) It is distructive physically, mentally, emotionally , & spiritually.
         (3) It brings shame and suffering.

      b. Heavy Petting which is just another name for what the Bible calls

fornication and sociology books call "sexual promiscuity."

CONCLUSION:

1. One can have a right concept of God because God has revealed himself unto man.
2. Jesus Christ revealed God unto us. Jn. 1:1,14; 14:9.

THE PROBLEM OF DISCERNMENT

Heb. 5:14; Phil. 1:9,10

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INTRODUCTION:

1. Teenagers ask the question "But what is right and wrong? What can I do?" Adults say, "I can't decide. It's hard to make decisions. Which will be best." All of these have to do with the problem of discernment.
2. Definitions of terms.
   a. Discern - it means to see and identify by noting differences.
      (1) It is not a problem of choosing between the pleasant and the unpleasant, but rather between the good and the bad - what may be pleasant may be bad and what may be unpleasant may be good.
      (2) It is not so much a matter of what pleases me but what is best for all concerned.
   b. "By reason of use" - Practice or habit.
      (1) Long practice with the right standards enables the Christian to effect the right discernment.
      (2) The mental faculties of the Christian, exercised at first on simple truths, are later increased to apprehend and discern.
3. Much trouble can be prevented through farsighted discernment.
   a. Great men have blundered because of faulty discernment. Job 32:9. (They were great in spite of their mistakes; but to the extent they faltered in discernment, they decreased their greatness.)
   b. Each one needs to develop the habit of weighing matters.
4. Let's consider:

"Great men are not always wise; neither do the aged understand judgment."

DISCUSSION:

I. THE PROBLEM OF DISCERNMENT BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.

A. The majority are against any attempt to classify good and evil, as taught in Heb. 5:14
   1. To many nearly all moral practices are good.
   2. To others almost all religious teaching are right.
   3. "To such individuals the right or wrong of an act or teaching is not in thedeed or precept but rather in the mind of the participant or instructor, and thus what may be right for one may be wrong for another and vice versa.
      a. Every man is a god unto himself.
      b. If true, no man could ever choose evil, provided he believed it to be good, and no way which seemed right could ever be wrong.
      c. The Bible teaches the very opposite. Prov. 14:12.
      4. Some ways are good and some ways are bad.
         a. Switching and perverting the road signs will not make abad road good or a good road bad, but it will bring woe.
         b. God pronounces a woe upon those that call evil good, and good evil. Isa. 5:20.

B. The right or wrong of a thing is not just a matter of personal thinking.
   1. "Since truth and right are facts rather than abstractions, then I must change my mind to fit them rather than change them to fit my mind.
   2. One of the greatest sins of the age is man's futile attempt to change right to fit himself rather than change himself to fit right.
   3. The Bible freely speaks of the good and the evil:
      a. Good man -(Psa. 37:23) Evil man - (Psa. 140:1)
      b. Good works - (Mt. 5:16) Evil works - (Jas. 3:16)
      c. Good words - (1 Kgs. 12:7) Evil speaking - (Eph. 4:31)
      d. Good path - (Prov. 2:9) Evil course - (Jer. 23:10)
      e. Good advice - (Prov. 20:18) Evil council - (Isa. 7:5)
      f. Good name - (Prov. 22:1) Evil name - (Deut. 22:19)
      g. Good fruit - (Mt. 7:17) Evil fruit - (Mt. 7:18)
      h. Good heart - (Lk. 8:15) Evil heart - (Heb. 10:22)
      i. Good morals - (1 Cor. 15:33) Evil dealings - (1 Sam. 2:23)
      j. Good report - (Phil. 4:8) Evil report - (2 Cor. 6:8)

II. THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL FAILURES IN DISCERNMENT.

A. The young prophet deciewed by a lie (1 Kgs. 13)
   1. Tell the story of his devotion, courage and strength.
   2. His downfall is wrapped in one statement: "He failed in discernment."
B. The rich man who was called a fool. Lk. 12:16-21.
   1. He was smart enough to make money but he was not smart enough to discern material and spiritual values.
   2. His tragedy was one of discernment.
C. Some tricky Pharisees who tried to trap Jesus. Mt. 22:15-22.
   1. They could not comprehend two loyalties - earthly and heavenly.
   2. They thought Jesus couldn't, but his discernment showed them there is a place for both. (Mt. 22:21)
D. Martha. Lk. 10:38-42.
   1. She had to choose between two important things: preparing a meal or listening to Jesus.
   2. Jesus revealed to Mary and Martha who had the greatest power of discernment.

III. WHAT ARE SOME GUIDEPOSTS TO WISE DISCERNMENT?

A. Faith. One of the greatest examples of discernment and its cause is that of Moses. Heb. 11:24,25.
B. Hope. This is another power which influenced Moses in his choice. Heb. 11:26.
C. Love.
   1. "If a man love me, he will keep my words." Jn. 14:23.
   2. Some fail to make proper discernment because of love for human glory. Jn. 12:42,43.
   3. Some fail to find the truth because of lack of love. 2 Thess. 2:10-12.
D. Courage.
   1. Courage will surely help me make the right decision. Mt. 10:28.
   2. Fear often gets in theway of wise decisions: fear of financial loss, fear of job loss, fear of promotion loss, fear of public disfavor. 1 Sam. 15:24.
E. Sincerity rather than deceit.
F. Caution.
   1. "Watch ye" 1 Cor. 16:13.
   2. Prov. 22:3.
G. Investigation.
   1. never reach a decison of consequences without full investigation.
   2. Rashness is not the behavior of a prudent person. Prov. 13:16; cf. Acts 17:11.
H. Examples of Jesus.
   1. It was prophesied fo Christ "He may know to refuse the ~~good~~ evil and choose the ~~evil~~ good." Isa. 7:15.
   2. Jesus perfectly discerned every problem and every issue of life. Heb. 4:15.

CONCLUSION:

1. "Principles rather than abuses of principles. Right here is where so many people err. They start out to fight the abuse of a principle and end up fighting the principle. They throw out the baby with the wash. Every good thing has its dangers, even the pulpit."(Brownlow)
2. It is the Christian's duty to discern good and evil, throw out the evil and retain the good. Much trouble has arisen in the church because of poor discernment. One of the daily and most urgent problems of the Christian is discernment.

FELLOWSHIP

Acts 2:42; 1 Jn. 1:3,7

INTRODUCTION:

1. The conversion and hope of the world depends upon the fellowship of Christian people.
2. There are but two reasons why it is not maintained:
   a. Either we do not know what the term means or
   b. We fail to appreciate its importance.
3. The prayer prayed by our Lord is the very shadow of the cross emphasizes fellowship.
   a. First, he prayed for himself. Jn. 17:1-5.
   b. Second, he prayed for the apostles. Jn. 17:6-19.
   c. Third, he prayed for men that would believe their word. Jn. 17:20-26.
   d. All of this emphasizes that the most fertile field of infidelity is the lack of fellowship among professed followers of Christ.
4. "Fellowship implies oneness, unity, and coherence among the members of any organization" (N. B. Hardeman) and no organization can succeed unless fellowship prevails among its members.
5. Since every Christian surely wants the church to succeed, and it cannot without fellowship, then our study becomes virtually essential.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT DOES FELLOWSHIP MEAN:
   A. A look at the uses of the term in the Bible should help us understand it better.
      1. The word "fellowship" is translated from the Greek word "Koinonia" in the following places: Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 8:4; Gal. 2:9; Eph. 3:9; Phil. 1:5; 2:1; 3:10; 1 Jn. 1:3,6,7.
      2. The word "Koinonia," (or family word) in other places, is translated:
         a. Contribution. Rom. 15:26.
         b. Communion. 1 Cor. 10:16; 2 Cor. 6:14; 13:14.
         c. Distribution. 2 Cor. 9:13.
         d. Communication. Philemon 6.
         e. Communicate. Heb. 13:16.
         f. Partakers. Mt. 23:30.
         g. Partners. Lk. 5:10.
   B. It means "a state of associate, comradeship, company of equals, mutual relation among members of the same church, communion." (Webster)
   C. It means "Partnership, joint participation; it implies agreement." cf. Amos 3:3.
   D. "Common participation in religious privilege." (McGarvey)
   E. "Common interest and mutual participation in those things which concern the welfare of each other." (Boles)
   F. "Something held in common;" literally sharing in common.
   G. Fellowship among Christians means we are:
      1. Partners in the blessings of the death of Christ. 1 Cor. 10:16.
      2. Partners in the strength and comfort of the Holy Spirit. 2 Cor. 13:14.
      3. Partners in the suffering of Christ. Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 4:13.
      4. Partners in the blessings of the gospel. Phil. 1:5.
      5. Partners in the favor and protection of God. 1 Jn. 1:3.

II. HOW DOES FELLOWSHIP EXPRESS ITSELF?
   A. If a company of business men organize and have any hope of success there are a few things that must be understood and accepted by each partner in the company.
      1. Each partner must have the same purpose and the same end in mind.
      2. It must be understood that each member obligates himself to do his part of whatever work is necessary.
      3. It is expected that each one will bear his part of the expense.
      4. It is implied and understood that the conduct of each member will be such as will sell the business to the expected customers.
      5. Every member must be willing to share in whatever profits and losses may come.
      6. All of these are easy to understand and every person will endorse these statements.

B. The church of the Lord is the greatest business company on earth, and all Christians are partners in it. Let each one ask himself:
   1. Was my purpose in becoming a member of this company the same as every other worthy member?
   2. Did I understand, when I became a member, that I was obligated to do my part of the work necessary for its success?
   3. Did I expect to bear my part of the expense so necessary to carry on our business.
   4. When I became a member of God's great company was it my definite purpose to conduct myself so that I would be helpful and not harmful to all the other members?
   5. Am I willing to share the joys as well as the disappointment that comes from being a member of the company?

III. WHO MAKES UP THIS GREAT COMPANY WITH WHOM WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP OR PARTNERSHIP?

A. God. 1 Jn. 1:3.
   1. "Because we are partakers of the divine nature as we escape the corruption that is in the world." 2 Pet. 1:3,4.
   2. We must walk in the light. 1 Jn. 1:6.

B. Christ. 1 Jn. 1:3. "Because of the common sympathies which his life and suffering have established between himself and us."

C. The Holy Spirit, 2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1. "Because we partake of the strengthening and enlightening influence of his teachings and he dwells in us."

D. Other Christians. 1 Jn. 1:7. It is only right that we have fellowship with each other because we are:
   1. Fellow - citizens. Eph. 2:19,20.
   2. Fellow - heirs. Eph. 3:6; Rom. 8:17.
   3. Fellow - soldiers. Phil. 2:25; 2 Tim. 2:4,5.
   4. Fellow - laborers. Phil. 4:3; Mt. 20:1.
   5. Fellow - servants. Col. 1:7.
   6. Fellow-travelers. Heb. 11:13,14.
   7. Fellow - helpers. 3 Jn. 8; Gal. 6:1-4.

IV. WITH WHAT AND WHOM MUST WE NOT HAVE FELLOWSHIP?

A. Devils. 1 Cor. 10:20.

B. With unbelievers and unrighteousness. 2 Cor. 6:14-16.

C. With works of darkness. Eph. 5:11.

D. With false teachers. 2 Jn. 9 - 11.

"to partake (koinonao) to enter into fellowship, join one's self as a partner, make one's self a sharer or partner." (Thayer)

   1. I cannot fellowship or be a joint-partaker with any man who preaches or practices that which I believe the Bible does not authorize.
   2. I could not call upon a member of some denominational church to lead prayer because I respect him too much to ask him to ask God's blessings upon a lesson I know he doesn't believe.
   3. Baptist and Methodists can have no fellowship.

E. There cannot be fellowship between the faithful and the wilful, indifferent Christian. 2 Thess. 3:6.

CONCLUSION:

1. Again, we repeat our opening statement: "the hope and conversion of the world depends upon the fellowship of Christian people."
2. "It can not but be evident, in the light of the considerations we have submitted, that our churches have by no means fully entered into 'the fellowship.' We have resources enough to fulfill our mission, but they fail of appropriation. THERE IS NO GENUINE PARTNERSHIP of labor and of expenditure. The mass of our membership exhaust their piety in church-going, sermon-listening, and the payment of such trifling sums as must be paid to maintain a respectable standing. The genuine workers are few; so are the voluntary contributors. There is no consecration of all to Christ - no laying down of all our treasures at the apostles' feet. The result is leanness, barrenness, impotency. We are smitten with mildew and blasting - the locuts and caterpillars eat up our substance. We receive little in return. We are shut out from the highest JOYS of spiritual fellowship, because we shut ourselves out from its highest DUTIES. We are looking for happiness in a wrong direction. We seek it in selfishness, in ease, in the world's voluptousness; it is found in giving, in toiling, in

suffering, in condescension, in compassion, in self-denial for other' good.

"The abode of happiness is in Bethlehem, in Gethsemane, at Calvary, and in the eternal home of love and joy to which THESE ONLY lead. We can only know the 'power of Christ's resurrection' after we have known 'the fellowship of his sufferings,' and have been made 'conformable to his death.' The beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount distill not in the souls that riot in abundance and revel in selfish enjoyments. Heaven's immortal fellowships belong only to a brotherhood of heroic and patient sufferers, who have 'come up out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

"Man of sorrows! divine Sufferer! toiling Son of God! teach us to be willing to know the fellowship of Thy labors and Thy sorrows, and to give our little all to Thee, who gavest all for us. Then shall we have fellowship with each other; then will Thy blood cleanse us from all sin; then shall we have unclouded views of Thy glory, and rise to the possession of the everlasting fellowship of heavenly rest and joy." (New Testament Christianity, Vol. 1) Z. T. Sweeney, page 450-452.

"THE PROBLEM OF WORRY"
Phil. 4:6; Mt. 6:34

INTRODUCTION:

1. One of the greatest everyday problems of the Christian is worry, fretfulness, anxiety and care.
   a. I must work daily to overcome it, lest it overcome me.
   b. "Life can be harassed with worry or beautified with contentment, depending upon how I make it; for both are inside jobs."
      (1) It is true that outside influences may encourage us to anxiety, but we don't have to let them in.
      (2) To some extent we are creatures of habit. "Years ago a mother and daughter got into the habit of writing the gloomiest letters to each other. There was no sunshine in their lives."
      (3) The habit of fretting had so taken hold of one man that he often worried because he had forgotten what he was supposed to worry about.
2. God does not want his children to be anxious. Phil. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS WORRY AND WHAT DO PEOPLE WORRY ABOUT?
   A. "Mental distrell or agitation resulting from concern usu. for something impending or anticipated."
   B. "Characterized by extreme uneasiness of mind about some contingency."
   C. Worry then is a thought process and since it is, then it is reasonable to assume that we can control it by changing our thinking.
      1. By thinking upon the things that are diametrically opposed to the thoughts which produce anxiety.
      2. Now let us think upon the worry preventives and antidotes - preventives to those who are not worrying and anitdotes to those who are.

II. SOME PREVENTIVES AND ANTIDOTES OF WORRY.
   A. Much faith repels worry, while little faith invites it.
      1. Sometimes we believe our doubts and doubts our beliefs. Peter had this trouble and it was his little faith. Mt. 14:31.
      2. Our sea of life has its boisterous winds and if our faith breaks, our anxiety forms.
         a. We need to believe that God who feeds the birds and clothes the grass of the field will care for us. Mt. 6:25-31.
         b. "Overheard In An Orchard"

"Said the robin to the sparrow
'I should really like to know
Why these ansious human beings
Rush about, and worry so?'

Said the sparrow to the robin,
'Friend, I think that it must be
They have no heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me." ...Elizabeth Cheyney.

   B. Trust in the Lord keeps spirits from dropping low.
      1. Jer. 17:7,8.
      2. Prov. 3:5.
      3. An example is in order: "All through life we trust our safety to bridges built by man. The supporting peirs are deep down beneath the water. We do not doubt their strength. We do not worry when they tremble or swerve in the storm - we trust the builder. Significantly but vitally more important, life's highways has its bridges resting deep down in the wisdom of God, hidden in the depths of time and eternity. No bridge of God ever collapsed. It is easy to trust the bridge if I trust the Builder."
      4. An aged man went through the Bible and wrote "proved" by every promise or bridge of God.

5. One of the sweetest tribute to the vitalizing power of trust is Psa. 23:1.
6. I know not the future, but I know the God who is in it.

C. An acceptance of self helps to prevent fretfulness.
1. Jesus asked, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" Mt. 6:27.
2. We are on the road to contentment when we accept ourselves as we are.
   a. One lady said the happiest day of her life was the day she accepted the fact she couldn't be a beauty queen.
   b. Realistic living demands that we accept the fact that different people have different talents and various degrees of ability.
      (1) Worrying about being a one-talent man won't make us a five-talent one.
      (2) Complaining about what we do not have won't give us more.

D. Faith in self helps to prevent worry.
1. It is scriptural to say "I can" provided one is linked to the Lord. Phil. 4:13.
2. It takes much strength to live up to our reponsibilities in life, but strength, physical, moral, and spiritual is a growing quality and as we use it, it develops according to our needs. Deut. 33:25.
3. I should not worry about performing my duties. All that is expected of me is the best I can do.

"The world is wide
In time and tide,
And God is guide,
Then - do not hurry.
That man is blest
Who does his best
And leaves the rest,
Then - do not worry." Charles F. Deems.

E. Planning and making the day-before preparation is a safeguard against many worrisome problems.
1. The man that built the tower could have prevented his worry. Lk. 14:28-30.
2. General Foch said, "Battles are won the day before."

F. Casting our burdens upon the Lord relieves us of the heavy weights of anxiety. Psa. 55:22.
1. There are many problems which defy solution and unless we learn to shift them to the Lord, we will be pressed down.
2. The camels which bears heavy burdens during the day bows at night for them to be taken off. We need to learn to kneel at night.

G. My counting my blessings instead of my cupposed misfortunes enables me to see how well off I really am instead of how bad off I may think I am.
1. It is only then that I can say "blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation." Psa. 68:19.
2. There is a great blessing in counting my blessings. Sing song here "Count Your Blessings" page 304.

H. Living life a day at a time will spare me many misgivings.
1. Jesus said, "be not therefore ansious" (ASV) Mt. 6:34.
2. The Master aimed the passage at the common mistake of trying to live life in a lump.
   a. Trying to solve today the problems of a lifetime is enough to worry anyone to death.
   b. Today has enough of its own burdens without trying to pile on tomorrow's.
   c. Some people cannot efficiently do today's duties for worrying about tomorrow.

I. My cultivating myself to see good instead of evil in the world is a shield against the darts of worry. Prov. 16:27. "A worthless man devineth mischief
1. Complaint about evil in another may be actually complaining about the evil in me.
2. I am not suggesting that we should not be realistic, but I am suggesting that we often see a reflection of ourselves.
   a. We may see good because we are good.
   b. " " " evil " " " evil.
   c. We may see defeat, because we are defeated.
   d. " " " fear " " " afraid.
   e. " " " clouds " " have a haze over our eyes.

CONCLUSION:

1. There are so many good things in the world - all I need is to train my eyes to see them. As I see more good, I see less cause to worry.

My God, I thank thee who hast made
The earth so bright,
So full of splendor and of joy,
Beauty and light;
So many glorious things are here,
Noble and right." ...Adelaide A. Procter.

2. If I smile at the world, the world will smile back.

"Keep your face with sunshine lit,
Laugh a little bit!
Gloomy shadows oft will flit,
If you have the wit and grit
Just to laugh a little bit!" ....J. B. Cook

3. Remember, we worry about two groups of things (1) Those we can help and (2) those we can't help. If we can help, then do them; why worry. If we can't help, why worry?

"BE NOT CONFORMED"

Rom. 12:1,2

INTRODUCTION:

1. Do you consider yourself a conformist or non-conformist? Are you seeking fashion or favor?
2. Paul's statement make men responsible for their surroundings.
   a. argument of necessity to excuse our wrong actions was not a part of Paul's philosophy.
   b. The freedom of our will enables us to select from our circumstances that which is best.
3. The motive behind Paul's plea and our actions would be "the mercies of God." (Rom. 12:1) Throughout the first eleven chapters Paul discusses all that God has done for us.
   a. Justified freely by the grace in his Son. Rom. 3:24-26.
   b. God gave His Son even while we were sinners. Rom. 5:6-9.
   c. No condemnation to the faithful in Christ. Rom. 8:1.
   d. Rom. 8:33-39 -
   e. Rom. 11:33-36.
4. Based upon all this Paul makes these pleas:

DISCUSSION:

I. PRESENT YOUR BODIES A LIVING SACRIFICE.
   A. "Present."
      1. To present or to yeild is to cease to resist.
      2. Yielding means also ceasing to with-hold - let God have full possession.
   B. A living sacrifice - continually, once for all, and let them stay presented.
      1. Present in such a way as to glorify God by our bodies. 1 Cor. 6:19,20.
      2. As one alive from the dead. Rom. 6:3-5.
      3. Present the very best of our years to God.
   C. Holy - Devoted - it means "God first, God last, God everywhere, God as the spring of thought and word and deed.
   D. "Acceptable" or "well-pleasing" This can only be true by being constantly employed in those things that are well-pleasing to God.
   E. "Which is your reasonable service." In view of all that God has done for us, presenting our bodies is a reasonable service.

II. "AND BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD."
   A. What does "conform" or "conformity" mean?
      1. "To have the same shape, outline, or contour."
      2. "To become or be like."
      3. "Correspondence in form, manner or character."
      4. "Do not be fashioned in the mold of the present age or state of things."
      5. "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mold."
      6. "The molding of the life and character by the system which prevails around you."
   B. This admonition is greatly needed because:
      1. God's people had a tendency to conform in ages past.
         a. Israel wanted a king to "be like all nations." 1 Sam. 8:19,20.
         b. Israel destroyed her spiritual life when she began to become like the nations about her.
      2. Conformity to the ways of the world results in the ruin of the church.
         a. Sardis was dead because she had conformed to the secure feeling of the city. Rev. 3:1-2.
         b. Laodicea had conformed to the lukeward and self-satisfied condition of the people about her. Rev. 3:14-17.
      3. There is great danger the church today is trying to conform to the world in:
         a. Faith - Members of the church feeling that it is not really important if we are a little wrong. Jude 3.
         b. Worship = (a) Desire on part of many members to have services that appeal to our physical senses.

(b) Attending only when it is convenient and in some cases just dismissing completely.

C. Morals - [illegible]
1. "They are going to engage in sexual acts anyway, so let's show them how to keep from getting pregnant."
2. Leaving home and letting teenagers have the house.

D. Dress. 1 Tim. 2:9,10; 1 Pet. 3:1-4
1. Wearing of shorts and other brief apparel by both men and women has come to be largely accepted.
2. Mixed bathing is an accepted practice.
3. Men and boys wearing their hair like women ans women wearing theirs like men. 1 Cor. 11:1-16.

III. "BE YE TRANSFORMED."

A. "Transformed" means "to undergo a complete change which, under the power of God, will find expression in character and conduct."

B. How?
1. "By the renewing of your mind."
2. By realizing that we are new creatures. 2 Cor. 5:17.
3. By looking into the mirror and being changed into the glory of Christ. 2 Cor. 3:18.
4. By continuing in the work. Jas. 1:22-25.

C. Why? "That ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom. 12:2 c.

CONCLUSION:

1. It's the easiest thing in the world to be a conformist - "go along with the crowd."
2. But it takes real courage and conviction to be a non-conformist. Jesus was a non-conformist. Whay are you?

THE PROBLEM OF ENEMIES

Mt. 5:43,44

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is an honor to have friends: but it in not necessarily a dishonor to have enemies - in some cases it is as complimentary to have enemies as friends.
2. It is no compliment to live so many years and never had an enemy.
   a. Christ had his enemies.
   b. Paul had his enemies.
   c. Christians will suffer. 2 Tim. 3:12.
   d. "Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you!" (Lk. 6:26)
3. Let's consider:

DISCUSSION:

I. WE MAY HAVE ENEMIES WITHOUT CAUSE. Psa. 35:19; Job 19:28. WE MAY HAVE ENEMIES WHEN IT IS NOT OUR FAULT.

   A. One reason is the unfairness of unreasonable people. 2 Thess. 3:2.
      1. Innocent people have been unjustly blamed on the notion that the fault is half one and half the other. Impossible to have lasting friendship with unreasonable people.
      2. Some people need a whipping boy and if you have been elected, then you may be whipped without cause.
   B. You may have an enemy for the simple reason he or she experienced a slip of the tongue and talked about you. Prov. 26:28. After talking about you this one begins to build up opposition to justify their wrong.)
   C. You may have an enemy because he mistreated you or did you harm. He rationalizes and decides you are an evil person who deserves to be opposed.
      1. It may result from a debt that is not paid.
      2. It can be caused by misrepresentation regarding a transaction whereby one is cheated. (The cheater hates the cheated.)
      3. It can occur because of exorbitant prices charged for services rendered. (People have a tendency to hate those they mistreat.)
      4. It may happen because of job interference.
   D. Enmity may result from reproof. Prov. 9:8; Gal. 4:16.
   E. A refusal to flatter will make enemies of some people. 1 Kings 22:8.
   F. Knowing something bad on another may cause that one to become your enemy.
      1. People have a tendency to hate us if they know that we know something ugly about them.
      2. I try to keep from learning ugly things about people for this reason, also "the ungodly man diggeth up evil." (Prov. 16:27)
   G. Being successful or popular may make enemies for you. Prov. 14:30.

II. WE MAY HAVE ENEMIES WE HAVE MADE.

   A. Our greatest and most spiteful enemies are those who consider us a personal threat in some manner to them.
      1. Dignity, job advancement, popularity - "You are interfering with my plans; you are hurting me; and I don't like you."
      2. Herod sought the life of Jesus for this reason. Mt. 2:1-18.
   B. One business man's conception of a good man was one that traded with him and a bad man traded with his competitor.
   C. Any kind of threat to another's welfare tends to make enemies. cf. Diotrephes. 3 John 9.

III. WHAT TO DO ABOUT ENEMIES.

   A. Do good unto them.
      1. Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you." Mt. 5:44.

2. Paul said, "feed him...." Rom. 12:20.
3. Never retaliate. Rom. 12:19.
4. David's goodness toward Saul, softened Saul's heart. 1 Sam. 24:17.

B. Pray for them. Mt. 5:44,45.
1. Jesus prayed for his enemies. Lk. 23:34.
2. Stephen prayed for his enemies. Acts 7:60.
3. "Two business men were bitter enemies because they were competitors. The enmity was destroying both of them and their businesses. One of them, speaking of the other, said to the preacher, 'You see Old So and So. He is the lowest down, conniving, theiving skunk in this town.' The preacher said,'You don't like him...' And he blurted out, 'Like him? I hate him!' The preacher continued, 'Sam if you don't overcome this, it is going to wreck your health and ruin your business. The thing for you to do is to pray for him each night. Ask God to bless him and his business as well as you and yours.' After much reasoning the business man agreed that he would try. That night he prayed, 'Dear God, I promised the preacher that I would try to pray for Old Skin Flint. You know I don't mean it, but I promised I would. So bless him as well as me, if you see best.' The next night it was easier, and so the next. In time they became good friends, their businesses prospered because they were building it instead of fighting each other.

C. Refrain from getting on the level of an enemy.
1. Jesus refused to do this. 1 Pet. 2:23.
2. You cannot lift up others by pulling yourself down to their level.

D. Rejoice not at the failings of an enemy. Prov. 24:17.

E. Remember that it is through God's commandments you can be made wiser than your enemies. Psa. 59:1.

F. We can pray for deliverance from our enemies. Psa. 59:1.

G. God is stronger than our enemies and can care for us despite them. Psa. 23:5.

CONCLUSION:

I cannot always help having enemies, but I can help my attitude toward them.

THE PROBLEM OF FRIENDS

Int.

Introduction

1. The normal life is one of friendship.
   a. Friends are a reflection of our own worthiness and a source of help for our own inadequacies.
   b. Friends are precious responsibilities; therefore, I have the problem of choosing friends, of making and holding friends, and of being a friend.
2. "A friend is like bread for a hungry appetite; like a balancing pole for walking the tight-rope of life; like a soothing ointment for the cuts and bruises of life; like a golden link in the chain of life; and like a vine that clings to us despite our weaknesses."
3. What one possesses another may lack.
   a. We all possess some things in common, but we all are not endowed alike.
   b. We find strength in others for our weaknesses, and they find hlep in in us for their failings. This is what makes friendship so delightful.

"There's happiness in little things,
There's joy in passing pleasure.
But friendships are, from year to year
The best of all life's treasure."

Dis.

I. THE SELECTION OF FRIENDS IS A GREAT PROBLEM.
   A. Solomon made it very plain that one should be very careful in the selection of friends. Prov. 22:24. Verse 25 reveals the reason for this admonition.
   B. Paul said "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." 1 Cor. 15:33 (ASV)
   C. Thus it is evident that our selection of friends should not be based on wealth, education or prestige, but rather upon their being the right people, regardless of their status in life.
   D. The qualities needed to make and hold friends are also the qualities to look for in the selection of friends.

II. MAKING AND HOLDING FRIENDS.
   A. Be friendly.
      1. "A man that hath friendsmust show himself friendly." Prov. 18:24.
      2. Friendliness is a quality of Christianity; sourness is not.
      3. John Wesley said, "Sour godliness is the devil's religion."
      4. Even a dog, without reading books, knows how to make friends and influence people.
      5. Bobby Burns, the National Poet of Scotland, while visiting in a strange city became very lonely. He visited one of the churches and never received a hand of welcome or a smile. Before leaving he wrote this verse on the flyleaf ofa hymnal.

"As cauld a wind as ever blew;
"a caulder kirk, and in't but few;
As cauld a minister's e'er spak;
Ye'll all be hot ere I come back."

      6. Would it have been different if you and I had been in the audience.
   B. Be helpful in adversity.
      1. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Prov. 17:17.
         a. You cannot get and retain friends with bare compliments.
         b. They are drawn and held by giving tokens of your love because they are tokens of yourself.
         c. In the adverse circumstances of the man who was robbed and wounded, it is very obvious who made the friend. He was a brother "born for adversity."
      2. Adversity shows who your real friends are. There are many people who are good at being friends until you need a friend.
   C. Possess a humility that will cause you to mix and mingle with all classes of people.

"In prosperity our friends know us; in adversity we know our friends." (John Churton Collins)

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

1. Social, intellectual or financial snobbery will not make or hold friends.
2. In "lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself". Phil 2:3.
3. We never look up to the person who is stuck up.
4. We can get down among the people without getting down on their level of sin.
   a. Jesus associated with all classes of people including sinners and publicans. Mt. 9:11.
   b. Our Lord never pulled back form sinners feeling he was too good to touch them. He permitted a sinful woman to fall before him, bathe his feet with her tears and wipe them with her hair. Lk. 7:36-48. Some members of the church would be horrified and feel they were disgraced for life.

D. Be unselfish.
1. Phil. 2:4.
2. Christ came to minister, not to be ministered unto. Mt. 20:28.
3. Some people are too self-centered to have many friends. They get up in the morning with this attitude: "Let's see----just what can some of my friends do today to make me happy?"
4. There was a childless couple whose prayer was: Lord, bless us two
   And that will do.
5. And an old bachelor is supposed to have prayed: Lord bless only me
   That's as far as I can see."

E. Be tolerant.
1. Col. 3:13.
2. If I want to be tolerant and withhold judgment of me from others, then I must not judge. Mt. 7:1. Years of experience teach us that we are less likely to have all the facts than we would like to think and very seldom know all the circumstances.
3. A look at our own weaknesses will help us to be more tolerant of the weakness of others. Mt. 7:3.

F. Be sincere, truthful and honest.
1. Phil. 1:10; Rom. 13:13.
2. One of the most repulsive traits of the Pharisees was their insincerity. Mt. 23:3.
3. True and lasting friendship with the Lord or anyone else begins on the inside.
4. Friendship must be natural and spontaneous.

G. Follow the Golden Rule.
1. Mt. 7:12.
2. Following this rule will keep one from taking advantage of his friends.
3. One lady said, "I used to admire Ruth and expected that we should be good friends, but she's borrowed so many things and never repaid them that I've decided I don't want anyone for a friend that takes such liberties."

H. Be Stable.
1. No friendship can be any stronger than the people involved
2. Friendship is something that should grow deep and not be easily swayed from its purpose.
3. A double-minded man will not make a very good friend. Jas. 1:8.

I. Be loyal.
1. One of the things that gave Paul strength and comfort when he was a prisoner in Rome was the loyalty of his friend Onesiphorus. 2 Tim. 1:16.
2. One of the things that hurt poor Job was the disloyalty of supposed friends. Job. 19:14,19.
3. Sometimes disappointment in a friend comes because of our unreasonable expectations. They have their weaknesses too.

Conclusion.
1. All of the things we have mentioned will make me a friend. and as I become one, others will respond and become my friends.
2. Personal Question: If I were someone else, would I want me as a friend?

THE CHRISTIAN GRACES
2 Pet. 1:1-12

Introduction.
1. Read or quote 2 Pet. 1:1-12.
2. God's promises to man are "exceedingly great" so as to influence man to become like his Son.
3. Man escapes sin "through the knowledge of Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 2:20.
   a. Such knowledge reveals that as an alien sinner he must believe (Heb. 11:6), repent (Acts 2:38), confess (Rom. 10:10) be baptized (Acts 2:38).
   b. One is then freed from his sins. Rom. 6:17,18.
4. At the point one becomes a servant of righteousness he then begins to add the Christian graces.

Discussion.
I. "AND BESIDES THIS, GIVING ALL DILIGENCE . . ." 2 Pet. 1:5.
   A. "And besides this".
      1. The American Standard has "and for this cause."
      2. It is an exhortation based on verse 4. Since God has given us exceedingly great and precious promises we are to be "giving all diligence."
   B. "giving" ("adding on your part" ASV).
      1. The literal meaning is "bringing in by the side of" which means that man is to bring his part, although small and insignificant, along side God's part. This suggests that God has a part and man has a part in his salvation.
      2. God's part.
         a. He has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. 2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; Jude 3.
         b. He has called us by glory and virtue. 1:3. By the gospel. 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9.
         c. He has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises." 1:4. Forgiveness of sins. Mk. 16:16; eternal life. 1 Jn. 2:25.
      3. Man's part. Supply the Christian graces. 1:5.
   C. "All diligence."
      1. Diligence means "to hasten; the quality of persevering in doing something with the most careful painstaking attention." It's the opposite of careless, lazy and indifferent.
      2. Some reasons for giving diligence.
         a. Our part in our salvation, though small and insignificant when compared with God's part, still must be brough along side God's part if we would enjoy God's blessings. Thus let us hasten!
         b. Spiritual things are of far greater value than temporal things and we must give more diligent study and preactice to spiritual things than temporal.
         c. It plays and important part in man's salvation.
            (1) Rule with diligence. Rom. 12:8.
            (2) Work with diligence. Heb. 6:10-12.
            (3) 2 Pet. 3:14.
II. THE GRACES CAN BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR GROUPS.
   A. Those necessary to form the Christian character.
      1. Virtue
      2. Knowledge
      3. Self-control
      4. Patience.
   B. That which reveals the follower of Christ to be a servant of God. godliness.
   C. That which reveals one a member of the family of God. brotherly-kindness.
   D. That which reveals one well-disposed toward all men. Love.
III. SOME ENCOURAGEMENTS FOR ADDING THE GRACES.
   A. Negatively. 2 Pet. 1:9. The man that lacks them:
      1. "Is blind and cannot see afar off" (Nearsighted)
         a. He cannot discern the elementary things of the gospel.
         b. He sees only the things of the world and those close at hand. (Possible for two men to sit in worship and each see different things.)

c. The Christian sees more than the temporal things. 2 Cor. 4:18.

2. "Hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."
   a. The term "hath forgotten" occurs nowhere else in the New Testament and means such a one has accepted forgetfulness.
   b. He is no longer influenced by the recollection of his obedience and acts as he di in his former condition.
   c. The Christian who has forgotten the cleansing from his old sins is the worst kind of ingrate.
      (1) "He has forgotten the greatest possible blessing from the greatest possible giver at the greatest possible cost." (Tolle)
      (2) It is no wonder that such a Christian's life is destitute of the graces.
      (3) Nine of the ten lepers were ungrateful. Lk. 17:11-19.

B. Positively.
1. They keep us from being barren (idle) and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1:8.
   a. An active life is pleasing to God.
   b. A fruitful Christian life pleases God. Jn. 15:8.
   c. A complete knowledge of Jesus Christ is the goal toward which Christian activity should be tending.
2. By giving diligence to them we are making our calling and election sure. 1:10.
   a. This destroys the teaching that certain ones were elected to be saved before the foundation of the earth and there is not anything they can do about it. A thing that is sure cannot be made surer.
   b. It shows that man has apart in working out his salvation. Phil. 2:12.
3. Such a one shall never fall. 1:10.
   a. This shows that it is possible for one to fall from God's grace. 1 Cor. 10:12; Heb. 3:12; 2 Pet. 2:20.
   b. This shows that it is possible to keep from falling by adding the graces.
4. An entrance into heaven assured to such a one. 1:11.
   a. It shall be ministered.
   b. It shall be ministered abundantly. Jn. 14:1-3; Rev. 7:13-17.
   c. It shall be into the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ. Mt. 25:46; Rev. 22:14.

Conclusion.
1. Such wonderful promises and assurances must stir us to action in adding the graces. God's promise is built on four pillars:
   a. God's justice, which will not suffer him to deceive.
   b. God's grace or goodness, which will not suffer him to forget.
   c. God's truth, which will not suffer him to change.
   d. God's power, which makes him able to accomplish.
2. Let us do our part and God will do his part.

SACRIFICE

Heb. 13:15,16--

Int.

1. Just outside the little town of Collins, Miss., is a family (Man and wife) that earn their living by gathering eggs on a chicken farm seven days a week. Their income is very small but their zeal for the Lord's cause is tremendous. Recently some of their neighbors visted them, A family that includes several children. While visiting they heard our daily radio program and enjoyed it very much. The Brewers encouraged them to listen every day. One of the little girls said, "But we don't have a radio." The Brewers, in the next few days, managed to buy and trade for a used radio and gave to this family. This represented a real sacrifice.
2. Christianity itself has a sacrifice as a part of its foundation. Heb. 9:26; 10:12.
3. What does sacrifice mean?
   a. "Primarily denotes the act of offering." (Vine)
   b. "Destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else: giving up of some desirable thing in behalf of a higher object." (Webster)
   c. "To suffer loss of, give up, renounce, injure, or destroy, often for an ideal or belief or for an advantageous or beneficial end." (Webster)
   d. The word "sacrifice" translates 8 Hebrew wo ds for various kinds of sacrifice and occurs 350 times.
4. Let's consider:

Dis.

I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN A SACRIFICE UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES?
   A. It had to be the best they had. Ex. 12:5,27; cf. Mal. 1:8,14.
   B. Everyone was expected to make sacrifices. Ex. 23:15.
   C. It had to be offered without leaven. Ex. 23:18. cf. 1Cor. 5:7,8.
   D. It had to be in obedience to God and not merely a substitute for obedience. 1 Sam. 15:22.
   E. It cost them something. 2 Sam. 24:24.
   F. It had to be from the heart and not merely a form. Isa. 1:11.

II. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS A SACRIFICAL LIFE.
   A. Consider the sacrifice made by so many to make Christianity possible to us.
      1. Jeremiah, the prophet of righteousness.
         a. Placed in stocks in the high gate in Jerusalem. Jer. 20:1-3.
         b. Put in a dungeon where he sank in the mire. Jer. 38:1-6.
      2. Jesus the Son of God. Phil. 2:5-9.
      3. Paul, the stalwart missionary. Phil. 3:4-9.
   B. The sacrifice and resurrection of Christ should motivate us to sacrifical living.
      1. Christ lived in Paul. Gal. 2:20.
      2. Paul desired a knowledge of the power of his resurrection. Phil. 3:10.
      3. Christ's sacrifical death became the apostle's appeal for sacrifical living. 2 Cor. 5:13-15.
   C. The Christian's sacrifice is necessary to fill out Christ's sacrifice. Col. 1:24.
   D. The Christian is to present himself fully to the Lord. Rom. 12:1,2; 2 Cor. 8:5.
   E. Christians must offer their money or earthly possessions to God.
      1. Paul speaks of the gift from the church at Philippi as "a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God." Phil. 4:18.
      2. The poor widow made a real sacrifice to God. Mk. 12:41-44.
      3. The Macedonians truly had learned the lesson of sacrifice. 2 Cor. 8:1-4.
      4. Paul exhorts the Hebrews "But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. 13:15,16.
   F. Peter views the whole of using all of our gifts as sacrifical living. 1 Pet. 2:5,20; 4:12-16.

III. IN PLAIN LANGUAGE WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL LESSONS THAT I MUST ACCEPT?
   A. I must deny myself of some things. Lk. 14:25-33.
      1. Preachers
      2. Elders
      3. Deacons
      4. Bible teachers
      5. Young people (some denying whole summer to do mission w
      6. Parents

B. I must put first things first. Mt. 6:33.

Conclusion

1. B ro. Conrad Steyn sacrificed a thriving undertaker business to come to school here.
2. Bro. Phil Liebrandt gave up a highly paid government job to become a gospel preacher.
3. These Mormon Elders that come to your house are giving two years at their own expense just to teach Mormon doctrine.
4. Christ gave his life for you. What are you sacrificing for him?

THE PROBLEM OF TIME

Introduction.

1. Time has always been a problem for man, because he has only a limited amount of it.
2. One of the most common expressions heard is "I just don't have enough time."
3. Our days are few and wrought with trouble. Job. 14:1,2.
4. Let us consider:

Discussion.

I. SOME PROBLEMS RELATIVE TO TIME.

A. I have the problem of learning my frality and the measure of my days.
   1. I know life is short for the other fellow, but I am inclined to think time will tarry for me.
   2. Life is something we live daily, so man's frality is a daily problem. Psa. 39:4; 90:12.

B. I have the everyday problem of protecting my body and caring for my health that my days may be lengthened. Psa. 90:10.
   1. By reason of strength man's years may be increased.
   2. Whatever contributes to my longevity is a daily problem and I must work at it.

C. I have the problem of redeeming time. Eph. 5:16.
   1. Redeem means to buy back and we need to buy back as much as we can of what is wasted.
   2. Idleness is not for the Christian. Cf. Mt. 20:6; 1 Tim. 5:13.

D. I have to daily face the temptation of procrastinating until tomorrow to do what should be done today. 2 Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:7,8.
   1. Tomorrow is in the realm of the unknown. Prov. 27:1.
   2. Tomorrow is the fool's day. Jesus called one man a fool because he planned big things for tomorrow at the expense of neglecting his soul today. Lk. 12:16-21.
   3. Now let's do a little soul-searching about the problem of tomorrow.
      a. What about the letter I was going to write Tom and Mary tomorrow? Now it has been so long I am ashamed to write.
      b. And what about the thank you note I was going to write tomorrow to Sue? She has been so thoughtful of me. Oh, how time flies-----it has been six months.
      c. What ever happened to that tomorrow I was going to begin reading the Bible everyday?
      d. And what about that tomorrow I was going to visit grandmother? She will not be with us long.
      e. What about my saying I would visit Henry in the hospital tomorrow? He is now well, but when he needed me I let tomorrow stand between us.
      f. Then there was the tomorrow I was going to visit the new family that moved down the street and invite them to church. They are no longer new. It has been a year and I have never met them.
      g. And there was that tomorrow I was especially saving to begin attending Sunday evening services. The years have passed and I am just a Sunday morning attender.
      h. And what about that tomorrow I was going to apologize to Pearl for the wrong I had done her? Now what was once no more than an ant hill has become a towering mountain.
      i. That bad habit was going to be broken tomorrow, but that tomorrow has never come and the habit is stronger than ever.
      j. Tomorrow I was going to be a light in this old world; but because it takes effort to keep oil in the bowl and the globe shined, I have waited for a day to come which seldom ever comes----tomorrow.
   4. Poem-----"Tomorrow"

1. "He was going to be all that a mortal should be Tomorrow.
2. No one would be better than he Tomorrow.
3. Each morning he stacked up the letters he'd write Tomorrow.
4. It was too bad indeed he was too busy to see Bill,
   but he'd promised to do it Tomorrow.
5. The greatest of workers
6. The world would have been Tomorrow
7. But the fact is he died + faded from view, and all that was left when living was through
8. was a mountain of things he intended to do Tomorrow.

Had he ever seen Tomorrow
Yes known him

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

II. SOME OTHERS THAT HAVE HAD THE PROBLEM OF TIME.

A. Felix failed to overcome the problem of time.

1. Paul preached to him of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Acts 24:25a.

2. Felix answer reveals that he failed to overcome this problem. Acts 24:25b.

B. The foolish virgins were good women but they failed to solve the problem of time. Time ran out on them before they completed their preparation. Mt. 25:1-13.

III. WASTING TIME IS A PART OF OUR PROBLEM. SOME WAYS IN WHICH ONE MAY WASTE TIME ARE:

A. Lack of application.

1. If we accomplish anything we must apply ourselves. Eccle. 9:10.

2. The child refuses to apply himself very long because he had rather play, but adults are to put away this characteristic. 1 Cor. 13:11.

B. Reading cheap literature.

1. The country is filled with cheap, unwholesome literature.

2. My duty is to think on higher and nobler things. Phil. 4:8.

C. Unwholesome recration.

1. The world is pleasure mad. 2 Tim. 3:4.

2. Everyone needs recreation, but let's be sure it recreates.

D. Meditating on fanciful injuries is a very hurtful way to waste time.

1. Carrying chips on the shoulder takes time and strength that could be used constructively.

2. Forget it. Leave vengeance to the Lord. Rom. 12:19.

E. Pondering past mistakes.

1. No accountable being is perfect and great men have made great mistakes.

2. Paul forgot those things behind. Phil. 3:13.

3. When God forgives he forgets (Heb. 8:12) and so should we.

F. Many people waste time worrying about what may happen in the future.

1. We need to have faith that enables us to believe all things will work out for good. Rom. 8:28.

2. Here are three time-saving rules:

a. Turn loose of yesterday, for it is gone.

b. Do not reach for tomorrow for it has not come.

c. Grab today for it is here.

G. Gossiping or lending ears to gossipers is a sinful way to squander time. Lev. 19:16; Prov. 26:22.

H. Some waste time by lying in bed longer than is needful or helpful. Prov. 20:13.

I. ANOTHER DEVASTATION OF TIME is unusually long telephone conversations.

1. The telephone is one way an individual can invade your privacy anytime they like.

2. They can hold you to an unusually long telephone conversation.

J. Many people kill time by crucifying it on the cross of disorganization. They are always busy, but never seem to get anything done.

K. Time is also wasted through slow movements.

1. Paul wrote Timothy "to come to him with all speed." Acts 17:15.

2. "Lincoln was known for many qualities, one of which was his wit. On one occasion he rented a horse and buggy to got to a town where he was scheduled to make a political speech. The opposition conspired for him to get the slowest horse in the livery, thinking he would be late for the speech. When Lincoln returned he said to the livery man, 'I suppose you keep this horse for funerals.' 'No, no', replied the owner. Lincoln continued, 'Well, I'm glad to hear that; for if you did, the chances are you wouldn't get the corpse to the cemetery in time for the resurrection."

3. I can save time by moving faster, provided I do it advisedly.

L. Hesitancy in making decision will steal our time.

1. We are against making hasty decisions.

2. But the person who can never make up his mind is always lagging behind.

THE CHRISTIAN GRACES
2 Pet. 1:1-12.

INTRODUCTION:
1. Emphasize fact that he is writing to Christians. (Place these points on flannel)
2. Talk about the graces.

DISCUSSION:

I. KNOWLEDGE
- A. The knowledge referred to here is discrimination. It is gained by, and grows out of, the practice of virtue.
- B. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Prov. 1:7.
- C. If one can become a Christian by hearing one sermon (Acts 2) then progress is needed.
- D. Paul prayed that the Philippians' love might abound in knowledge and judgement.
- E. He again prayed that the Colossians might increase in knowledge. Col. 1:10.
- F. Such knowledge comes by use of our senses. Heb. 5:14.
- G. Grow in grace and knowledge. 2 Pet. 3:18.

II. TEMPERANCE.
- A. Self-control.
- B. Paul reasoned with Felix of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. Acts 24:25.
- C. A man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. 1 Cor. 9:25.
- D. A part of the fruit of the Spirit is temperance. Gal. 5:22,23.
- E. Elders are to be temperate. Tit. 1:8.

III. PATIENCE.
- A. "The grace which enables us to bear afflictions and calamities with constancy and calmness of mind, and with a ready submission to God's will."
- B. "It includes a positive resistance of evils and a stedfast bearing up under them."
- C. It is through faith and patience that we inherit the promise. Heb. 6:12.
- D. Have need of patience. Heb. 10:35.
- E. The husbandman and prophets are an example of patience. Jas. 5:7-10.
- F. Job is an example of patience. Jas. 5:11.
- G. Trials and tribulations work patience. Rom. 5:1-4; Jas. 1:1-4.
- H. The greatness of our hopes determines the extent of our parience. 2 Cor. 4:16-18; Rom. 9:25; Rom. 8:18.

IV. GODLINESS.
- A. "Denotes that reverence or respect for God which is the sincere feeling of the heart in view of His nature and character."
- B. God-ward-ness, a state of mind which accepts God as the sole object of its adoration and reverential respect, the central object of its trust, and the infallible source of all religious responsibility.
- C. The basis of patience is the holy reverence one has for God. cf. Moses Heb. 11:27.
- D. Paul said, "godliness id profitable." 1 Tim. 4:7,8.
- E. One develops godliness through Bible study (2 Tim. 2:15), meditation, worship.

V. BROTHERLY KINDNESS.
- A. Godliness and brotherly kindness supplement each other.
- B. The reverence the Christian has for the Father can inspire him to an affectionate, loving regard for the Father's children.
- C. Love of God and love of our brethren are vitally connected. 1 Jn. 4:7-11,20,21; 5:1,2.

VI. LOVE
- A. 11 Cor. 13.

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VI. LOVE

A. 1 Cor. 13.

THE PROBLEM OF EMPLOYMENT

1-8-4

Int.

1. One of my daily problems is to make a living. To do this I must be either self-employed or employed by others.
2. With most of us there is the necessity or problem of labor; but without it, there are more stressing problems.
3. Thus what may actually be considered a problem by some is a friend and preserver.
4. Let's consider:

Dis.

I. THE BIBLE TEACHES THE NECESSITY OF LABOR.
   A. From the beginning God has appointed man a job. Gen. 2:15.
   B. After man fell, the law of labor was renewed. Gen. 3:19.
   C. Solomon used the ant as an object to teach us the urgency of labor. Prov. 6:6-8.
   D. The law of labor is so fixed that God says its either work or starve. 2 Thess. 3:10.
      1. The best way to fight poverty is to go to work.
      2. We must labor for what we have.
         a. The cat likes the fish, but dreads the wading.
         b. We like gold, but hate the digging.
   E. There must be royalty in work for God worked. Gen. 2:2.

II. MAN NEEDS EMPLOYMENT FOR HIS OWN GOOD.
   A. Man needs employment for the strength of his mind and body.
      1. An unused muscle remains undeveloped and withers into helplessness.
      2. An unused mind will remain undeveloped.
   B. Man needs work, for it is work that helps to make the man.
      1. While the farmer cultivates the crop, the crop cultivates the farmer.
      2. Whatever one puts into his work is what goes into him. (Honesty or dishonesty, etc
   C. You can never enjoy the sweetness of rest and sleep until you have tasted the bitterness of rigorous toil. Eccle. 5:12.
   D. Unless one is engaged in constructive work, idleness may ensalve him to destructive deeds.
      1. Some were not working and became busybodies at Thessalonia. 2 Thess. 3:11.
      2. Some retired people blight their days with gossip, slander, hate, strife, etc.

III. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD WORKER?
   A. The good worker sees not only what he does, but what it does for others.
      1. I should see my little labor as a necessary part of the world's work.
      2. It enhances one's feelings of accomplishment.
   B. The good worker is enthusiastic.
      1. Do whatever you do with your might. Eccle. 9:10.
      2. A banker once said, "There can be no substitute for brains, but if there could be, it would be enthusiasm."
   C. The good worker is one that is happy in his employment.
      1. If you cannot be pleased with yoru job, find another.
      2. A personnel man put the question to 100 men, "How many of you fellows are thoroughly satisfied with your job?"
         a. Only five hands went up.
         b. "What's the matter?" he asked.
            (1) "Not enough money."
            (2) "I'm not interested in this kind of work."
            (3) "I took this job until something better comes along."
      3. It has been estimated that 75% of the American labor is not producing more than 50% of its capacity. (Lots of people are being overpaid while they whine for better jobs)
      4. Paul had learned contentment (Phil. 4:11) and you can turn work into play, if you love your job.
      5. "It's not doing the thing we like, but liking the thing we have to do that makes life happy."

D. The worthy worker is a diligent worker.
1. The hand of the diligent worker maketh rich. Prov. 10:4.
2. The slothful man can never succeed. Prov. 22:13.
a. "Dan and Sam were two brother whose farms lay side by side. In the spring Dan said, 'The weeds are coming, but weeds as well as grain are part of the Creator's plan; so we must be resigned." And he lay down for hisusual afternoon nap.

Sam said, 'I can be resigned only to what I cannot help." So he went to work and ploughed and hoed until his fields were cleared of weeds.

You know the results. Sam prospered and Dan didn't. The years broadened the differences between the two. Dan said, 'Why are you always propering, but I am not? Every hing you do succeeds, while everything I do fails."

b. He didn't know that to pull ahead you must used your head. He didn't know that the trouble with success is it takes work. He didn't know that the 'Man of the Hour' never watches the clock. He didn't know that while the successful man tips his hat to past accomplishments, he takes off his coat to present duties.

E. The good worker is honest.
1. Employees steal several million dollars worth of goods from their employers each year.
2. Honesty is a most necessary quality. Rom. 12:17; Ex. 20:15; Eph. 4:28.
3. Honesty requires that I give an honest day's work for an honest day's pay to my employer.
4. Honesty also requires that my employer not expect more of me than he willing to pay for it.

F. The good worker is productive.
1. There will always be a demand for a productive worker.
2. Jesus exemplied this principle when he cursed the fig tree that didn't bear. Mt. 21:19

G. The good worker uses his mind to improve his work.
1. There will always be a place for the person who thinks.
2. "Think" should be placed before each mind.
3. "Why He Fails"

"There's many an industrious man
Who never gets ahead,
Because he does not think or plan,
But trusts to luck instead.
He's not a slacker or a shirk,
This plodder in life's grind;
But though he always minds his work,
He never works his mind.

Conclusion.
1. The problem of employment is an everyday problem.
2. The good worker is like a good watch: Open face, busy hands, pure gold, well regulated and wound up.

FAITH AND VIRTUE

2 Pet. 1:5

Int.

1. Do you truly want to go to heaven and live with God throughout eternity? I trust that each one will answer yes to this question. Yes, I want to go more than anything else.
2. The Bible clearly reveals that we can know that "we are making our calling and election sure" and that God has revealed unto us how to receive "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:10,11)
3. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue...."
4. Place on a flanneboard the steps in becoming a Christian and show that faith is the foundation out of which all the others come.

Dis.

I. FAITH IS THE FOUNDATION.

A. Faith is firm, unshaken confidence, conviction or belief in the truth of a proposition, a person, statement based upon testimony concerning them. Heb. 11:1.

B. Faith is essential.

1. Our hearts are purified by faith. A.1519
2. Sanctified by faith. Acts 26:18
3. The Just live by faith. Rom. 1:17
4. Justified by faith. Rom. 3:28; 5:1
5. Stand by faith. Rom. 11:20
6. Walk by faith 2 Cor. 5:7
7. Overcome the world by faith. 1 Jn. 5:4

C. It is out this foundation that we are to supply virtue.

II. ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE.

A. Virtue Definied.

1. "The virteous person has come to mean to us a person withdrawn from the dirty world and all sinful ideas. While it includes all that it includes more than negative goodness." (Minister's Monthly, Vol. No. 4, Dec. 1957)
2. "It means Christian manliness and active courage in the good fight of faith." (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 22, p. 4)
3. "Virtue which faith supplies is courage and soul vigor, the manliness and the determination to do that which is right." (Woods)
4. "The Latin word vir means a man or a hero; and the Latin word virtus meant the special quality of the man or the hero."
   a. To be manly was to be virtuous; to be virtuous was to be manly.
   b. The Greek word conveyed the same conception.
5. But when we speak of manliness in the Christian sense we are talking about manliness after the type introduced by Jesus Christ.
   a. It is not the Greek or Roman type of manliness which was a life of self-assertion, of mere courage, or of the tendency which says the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong.
   b. It is that kind of life which:
      (1) Realizes itself in service.
      (2) Spends itself in saving others.
      (3) Has as its ideal the life of Him who when he was reviled, reviled not again...

B. Virtue is faith in energetic action.

1. We employ the word in this sense when we say there is virtue in a medicine to cure a particular disease.
2. On one occasion when a woman touched the hem of the Lord's garment he "immediately knowing in himself that Virtue (he was conscious of him...."(Mk. 5:30)
3. The faith that works is energetic action. Jas. 2:14-26.
4. "Everyone remembers the well-worn tale of the pious lady of Vermont in the United States, the view from whose window was blocked by a rocky hill, and who determined to test the promise to faith that it should be removed and cast into the sea. And, according to her lights, she prayed and prayed the night through, tell the

Dawn peeped in at the window, and there was the hill unmoved. "Ah!" she said, "just as I expected !" But there came along that way a prospecting engineer, with his instruments and chain measures and dumpy leveller, and examined that hill and accurately measured it. It was in the way of a new railroad, and he expressed his firm faith that it could be removed. The Company at his back adopted his faith, and he added to his faith virtue in the shape of two thousand navvies, and in a few months that hill was removed. If he had had no faith, he would not have put on the navvies; and if he had not put on the navvies his faith would have been uninfluential and inactive. He added to his faith virtue; he added to his orthodoxy activity.; he added to his creed conduct; he added to his conviction action. His faith was as the grain of mustard seed, which, when the life or substance is awakened within, moves what, in comparison with its size, are literally mountaines. And so the engineer removed the mountain that resisted the prayer, unmixed with action, of the Christian lady of Vermont;

C. Virtue is often translated courage -manly courage - determination to do what is right.

1. In the French Revolution, Lafayette was dismissed from the Army, declared an exile and a price was placed on his head. This great hero was captured while trying to escape to America and was imprisoned in Germany. He was offered freedom if he would join in a plot against France. Even though ill and threatened with a long confinement should he refuse to cooperate, Lafayette boldly replied: 'Never! I am still Lafayette."
2. There are many examples of the same type of moral, manly courage in the Bible.
   a. Joseph had the courage to say <u>No</u> when tempted by Potiphas wife. Gen. 39: 7-9.
   b. Ruth had such courage to leave her home and stay with her mother-in-law. Ruth 1:16-18.
   c. Daniel manifested the same type of courage on two different occasions. Dan. 1:8; Dan. 6:10.
   d. Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego refused to bow down to the golden image. Dan. 3:16-18.
   e. The apostles refused to quit preaching Christ even though facing death. Acts 4:19,20; 5:29.
3. There are many occasions when virtue, real courage is needed by the Christian.
   a. It takes real manhood to confess oneself wrong.
      (1) David said, " I have sinned against the Lord." 2Sam. 12:13.
      (2) Few scenes in English history are more touching than the one which closed the long struggle between Edward I and the barnons over the Charter," when Edward stood face to face with his people in Westminister Hall, and, with a sudden burst of tears, owned himself frankly in the wrong."
      (3) The prodigal son gained his manliness, not lost it, when he said, "Father, I have sinned..." (Lk. 15:21)
   b. Young people, it takes far more courage to stay with convictions, when called "chicken" than to do what you are dared to do.
   c. Young lady, you need moral courage to say <u>No</u> to the temptation to surrender your virginity.
   d. It takes real courage today to stand firm on absolute truth when the majority says there is no absolute truth.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>

1. "Once in Northern India a detachment of soliders were led against a band of robbers who had entrenched themselves in a strong position at the head of a

narrow gorge. The troops were marching along the valley between the steep sides, when a sergeant and eleven men separated from the rest by talking then wrong side of the ravine. The officer in command signalled them to return. They, however, mistook the signal for a command to charge. For a moment they looked up the rocky heights, and saw their enemies above the ramparts. Then with a ringing cheer they clambered up the steep side. At the top were seventy robbers, sheltered behind a breastwork. It was a desperate encounter, but aginst such odds it could not last long. Six fell on the spot - the rest were hurled backward into the depths below. Now it was a custom in that nation when any of their bravest fell in battle to distinguish the most valiant by a thread tied round the wrist - a thread of red or green silk, red denoting the greatest courage. Some little time afterwards the English troops found the twelve bodies stark and gashed, but round the wrist of each was tied the scarlet thread - the distinction of the hero. So, even amongst a wild and savage robber horde, bravery, the bravery of an enemy, is a thing to be reverenced and honoured." (The great texts of the Bible - P. 165-166)

2. I challenge you today to truly pledge yourself to the Lord and " add to your faith virtue" because it is really needed.

THEPROBLEM OF INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP

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Int.

1. In every congregation there is the leadership of eldrs, deacons, teachers and various committees, but there is also the leadership of the individual.
2. My chief problem is with myself.
   a. What others may do in this realm will not solve my problem of doing some leading.
   b. I must forge ahead regardless of what others may do.
3. Every congregation needs capable and enthusiastic group leadership, but, perhaps, the most crying need is self-initiated activity.

Dis.

I. THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP IN THE BIBLE.

A. Joseph of Arimathea stands out as a noble example of personal leadership. Mt. 27:57-60.
   1. When Jesus was crucified there was a need for his body to be buried and Joseph filled the need.
   2. It took foresight, determination and courage.
   3. His was not the work of a group or the fulfillment of an assignment.
   4. It may be that other disciples thought about it, but only Joseph did it.

B. It was Andrew's individual leadership that directed Simon Peter to Jesus. Jn. 1:41,42.
   1. No committee gave Andrew this job, but he saw the opportunity and did it.
   2. The Great Commission(Mt. 28:19,20) requires personal leadership in soul-winning.
   3. God's chain reaction plan will work but it demands personal initiative.

C. The individual members of the church in Jerusalem exerted leadership in spreading the gospel.
   1. A painful persectuion scattered them abroad, but they went everywhere preaching. Acts 8:4.
   2. This took leadership and they had it.
   3. If there is enough inward compulsion, the outward manifestations we call initiative will follow.
      a. The word of God shut up in Jeremian's bones as a burning fire compelled him to speak the words of God. Jer. 20:8,9.
      b. His word "in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones will compel me to seek the lost whether I'm on a committee or not.
      c. When the heart is running over, there is no place for it to go execp through the eyes or mouth-----tears or words. Mt. 12:34.
      d. This explains the most effective and dynamic program of evangelism the world has ever known-----individual leadership.

D. A couple showed individual leadership in teaching a preacher. Acts 18:24-26.
   1. Aquilla and Priscilla taught Apollos.
   2. This was not a group effort or a project planned by the elders. It was rather the work of a couple who saw their duty and did it withotu consulting flesh and blood.
   3. This was a work which required:
      a. Concern and they manifested it.
      b. Love and they showed it.
      c. Knowledge and they taught it.
      d. Sacrifice and they made it.
      e. Self-reliance and they demonstrated it.
      f. Leadership and they had it.

E. The Good Samariatan individually led in relieving human suffering. Lk. 10:30-37.

F. Cornelius led in getting a group together to hear the word of God. Acts 10:24.

II. EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP OUTSIDE THE BIBLE.

A. The first church ever established in Fort Worth, Texas, was the Lord's church and it was the result of individual leadership. Fort Worth was a small village when Bro. Dean rode into the village with a pistol in one saddle bag and a Bible in the other. He worked as a harvest hand during the day and preached to the settlers at night.

When the harvest was over he rode away leaving a little congregation of eight souls.

B. BRO. Leroy Brownlow conducted his first gospel meeting when he was eighteen and had been a Christian less than a year. He was not called by a church to hold it but took it on his own in this little community. He borrowed song books and benches. He made signs of cardboard and crayola. At the end of ten days 14 had been baptized into Christ. Individual leadership.

C. The Paradise Orphan Home at Farmington, Ky. is the result of the individual leadership of a family----the Murdock family.

III. SOME PREREQUISITES OF LEADERSHIP.

A. You to lead.
1. Now this may sound simple, but its a profound truth.
2. "You cannot lead where you do not go.
You can't tell what you do not know."

B. Knowledge.
1. Each Christian is commanded to add to his virtue, knowledge. 2 Pet. 1:5.
2. We should be ready to give an answer for our hope. 1 Pet. 3:15.
3. "Zeal without knowledge id dangerous, just as knowledge without zeal is useless."

C. Wisdom-----certainly enough to know the difference between forcing and leading.
1. A boy scout who was battered and bruised was asked by the scout master what happened. He stated that he had tried to help an old lady across the street. "But what caused to get hurt?" He replied "She didn't want to go."
2. Jesus said if people will not let you lead them, then don't force them lest you cast pearls before swine. Mt. 10:14; 7:6.

D. Conviction.
1. Paul said, "I believed, and therefore have spoken." 2 Cor. 4:13.
2. Great leaders have always been men and women of great convictions.

E. Vision.
1. If I lead them I must have the ability to see what needs to be done.
2. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Prov. 29:18.

F. Sacrifice. It costs to lead others and no one can be a leader without paying it.

G. Courage.
1. It takes courage to push ahead.
2. Fear, overcaution has been the cause of many a defeat. Cf. Eccle. 11:4.

H. A tough skin.
1. One who leads must take criticism, most of which will be destructive and unjust.
   a. If you lead the band, you must face the music.
   b. The greater the leader, the greater the criticism, so it may be a compliment to be criticized.
   c. Criticism is sure to come so just keep a few things in mind.
      (1) Be sure you're right and go ahead because you will be criticized right or wrong.
      (2) Some of your critics will be those that are doing the least and hate to see others working.
      (3) Some of them will be evil people and such will not make you evil.
2. As Harry Truman once said, "If you can't stand the heat boys, then get out of the kitchen."

Conclusion.
1. Beloeved, the problem of individual leadership is an everyday problem.
2. Be a part of the organized work of the church, but look for opportunities to be individual leaders also.

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

THE PROBLEM OF CONTRARY WINDS

Mark6:48

INTRODUCTION:

1. This was an actual experience of the early disciples on a literal sea. Reverse winds necessitated more "toiling in rowing."
2. God knows best.
   a. He gave us the winds for the distribution of heat and rainfall.
   b. If the heat from the sun stayed where it fell, the equatorial region would be too hot for life and the northern regions would be locked in eternal frost.
3. We cannot have winds however without having them sometimes for us and sometimes against us, but this keeps life from being dull and boresome.
   a. Change makes life more interesting and struggle makes man stronger.
   b. In countries where the least effort is required for man's survival, he has had the least initiative, lowest ambition and made the slightest progress.

DISCUSSION:

I. WE HAVE TO ROW AGAINST CONTRARY WINDS.
   A. Man still has to battle contrary winds.
      1. Man must face elements in the material world and wrestle with the forces of evil in the moral and spiritual world. Eph. 6:12.
      2. God permits the winds to blow stopping them occasionally lest man be overcome. 1 Cor. 10:13.
   B. There is no escape from opposing winds simply by becoming a Christian as God's children in all ages had to face them.
      1. Joseph.
         a. Joseph was sold into slavery by envious brothers (Gen. 37:28) - things going wrong.
         b. As a slave his name was ruined by a conspiring woman (Gen. 39:7-20) - things were getting worse.
         c. But God was preparing him for a great purpose (Gen. 41:38-41) opposing winds were driving him in the right direction, but he didn't know it.
      2. Paul.
         a. He had to battle discouraging forces. (2 Cor. 11:24-27).
         b. But he declared that they happened for good.)Phil. 1:12).
   C. Adverse winds discipline us.
      1. Having plans to go astray teach us to depend more on God. Jas. 4:13-15.
      2. God knows we need chastisement for our good. Heb. 12:11.
   D. Negative circumstances try man's faith.
      1. Abraham was tried when he offered Isaac. Heb. 11:17.
      2. Through this trial God knew that Abraham feared him. Gen. 22:12.
   E. Opposing winds provide an opportunity for our greatness (if we have it) to shine as gold. Job:
      1. The greatest of all the men of the east. Job. 1:1-4.
      2. On a certain day he lost all. Job. 1:13-19. He had been great all alone a deeper and nobler greatness began to shine like pure gold. Job. 1:20,21.
      3. He was afflicted with sore boils and had to contend with his wife. Job. 2:9,10.
      4. His friends chided him.
      5. H e said, "When he had tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job. 23:10.
   F. Contrary winds can strengthen us by calling for more fortitude.
      1. God permits things to be fixed against us to teach us to set ourselves against them.
      2. Moses had to go through a period of struggle for his great task.
      3. An easy liver is like a mushroom, which, growing up in a night, is but a pulpy thing.
      4. But the oak and there a men like that. Psa. 1:1-3.

II. SOME DISTRESSING WINDS WE MUST MEET.

A. Betrayal by supposed friends.
   1. Judas betrayed the Lord. Mt. 26:14ff.
   2. The disciple is not above his Master. Mt. 10:24.

B. Persecution by enemies.
   1. This is another opportunity.
   2. We cannot control the conduct of others, but we can control our own conduct. Mt. 5:44.

C. Lying tongues which hurt you in all phases of your life.
   1. "Where there is smoke there is a little fire" O Oh, no, there was a lot of smoke about Jesus, Paul, etc., but no fire at all.
   2. Lying tongues is an annoying experience.

D. Financial backsets.
   1. Loss of job, failure to get a promotion, etc.
   2. If I cannot do what I wish, then I must wish to do what I can.
   3. The Christian is helped by Lk. 12:15.
   4. A bank president lost every penny during the Great Depression. Did he give up? He bought a few suits and began to peddle from door to door. He gradually grew and became rich.

E. An accident which brings physical and financial injury.
   1. It can teach us patience. Phil. 4:11.
   2. It can bring new resolves. Phil. 3:13.

F. Loss of health.
   1. Lost health can be regained.
   2. If not it can help us learn to live with the ailment. III Jn. 2.

G. Disappointments of various kinds.
   Paul. 1 Thess. 2:18.

H. Death of a loved one.
   1. Death is appointed. Heb. 9:27.
   2. We find balm in Job's words. Job. 1:21.
   3. We also find a strong resolve in David's words. 2 Sam. 12:23.

III. FAITH IS SOMETIMES LOST WHEN THINGS GO WELL.

A. There is danger of losing faith when things go well. Psa. 55:19.

B. One of the disadvantages of good times can be forgetfulness of God. Cf. Lk. 12:16-20.

C. Another is pride and self-sufficiency. Prov. 16:18.

CONCLUSION:

1. Stormy winds cause the anchor to take a stronger grip.

2. No matter whichway the winds blow, I can set my sails so it will be an advantage.

3. "Then whatsoever wind doth blow,
   My heart is glad to have it so:
   And blow it east or blow it west,
   The wind that blows, that wind is best."
   Caroline A. Mason.

THE PROBLEM OF SELF-IMPRISONMENT

Jn. 8:32; Acts 22:28--

Int.

1. It can be said of every American "I was free-born" but are we really free?
   a. It seems strange that free people would imprison themselves, but millions have.
   b. There are many prisons besides the ones made of stone and iron bars.
      (1) "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage."
      (2) One of the characters of Charles Dickens expressed it correctly when he said, "I wear the chain I forged in life."
2. Let's consider some Of our self-made prisons.

Dis.

I. THE PRISON OF INFERIORITY.
   A. This is an exaggerated sense of inadequacy and it fosters a feeling of defeat.
   B. All of us at times have to fight the feeling of inferiority. The self-assertive person is no exception, in fact, he may be the worst.
   C. The feeling of insufficiency is certainly no proof that one is incapable.
   D. We can tear down those prison walls of inferiority we have built around ourselves.
      1. To do so, we cannot submit to them. Paul refused to submit to his thorn in the flesh, but fought a good fight. 2 Tim. 4:7.
      2. When we are threatened with the feelings of inferiority we need to take our problem to God in prayer.
         a. Nehemiah and his followers faced enough ridicule to give anyone inferiority feelings but they went to God in prayer. Neh. 4:1-4.
         b. In everything pray. Phil. 4:6.
      3. We need to engage in positive thinking, trusting in the Lord to help us. Psa. 46:1; 94:17; 2 Cor. 4:13; Phil. 4:13.

II. THE PRISON OF SELF-SATISFACTION.
   A. Self-satisfaction has become for many people the self-made prison which has restricted their activities.
      1. Self-satisfaction is a kind of living death-----no climbing, growth or improvement.
      2. Some people cannot be any better because they do not want to be any different. Rev. 3:17.
   B. Most people are satisfied if they live up to the standards and demands of the average
      1. The Bible teaches "Seek that ye may excel." 1 Cor. 14:12.
      2. The average is the midway mark, but we must try to get above the average.
      3. Here is a ball and chain for each ankle:
         a. "I am doing as well as the other fellow."
         b. "Why should I be expected to do better than the average."

III. THE PRISON OF SUPERSTITITION.
   A. Many people in the land of the free are held in the bondage of superstitition.
      1. When Friday the 13th comes, the world has to stand still for them.
      2. If a black cat crosses their path, all special activities are cancelled for that day.
      3. If they break a mirror it is a bad omen of trouble and they feel they must go to bed to prevent it.
   B. Superstition has reached such proportion that the American people are spending over $125,000,000 every year patronizing the various forms of it.
      1. Almost half of the American people believe in some form of fortune telling.
      2. Instead of going to the Bible for guidance (Psa. 119:105) they allow life to be shaped by a certain day, a black cat, a ladder, abroken mirror or a toothless old lady in a dirty tent.
   C. We are commanded to remain free of superstition and other fables. 1 Tim. 4:7.
   D. In proportion to our belief in God's running this world, we are freed from superstition. Acts 17:24;28; 2 Tim. 1:12.

IV. THE PRISON OF RESTLESSNESS.

A. A generation of bewildered, perplexed people pace their prison like a lion in a cage---a casual glance at our society reveals this.

1. Giving oneself to intoxicants is the futile search for a restless people to find release.
2. Gambling is another manifestations of unrest.
3. Our vision of greener pastures across the fence is often an illusion created by our own restlessness.
4. There are as many as 25,000 suicides some years in America.

B. How do we solve this universal problem of unrest.

1. We must understand the true design of living. We are not here just to eat, drink and be merry, but the spirit must have communion with God. Eccle. 12:13.
2. We must give ourselves to a cause bigger than ourselves. Mt. 5:5; 11:28; Phil. 4:7.
3. We must have an approving conscience. Acts 24:16.
4. We must quit thinking so much about ourselves and start thinking about others. 2 Cor. 8:9.

Conclusion.

1. One of my daily problems is to remain free of self-improvement. MENT
2. Whatever that entails is my daily job.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Acts 1:11; Rev. 1:7---

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Introduction.

The second coming of Christ was a cardinal truth with the apostles; one they ever kept before the early Christians. It was the firm belief in, and ever looking forward to his coming, that sustained them through many difficulties. Likewise, it needs to be vividly impressed upon our minds.

Discussion.

I. CHRIST IS COMING THE SECOND TIME.
- A. He said He was.
  - 1. Matt. 24:42--"know not what hour your Lord doth come."
  - 2. Matt. 25:27--"and them at my coming..."
- B. Paul taught it--1 Cor. 1:7; 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:3; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1;
- C. James taught it--James 5:7.
- D. John--1 John 2:28.
- E. Peter--2 Pet. 3:12.

II. NATURE OR MANNER OF HIS COMING.
- A. Suddenly--1 Thess. 5:3.
- B. In an hour when men think not--Matt. 24:44.
- C. Visible.
  - 1. Come as he left--Acts 1:11.
  - 2. Every eye shall see him--Rev. 1:7--(This does away with the theory that one or two see him.)
- D. As a thief in the night--1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10.
- E. Audibly----John 5:28; 1 Thess. 4:16.
- F. Accompanied by angels---Matt. 25:31; Matt. 13:40-41.
- G. In flaming fire--2 Thess. 1:7,8.

III. PURPOSE OF HIS COMING.
- A. It is not to set up an earthly kingdom. (Premillenial theory false because:)
  - 1. Christ's kingdom not of this world--John 18:36.
  - 2. Christ's kingdom already been established--Mk. 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1,47.
  - 3. His second coming will mark the end of his reign and not the beginning--1 Cor. 15:24-28.
  - 4. No scripture reveals Christ will ever set foot on earth again.
- B. To raise the dead--John 5:28,29; 1 Cor. 15:51ff; Phil. 3:20,21.
- C. Judgment--Matt. 25:31; Rev. 20:11; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Cor. 5:10.
  - 1. Righteous rewarded--Matt. 25:34.
  - 2. Wicked punished--Matt. 25:41.
- D. Other events are:
  - 1. Destruction of heaven and earth--2 Pet. 3:10-12.
  - 2. All things made manifest--1 Cor. 4:5; 1 Tim. 5:24,25.

IV. ATTITUDES ABOUT HIS COMING.
- A. Some scoff at the idea--2 Pet. 3:3,4. No new thing:
  - 1. Noah and the flood--Gen. 6.
  - 2. Lot--Gen. 19:14.
  - 3. Men scoff now, as they did then, because such a thing has never happened before.
- B. Unconcern and indifference--Matt. 24:37-39.
  - 1. In the days before the flood men went about their business unconcerned.
  - 2. Such conditions do prevail, and will be prevailing, when Christ comes again.
- C. The faithful will welcome his coming--2 Pet. 3:13; 2 Tim. 4:7,8.

V. WHAT SHOULD EACH ONE BE DOING IN VIEW OF HIS COMING?

A. Sinners--The Great Commission--Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38.

B. Christians.

1. Adding the Christian graces--2 Pet. 1:5-11.
2. Watching--Matt. 24:42.
3. Awake and busy--1 Thess. 5:6-8.
4. Abiding in him--1 John 2:28.
5. Dwelling in love--1 John 4:16,17.
6. Diligent--2 Pet. 3:14.

Conclusion.

Yes, the Lord is coming again and may each of us live from day to day that we can say with Paul--2 Tim. 4:7,8.

We live between the two advents

Two extremes
Indifference &
Over emphasis

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

Jn. 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Rev. 1:7

When?

How?

Where?

Why?

1.	Literally as he went away	Acts 1:11
2.	Everyone shall see him	Rev. 1:7
3.	At an unexpected time	Mt. 24:44
4.	Suddenly as a thief	1 Thess. 5:2
5.	The earth will be burned up	2 Pet. 3:10
6.	Coming in fire taking vengeance	2 Thess. 1:7-9
7.	Living saints will meet him	1 Thess. 4:17
8.	Herald by trump of God	1 Thess. 4:16
9.	Bringing saints with him	Jude 14
10.	Coming to execute judgment	Jude 15
11.	Resurrection of ALL	1 Cor. 15:50-58 Jn. 5:28
12.	DEATH WILL BE DESTROYED	1 Cor. 15:26
13.	Saints will be like him	1 Jn. 3:2
14.	He will judge living and dead	2 Tim. 4:1
15.	Saints will be with him	1 Thess. 4:17
16.	All saints will be rewarded	2 Tim. 4:6-8 Jn. 5:28,29
17.	Christ will deliver kingdom to God	1 Cor. 15:24

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THE PROBLEM OF SELF-DISCOVERY

2 Cor. 13:5

INTRODUCTION:

1. Self-discovery is a big and personal problem.
2. Each needs to discover himself.
3. The need is more common than many suppose.
4. Most people seem to have a very imperfect comception of what they really are.
5. Let's consider:

DISCUSSION:

I. SOME WHO FAILED TO SEE THEMSELVES AS THEY WERE:
   A. David, one of the all-time greats, marked his life with a failure to see himself as he was.
      1. Tell the story of David's sin with Bathsheba and other deeds connected. 2 Sam. 11.
      2. God then sent Nathan to David and in the story that Nathan told, David discovered himself and confessed his sin. "I have sinned against the Lord." (2 Sam. 12:13)
      3. The moral for us is: We may have many wonderful and noble traits and still need to discover ourselves.
   B. The Pharisee who went up to the temple to pray did not see his true state. Luke 18:10-14
      1. The Pharisee went to brag on himself and thank God he wasn't like others.
      2. The Publican knew himself and said, "God be merciful to me a sinner."
   C. The members of the church at Laodicea had a grossly perverted view of themselves. (Rev. 3:14-17.)

II. SOME WHO DISCOVERED THEMSELVES.
   A. The chief butler, made famous by Joseph and Joseph's dreams, saw his faulty life. Gen. 41:9.
   B. Isaiah got a more vivid and realistic view of self when he saw his sinful nature in contrast with God's holy nature. Isa. 6:5.
   C. Peter found himself in the most painful.
      1. Jesus told his disciples that all of them would be offended because of him. Mt. 26:31.
      2. Peter showed that he didn't really know himself when he denied that he would. Mt. 26:33.
      3. Peter really found himself and his weakness through a base denial of the Lord. Mt. 26:69ff.
      4. We may fall when we think we are strong. 1 Cor. 10:12.
   D. The Prodigal Son.
      1. The prodigal son pictured himself as an enterprising young man who could make his own way in the world without anyone's help. Lk. 15:11ff.
      2. The Bible says, "And when he came to himself" Lk. 15:17. (He really saw himself as he was.)

III. SELF-DECEPTION IS THE MAIN HINDERANCE TO SELF-DISCOVERY. Jer. 17:9; Gal. 6:7; Jas. 1:26; 1 Jn. 1:8. SOME WAYS WE DECEIVE OURSELVES AND THUS FAIL TO DISCOVER OURSELVES:
   A. The common and comfortable practice of looking at the sins of others instead of our own.
      1. "There was an elderly man who often wore a coat patched with many colors. He said the patches on the side represented the sins of his neighbors. When asked about the patches on his back, he replied, they represent my sins, but they are where I can't see them."
      2. It's easy to see the faults of others, but we seldom see our own.
         a. The spendthrifts can give a great sermon on the sins of the miser.
         b. Jesus said something on this subject. Mt. 7:3-5.
   B. Another deceitful exercise which hinders self-discovery is the measurement of ourselves by others who are weaker and less fortunate.

1. The Corinthians measured themselves by themselves. 2 Cor. 10:12.
   a. One can't discover self if he spends all his time trying to cover self with a false standard.
   b. I am what I am, no matter what others may be.
2. Here is the true measurement.
   a. Gal. 6:4.
   b. I must daily prove or test myself by the true standard of Christ and his word.
   c. "Just go to the mirror and look at yourself, and [illegible]
      And what the man has to say;
      For it isn't your father, or mother, or wife,
      Who judgment upon you must pass.
      The fellow whose verdict counts most in life
      Is the one staring back from the glass." Author unknown

C. We are hindered from self-discovery by assuming virtues which are not our own.
   1. Here is a man who takes pride in his family, but what has he done to make his family name great and honerable?
   2. Here is another man who prides himself upon belonging to a large active, and generous church, but what has he done to make it thus?
   3. A man is not honorable because he has an upright family; neither is he an active and generous Christian just because he has membership in a live and liberal congregation.

D. We deceive ourselves by disguising our sins with new names.
   1. You have seen the covetous man who labeled his sin "thrift."
   2. You have seen the stingy man who refused to give to the church who called it humility - he was too "humble" to let anyone see him give more than a nominal sum."
   3. There is the person who neglects the worship services, but boasts that he or she is a Christian everyday in the week.
   4. The drunkard is not a drunkard, but sick.
   5. The murderer is mot a murderer but mentally ill.
   6. The delinquent boy and girl are not delinquent, but the parents are responsible.

E. Self-discovery is hampered by the gratifying deciet of changing the form of our sins.
   1. The Bible says "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13) Man thanks God he is not a murderer, but he hates an enemy and hopes a car will run over him. It is still murder. 1 Jn. 3:15.
   2. Another says "Thank God, I am not a thief!" But he holds up others for goods and services. Prov. 22:22. "Rob not the poor because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate."
   3. One thanks God he is not an adulterer because he has not committed the actual act, but he lusts after a woman. Mt. 5:28.

CONCLUSION:

1. I should daily and diligently strive to discover myself, but I tell on myself whether I see myself or not.
2. I should be honest with myself and try to see myself because I am what I am and what I will be my destiny. Gal. 6:7,8.
3. The time for self-examination is short. All will eventually be made known. 1 Tim. 5:24,25.

GOD OPENS DOORS
Acts 14:27-----

Introduction.

1. "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ." (Text)
   a. The church at Antioch had sent Barnabas and Saul on the first missionary journey. Acts 13:1-3.
   b. What did Paul rehearse to the church at Antioch?
      (1) He told them about the experience at Paphos with Elymas the sorcerer and Sergius Paulus. 13:4-13.
      (2) He rehearsed how they preached at Antioch and how the Jews rejected, but many Gentiles accepted. Acts 13:14-52.
      (3) He told how the Jews stirred up the Gentiles at Iconium and they escaped stoning only by fleeing to Lystra and Derbe. 14:1-7.
      (4) They healed a cripple at Lystra and the people at first thought they were gods, but later the Jews persuaded the people who stoned Paul. 14:8-20.
      (5) They returned to the places where they had preached and appointed elders in every church. 14:21-26.
2. Paul also told them "how he (God) had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."
3. Let's consider:

Discussion.

I. ALL THAT GOD HATH DONE WITH ME DURING THE RECENT CAMPAIGN IN BERMUDA.
   A. This is essential because you sent me and deserve to know the value of your support.
   B. There were 9 women, two elders and 18 preachers that worked in the campaign, besides the local members.
   C. Theisland itself:
      1. It is 21 miles long-----5 miles wide at widest point---2 or 3 hundred feet at narrow point.
      2. It has a population of 50,000 made up of English, Americans, Portuguese, Negros etc.
      3. The religions on the idland are many-----all the way from the Church of England which is the state religion to the followers of Garner Ted Armstrong.
      4. The people are very religious, very helpful and very courteous.
   D. Our program:
      1. The first day we spend on and off of a bus touring the island which proved very enjoyable and profitable.
      2. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday we called on every house on the island leaving brochures and inviting people to the meeting.
      3. On Sunday I taught the adult class and Wayne Emmons preached. We had 14 restorations and 1 baptism.
      4. On Monday through Saturday we met at 9:00 for devotion and assignments. The remainder of each day was spent in visiting and studying with those that attended the night before. Relate some of the studies.
      5. Our services each night begin at 7:30 and lasted from 1½ to 2½ hours.
      6. The meeting ended with 19 baptisms and 18 restorations, three being baptized at 12:15 before we left at 2:00.

II. GOD OPENS DOORS OF OPPORTUNITIES.
   A. Paul told the church at Antioch how God had "opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."
      1. The figure of a "door" is used a number of places in the Bible.
         a. Jesus said "I am the door of the sheep." Jn. 10:7.
         b. Paul said "a great door and effectual is opened unto me. 1 Cor. 16:8,9.
         c. A door was opened for Paul at Troas. 2 Cor. 2:12.
         d. Paul asked the Christians at Colossee to pray that "god would open unto us a door of utterance." Col. 4:3.
         e. The Lord told the church at Philadelphia "I have set before thee and open door." Rev. 3:8.

2. Paul was called to preach to the Gentiles and God opened the door as he went forth. Acts 26:16-18.

B. Some doors that God has oepened through this effort.

1. A door of opportunity to reach the Portuguese people. (Tell about the service, the results and future plans.)
2. Doors were opened into many homes which will result in salvation to many souls.
3. A door is open to this congregation to engage in future campaigns by sneding an elder, deacon, qualified member or preacher.
4. A door of realization was opened to me personally.
   (1) a realization of need of special study in some areas. (Came through certain studies.
   (2) A realization of how there are people who have never heard the simple truths which you and I take for granted. (The old blind colored man who listened with such avid interest and then said, "I never knew that before" or "We never had that explained before."

Conclusion.

1. God is still opening doors thatwe can enter, but we must lest they be closed.
2. God will still use us if we will allow him to guide and control our lives.

THE PROBLEM OF SELF*IMPROVEMENT

Introduction.

1. We have the daily challenge to improve ourselves and develop more beautiful and beneficial lives. 2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:1,2.
2. Each scripture calls for a conscious effort self-improvement.
   a. Few things remain static, including character.
   b. I must pull myself up thorugh purposeful and conscious efforts or aimlessly allow myself to be pulled down by the care and forces surrounding me.
3. Let's consider.

Discussion.

I. WAYS AND MEANS OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT.

A. Self-discovery is a prerequisite to self-~~discovery~~ improvement, which was discussed in our last lesson.

B. Reading the Bible everyday encourages personal excellence.
   1. The most revealing agency in self-discovery---essential to self-improvement----- is God's word, which is described as a mirror of the soul. Jas. 1:23-25.
   2. The word of God is a sword which cuts and pricks the heart. Heb. 4:12; A. 2:37.
   3. The Bible is like a fire which refines and a hammer which pulverizes. Jer. 23:29.
   4. The word of God is both milk and meat. 1 Cor. 3:1,2; Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2.
   5. There is tremendous productive power in readint the Bible every day. Psa. 1:1-3.
   6. An elderly woman once said she had read the Bible through 14 times and each time for the specific purpose of seeing if there was anything God commanded her to do that she wasn't doing.
   7. Great men have spoken of the merits of the Bible.
      a. Horace Greeley---"It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible reading people."
      b. George Washington---"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."
      c. Daniel Webster---"There is no solid basis for civilization but in the Word of God. I make it a practice to read the Bible through once every year."

C. We can upgrade our lives by picking associates who contribute to our goodness.
   1. A warning. 1 Cor. 15:33. If one runs with the goats one will smeall like the goats.
   2. Associations are like leaven. 1 Cor. 5:6.
   3. God issued this protective command. Prov. 22:24,25.
   4. The ways of Solomon's wives became his ways. 1 Kgs. 11:4.
   5. The ways of Herod's guests were adopted as his ways. Mt. 14:9,10.

D. We can cultivate the more attractive personality by thinking on rightthings:
   1. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Prov. 23:7.
   2. We are told to think on high and noble things. Phil. 4:8.

E. Examination of one's daily life with the resolution to excel is a stimulus to better living. Here are some areas in which we ought to question ourselves:

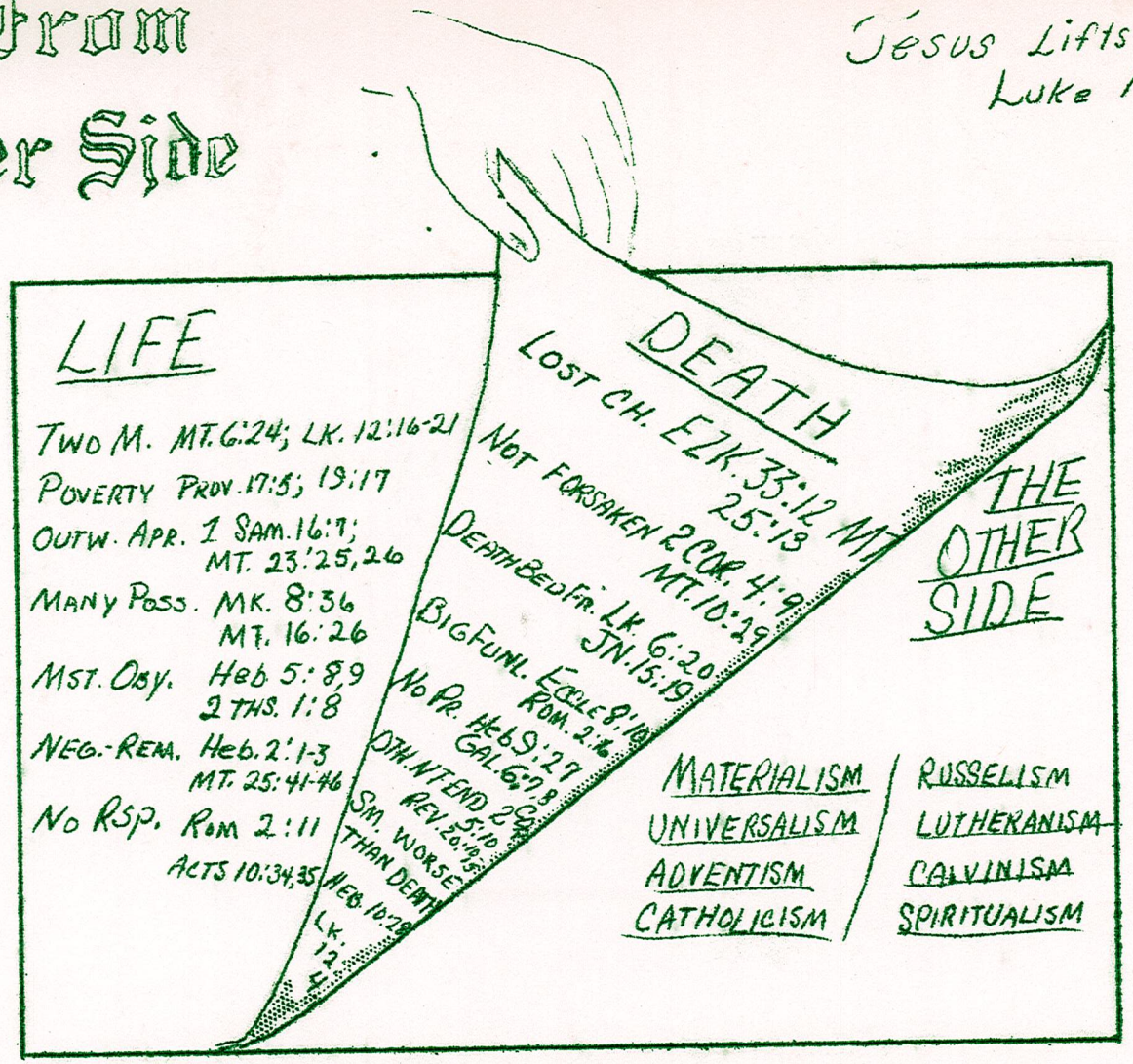
SOME AREAS OF SELF-EXAMINATION IN WHICH WE OUGHT TO LOOK EACH DAY AND GIVE OUR SELVES A GRADE.

1. Have I spoken evil of any person this day? "Speak not evil one of another." Jas. 4:11
2. Have I taken the name of God in vain? "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Ex. 20:7.
3. Have I been a gossiper? "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among they people." Lev. 19:16.
4. Have I this day been quick to speak and quick to wrath? "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." Jas. 1:19.
5. Have I been a peacemaker on the job, in the school, in the church and in every walk of life? "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace." Rom. 14:19
6. Have I been unselfish in all my dealings? "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Phil. 2:4.
7. Have I thid day been free of malice and hate? "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Tit. 3:3.
8. Have I been free of envy of another's honor, position, possessions or success? "But envy is the rottenness of the bones". Prov. 14:30.
9. Have I been compassionate and sympathetic? "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." 1 Pet. 3:8.
10. Have I refrained from being retaliatory and vengeful? "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing." 1 Pet. 3:9.
11. Have I been longsuffering and gentle? "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." Gal. 5:22.
12. Have I this day been sincere in all my affairs? "That ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ." Phil. 1:10.
13. Have I been honest in all my dealings? "Thou shalt not steal." Ex. 20:15.
14. Have I been cooperative in the home , on the job, and in the church. "We then as workers together." 2 Cor. 6:1.
15. Have I been tolerant of the faults of others, considering myself? "And why beholdest the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but consideret not the beam that is in thine eye?" Mt. 7:3.
16. Have I been fair and just in all my relationships? "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Mic. 6:8
17. Have I been forgiving, refusing to harbor grudges? "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Mt. 6:15.
18. Have I been thankful for my blessings? "Be ye thankful" Col. 3:15.
19. Have I been industrious? "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and and idle soul shall suffer hunger." Prov. 19:15.
20. Have I been thrifty? "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Jn. 6:12.
21. Have I kept my word? "Covenant breakers . . . worthy of death." Rom. 1:21,32
22. Have I been easy to entreat? "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated." Jas. 3:17.
23. Have I today followed the Golden Rule? "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Mt. 7:12.
24. Have I been content in the path that I must travel? "For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Phil. 4:11.
25. Have I today found happiness and shared it with others? "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say rejoice." Phil. 4:4.

Con. There is much power in resolution. There is power in "I will." We are human and therefore imperfect. Let us go on unto perfection."

Pictures From Life's Other Side

Jesus Lifts the veil.
Luke 16:19-31

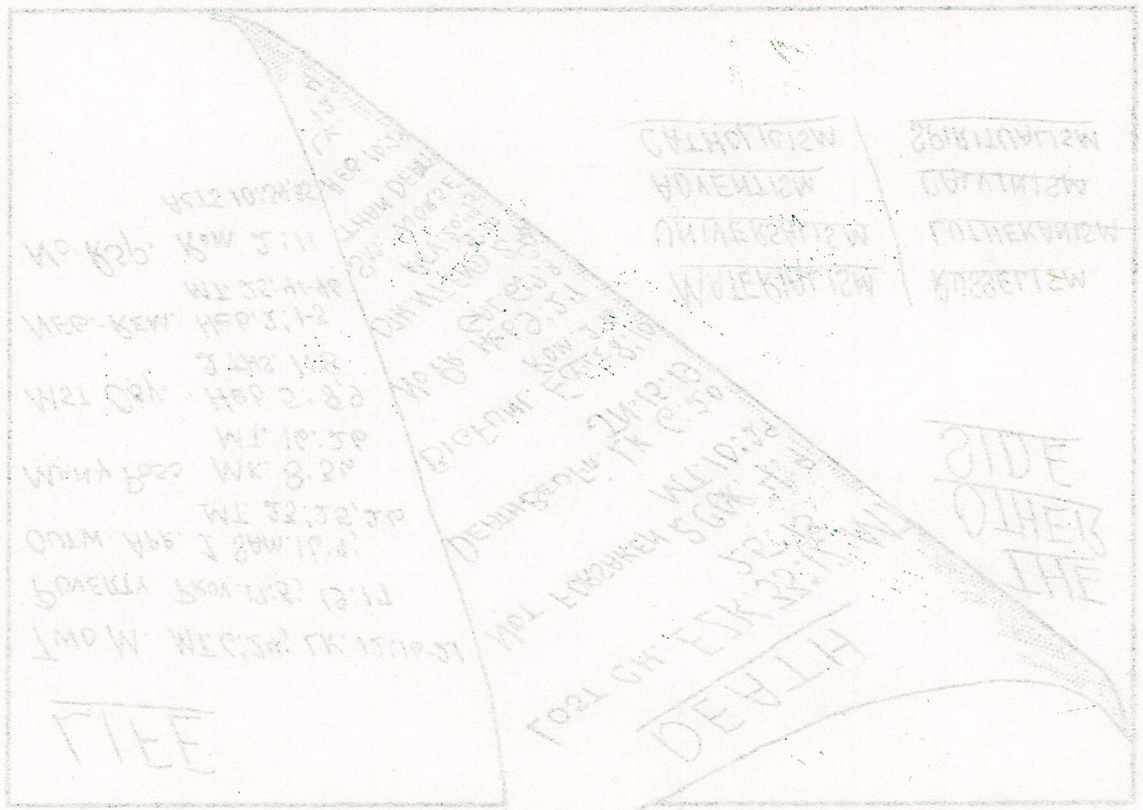


SADDEST LESSON!

Too Little
Too Late!

LEARNED TO PRAY
BELIEVED IN HELL
REALIZED DANGER
HEARD ABRAHAM
SAW POOR BEGGAR

REALIZED SOMETHING TO DO
CONCERNED FOR OTHERS
GREAT DESIRE FOR HEAVEN
DESIRE TO ESCAPE
CRIED FOR MERCY


LIFE
DEATH
SIDE
OTHER
SIDE

THE HOLY SPIRIT
No. 1

John 16:13

INTRODUCTION:

1. The only source of information about the Holy Spirit is the Bible.
   a. One can learn much about God - His existence, power, etc. - from a study of nature. Psa. 19:1,2; Rom. 1:18-20.
   b. But from the study of nature one can learn nothing about Christ and the Holy Spirit.
   c. Our only source of information about Christ and the Holy Spirit is the Bible and to it we must turn without preconceived notions, feelings, etc.
2. The study of the Holy Spirit is of tremendous importance for several reasons:
   a. First, there is probably more confusion and ignorance on this subject than any other.
   b. Second, very little teaching has been done on the subject.
   c. Third, there are those today in the church who are claiming to receive promptings of the Spirit other than through the word.
   d. Fourth, some of the most militant groups are followers of Garner Ted Armstrong and Full Gospel Business Men who claim baptism of the Holy Spirit.
3. But in order to have an understanding of the work of the Spirit, it is important that we understand the question, "Who is the Holy Spirit?" a very essential question since some think him a "vague, impersonal force" or just the word of God.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT PROCLAIMS PERSONALITY.
   A. He teaches and quickens the mind. Jn. 14:26.
   B. He testifies. Jn. 15:26.
   C. He is able to reprove and convict. Jn. 16:7,8.
      1. Acts 2:36,37
      2. Acts 24:24,25.
   D. He guides. Jn. 16:13,14
   E. He leads and forbids. Acts 16:6,7.
   F. He speaks. 1 Tim. 4:1.
   G. Only a person can do these things.

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERSON.
   A. He is called the "good Spirit." Neh. 9:20.
   B. Mind. Rom. 8:27.
   C. Has affection --"love of the Spirit." Rom. 15:30.
   D. Knowledge. 1 Cor. 2:11.
   E. Will. 1 Cor. 12:11.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A DIVINE PERSON AS SEEN IN A NUMBER OF WAYS.
   A. He is a member of the Godhead. Acts 17:29; Col. 2:9.
      1. Three distinct members, yet one. 1 Jn. 5:7.
      2. All three members mentioned in John 15:26.
      3. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit present at the Lord's baptism. Mt. 3:16,17.
      4. All three members are mentioned in connection with the baptism of a believer today. Mt. 28:19.
   B. He has attributes that are divine.
      1. Omnipresence. Psa. 139:7-10.
      2. Omnipotent. Micah 3:8.
      3. Omniscience. 1 Cor. 2:10,11
      4. Eternal. Heb. 9:14.
   C. His work manifest divinity.
      1. His work in the material creation. Gen. 1:1,2; Job 26:13; 33:4.
      2. He is the source of the miraculous. Mt. 12:28.
      3. His work in regeneration. Jn. 3:5.
      4. H is owrk in the resurrection. Rom. 8:11.

CONCLUSION:

1. All evidence proves the Holy Spirit is a person, a divine person.

2. Since the Holy Spirit is a person then we would expect to find him active in the ways of a person.

THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS CHRISTIANS

Rom. 8:26 #3

INTRODUCTION:

1. Definitions of help and helper.
   a. Help (n) (1) Antilepsis) - "To take, lay hold of, so as to support."
      (2) "It is mentioned in 1 Cor 12:28, as one of the ministrations in the local church by way of rendering assistance..."
      (3) Epipkouria - strictly denotes such aid as is rendered by an...ally, an auxiliary." (Vine)
   b. Help (verb) - (1) "To assist."
      (2) "Signifies to take hold with at the side for assistance...hence, to take a share in, help in bearing, to help in general." (Rom. 8:26) (Vine)
   c. "An act or instance of giving aid or support." (Webster).
2. God is pictured as help to his people.
   a. Israel was called a "happy people," because the Lord "the shield of thy help." (Deut. 33:29) Psa. 115:9,10; Psa. 121:2.
   b. We can go to the throne of grace for help. Heb. 4:16.
3. We all need help in living the Christian life and the Holy Spirit is a helper.
4. Let's consider some ways in which this is done.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT THAT WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD. Rom. 8:14-17.
   A. Give the background to this statement. Rom. 8:1-15.
   B. Notice that Paul is not telling us how to become children of God, but how to continue such. Although this is true it involves:
      1. The question of how one becomes a child of God in the first place.
      2. And the assurance that he is a child of God now.
   C. Some ways the Spirit does not bear witness:
      1. By a still, small voice. It is not said in this passage or any other.
         a. One claims that such a voice tells him he is a child of God.
         b. Another is told likewise but each told differently.
      2. By our feelings, our emotions, our impulses. Feelings differ, even in an individual.
      3. Not by a miraculous, direct revelation.
   D. The H oly Spirit witnesses through His word.
      1. The apostles spoke by the direction of the Spirit in revealing the mind of God to man. 1 Cor. 2:6-13.
      2. The prophets spoke by the Spirit.
         a. Israel sinned, but had been promised that if she returned she would be blessed. Neh. 1:8,9.
         b. How? "...and testifiedst against them by they spirit through thy prophets." Neh. 9:30.
         c. Peter said the Holy Spirit bore testimony through the prophets. 1 Pet. 1:10-12.
      3. The Holy Spirit spoke to the seven churches of Asia through the written word. Rev. 1:11; 2:1.
      4. The writer of Hebrews calls the written words of the Spirit the witness of the Spirit on that subject. Jer. 31:33,34; Heb. 10:15.
   E. The Holy Spirit testifies what is essential in becoming a child of God & living the Christian life.

1. The Holy Spirit	1. Man's Spirit bears testimony
a. Believe - Rom. 5:1	a. Believed
b. Repent - Rom. 2:4	b. Repented
c. Confess - Rom. 10:10	c. Confessed
d. Be Baptized - Rom. 6:3,4,17,18.	d. Baptized

THE TWO WITNESSES AGREE - ONE IS A CHILD OF GOD

2. The Holy Spirit	2. Man's Spirit
a. Yield bodies to righteousness Rom. 6:11-13,16.	a. Doing this
b. Walk after Spirit not flesh. Rom. 8:4.	b. Doing this
c. Bringing forth fruit. Gal. 5:22,23	c. Doing this

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US IN OUR PRAYERS. Rom. 8:26,27.

A. We do not need to know the answer to every question that might be raised about Paul's statement to know that the Holy Spirit does help us.

B. We do not have to know exactly how the Spirit does it in order by faith to know that the Spirit does it.

C. We need help in our prayers because:

1. "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." We often ask wrongly:
   a. Moses asked God to let him go into Canaan but the Lord said, "Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter." Deut. 3:23-26.
   b. Paul asked the Lord to take away his thorn but the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for thee..." 2 Cor. 12:9.
   c. We often ask for stones instead of bread. Mt. 7:8-11.
2. We, so often, cannot express ourselves due to afflictions, anxiety, etc.
   a. Hezekiah said about talking to God "Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter..." Psa. 38:14.
   b. David said, "I am so troubled that I cannot speak."Psa. 77:4.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS CHANGE US INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST. 2 Cor. 3:18.

A. We behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord. v 18 a The glass is the New Covenant which reveals:

1. Christ as Prophet (Heb. 1:1,2) priest (Heb. 4:14) and king.(Acts 2:36).
2. His power, majesty and authority.
3. Christ our example to follow. 1 Peter 2:21-23.

B. Are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

1. The Bible plainly teaches a change or transformation. Rom. 12:1,2.
2. We become more like him every day and one day will be completely like him. Phil. 3:20,21; 1 Jn. 3:2.

C. Even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

1. Paul has been discussing the covenant of the spirit in contrast to the covenant of the letter.
2. The Spirit's revelation of Jesus and our study of such brings about the change.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Holy Spirit is very active in the life of a Christian.
2. A proper appreciation of the power and work of the Holy Spirit becomes a great source of strength.
3. Thus we rest in the assurance that the Holy Spirit is our help - he does put his shoulder underneath and help us bear the load.

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Rom. 8:11---- #2

Introduction.

1. A number of years ago Bro. N.B. Hardeman, in a debate with Ben M. Bogard one of the Baptist Church's most effective debators, denied the direct and immediate influence of the Spirit "in addition to the written or spoken word."
2. Through the years gospel preachers have successfully denied in debate that the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the sinner in conversion, separate and apart from the word of God.
3. But today some are claiming to receive direct impressions from the Holy Spirit in their lives.
   a. Bro. Guy Woods tells about the brother on the West Coast making the same arguments the Holiness have made for years.
   b. Some claim to be able to speak in tongues.
   C. Another reported that he was preaching on a certain street corner with little success when the Holy Spirit instructed him to go to another corner where he enjoyed great success.
4. As we begin this study let some things be clearly understood:
   a. The question is not, Does the Holy Spirit dwell in Christians, but how does the Holy Spirit dwell in Christians?
   b. Second, how the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians should never be made a test of fellowship as long as we believe that one obeying the gospel from the heart receives the Holy Spirit.
   c. Third, the Holy Spirit does dwell in Christians whether we ever understand how or not. I accept the fact that my spirit dwells in my body although I do not claim to fully understand how.
5. Let's consider:

Dis.

I. THE SCRIPTURES AFFIRM THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES DWELL IN CHRISTIANS.

A. Acts 2:38
B. Acts 5:32
C. Rom. 8:9-11
D. 1 Cor. 3:16
E. 1 Cor. 6:19
F. Eph. 1:13; 4:30
G. 1 Thess. 4:8
H. Jude 19

I. To deny then that the Holy Spirit does dwell in Christians would be to deny plain passages of scripture.

II. SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT THE SPIRIT'S INDWELLING.

A. God dwells in Christians. 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Jn. 4:12,15. No person, so far as I know, contends there is a literal, personal, actual, bodily indwelling of God.
B. Christ dwells in Christians. Eph. 3:14-17.
   1. This verse affirms that Christ dwells in "our hearts by faith."
   2. But how does faith come? Rom. 10:17.
   3. Thus by hearing the word of truth, we are strengthened with power "through the Spirit" (who gave the word) and Christ "dwells in our hearts through faith."
C. The Holy Spirit dwells in Christians and there are certain passages that indicate how.
   1. Paul asked the Galatians "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. 3:2.
      a. This statement is rhetorical, put in this form for emphasis. It's meaning is "You did not receive the spirit by the works of the law, you did receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith."
      b. "By hearing the faith" is, literally, by the message of faith (Margin, American Standard Translation).
      c. Thus through the Christian system the Spirit came to the Galatians.
   2. Two Parallel passages:
      a. Eph. 5:18,19----Notice "be filled with the Spirit."
      b. Col. 3:16-------Notice "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom."

D. If the Holy Spirt dwells in Christian separate and apart from the word then what could he do for Christians that he does not do through his sword. Eph. 6:17.

1. He might give us faith. He does it through the word. Rom. 10:17.
2. He might enable us to enjoy the new birth. He does it through the word. 1 Pet. 1:23.
3. He might give us light. He does it through the word. Psa. 119:130.
4. He might give us wisdom. He does it through the word. 2 Tim. 3:14,15; Psa. 19:7.
5. He might convert us. He does it though the word. Psa. 19:7.
6. He might open our eyes. He does it through the word. Psa. 19:8.
7. He might give us understanding. He does it through the word. Psa. 119:104.
8. He might quicken us. He does it through the word. Psa. 119:50.
9. He might save us. He does it through the word. Jas. 1:21.
10. He might sanctify us. He does it through the word. Jn. 17:17.
11. He might purify us. He does it through the word. 1 Pet. 1:22.
12. He might cleanse us. He does it through the word. Jn. 15:3.
13. He might make us free from sin. Does it through the word. Rom. 6:17,18.
14. He might impart unto us a divine nature. Does it through the word. 2 Pet. 1:4.
15. He might fit us for glory. Does it through the word. Acts 20:32.
16. He might strengthen us. Does it through the word. Psa. 119:28.

E. To Affirm that the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians only through means of divine truth does not imply several things:

1. It does not imply that the Spirit and the word are the same. Eph. 6:17.
2. It does not imply that prayer is ineffectual.
3. It does not imply that providence is nullified.
4. It does not imply that the Holy Spirit is limited to the word in every activity. (There may be a 1,000 ways in which he acts that are not know because God has not revealed them.)
5. It does not imply a denial of the word of the Holy Spirit.

III. THE FACT THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES DWELL IN US IS A POWERFUL INCENTIVE TO HOLY LIVING.

A. Since our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and we are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in body and spirit. 1 Cor. 6:13-20.

B. The same obligation of using our body members for purposes of righteousness is stressed by Paul to the Romans. Rom. 6:1-13; 12:1.

C. The Bible emphasizes again and again the importance of keeping our bodies as fit as possible for the Master's use.

1. 1 Tim. 4:7.
2. 2 Tim. 2:19-21.

Conclusion.

1. One of the most powerful incentives to Christian living is a realization of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
2. I may never be able to fully understand in every detail just how he dwells in me, but I believe it, and will be moved to act accordingly.

DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT WORK MIRACLES TODAY, No. 1

Acts 2:22; 4:16; I Cor. 12:10

INTRODUCTION:

1. Read or quote the texts.

2. Miracles were very much a part of the Old and New Testaments.

   a. There are 54 miracles recorded in the Old Testament.

   b. There are 60 miracles recorded in the New Testament.

      (1) 34 performed by our Lord.

      (2) 26 performed by angels, the apostles and certain disciples.

3. Miracles are the very heart of Christianity.

   a. ". . .with the truth of miracles the entire citadel of Christianity stand or falls. For it's beginning is a miracle, it's author is a miracle; it's progress depends upon miracles. . . If the principle of miracles be set aside, then all the heights of Christianity will be leveled with one stroke, and naught will remain but a heap of ruins. If we banish the supernatural from the Bible, there is nothing left us but the covers." (Christlief, Modern Doutb and Christian Belief, p. 286)

   b. "A Christianity without the confirmation of miracles, the tokens of God's approval, is one without a spinal column." (Stanley Sayers, "For This Cause," p. 128)

4. The subject of our discussion is a very timely one because "there are countless numbers of people in the world today, representing many religious organizations, who claim to believe that miracles are currently being performed by the power of God." (James Tolle, "Have Miracles Ceased?", Tract, p. 3)

5. In this study let's consider:

DISCUSSION:

I. SOME THINGS THAT ARE NOT A QUESTION IN THIS ISSUE.

   A. It is not a question of whether or not they were performed yesterday.

      1. Christ and his apostles did perform miracles. Acts 4:10, 16

      2. It is not what they did, but where is the passage that says they are for today?

   B. It is not a question of power.

      1. God has power enough to do anything He chooses, but it is not what God can do but what does God do?

      2. God can make peas grow on a rosebush, but His law is that they grow on a pea vine.

      3. It is not what God can do, but what is His law concerning that particular thing?