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The Problem of the Work.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

BY

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"Another Mile," etc.



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DEDICATED TO
My Friends in the Ministry,
AT HOME AND ABROAD, TO WHOM I OWE AN
INEXPRESSIBLE DEBT OF GRATITUDE.

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FOREWORD.

This book is not a message for ministers only.

I would be glad if many people would read it, not only that they may understand the minister's position the better, but that they may be made to realize how very easy it is to help or to hinder him in his work.

My plea is for the best and highest type of evangelism.

I am not writing with any disposition to criticise other workers whose methods may differ from my own.

I am glad for all who work, and I rejoice with all whose ministry is honored and blessed of God.

I think the time is too serious, the difficulties confronting us too many, and the burdens we bear too heavy to permit the wasting in criticism of energy

which might be used in blessing and helping humanity.

I am glad there are workers of many sorts, if by all means we may help to establish the Kingdom.

I commit myself, however, only to that evangelism which strengthens the Church, cheers the minister, and makes plain the way to the Cross for the sinner.

Any method of evangelistic work, if used for too long a time, unconsciously to the man who uses it, draws hindrances to itself, and its strength not infrequently becomes its weakness.

I am persuaded that oftentimes it is necessary to forget the methods of men and go back to the first principles, which are Pentecostal.

Machinery becomes too complicated, methods too mechanical, and naturally the results accomplished are too superficial and far from satisfactory.

I look for no better condition of affairs in the Church until by the way of prayer and in the spirit of consecration we ap-

proach the throne of Grace and pray without ceasing.

We have too glibly criticised the Church in the past and we are to-day reaping the harvest.

We have too many times censured the ministry, and to-day we are seeing the effects of our criticism.

We have too many times failed to emphasize righteousness in living, in our plea to men to turn to God, and we are facing the consequences of our past failure.

We need a genuine Spiritual awakening. I am persuaded that we cannot organize it into existence, nor bring it to pass by using questionable methods. But God waits to give us what we so sorely need, and with hosts of others, I long for the dawning of His own day.

J. WILBUR CHAPMAN.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE, - - -	1
II. WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? - - -	15
III. A FAITHFUL WARNING, - - -	35
IV. THE NEXT AWAKENING, - - -	53
V. APPROVED METHODS, - - -	70
VI. THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON, - - -	87
VII. THE AFTER MEETING, - - -	99
VIII. AN ORGANIZED CHURCH, - - -	112
IX. THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH, - - -	127
X. CHURCH OFFICERS, - - -	141
XI. ORGANIZING THE MEN, - - -	151
XII. A SPECIAL DAY, - - -	164
XIII. UNION SERVICES, - - -	177
XIV. THE NEXT DAY AFTER, - - -	190
XV. THE EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL, -	202
XVI. THE PREACHER A PROPHET, - - -	214
XVII. THE WANING PULPIT, - - -	224
XVIII. WHY SOME FAIL, - - -	236

CHAPTER I

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

THE problem of life must be considered before we give very much attention to the question of work. If one has wrong views of life, the longer he lives the more is his responsibility increased. It is by no means necessary that we should live; it is quite essential that we should be in this world as God would have us. There is a natural love of life which is easily understood. This has always been true. As far back as in the days of Job we read, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." But from the first revelation that God made to man down to the last words recorded in His Word, He has made it plain that "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

death." And He has also declared that "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Not long ago a good illustration of this natural love of life was found in the daily press, in the story of the wreck of the ship "Poizat," which went down off Malebon, Philippine Islands. One of the sailors, when he saw that the vessel was doomed, jumped clear of the wreck. After an hour's swimming he found a hatch cover on which he rested. Then he started towards San Nicholas, pushing the hatch cover ahead of him. He was nearly successful and was just reaching shallow water when the tide carried him out to sea again.

As night came the wind increased and the waves tossed him and his hatch cover back and forth until he thought it would be impossible for him to hold his support, but towards midnight he found that he was being washed toward the shore. Just as his hope was strong

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

the tide and wind carried him to sea again. He struggled against them, but was swept out.

Something brushed against his leg. He thought it was a shark and screamed in fear. It did not touch him again or he should have gone mad. The water was cold, the night dark, and the rain beat down upon him. He heard a cry in the darkness and pushed his hatch over in the direction from which the sound came. Towards morning he found a Filipino boy, another survivor of the wreck, clinging to an oil box. They drifted together.

When daylight came they could see boats, and they shouted until they were exhausted, but they could not make themselves heard or seen. They were tortured by thirst. Salt water got into their mouths. They drifted all day. Night came again, and shortly after they saw the lights of a breakwater and with new hope noted that they grew larger and more distinct. They were being

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

washed in again. The boy was taken with cramps, lost his hold on the oil box, and went down. The man was washed towards the middle of the bay, and drifted during the night.

At dawn he was almost ready to give up, but the wind and waves headed him for the east shore, and he took heart. Then he saw boats, and used his last strength in trying to reach them. The boatmen saw him, were able to get him in time, and picked him out of the water. There was not much of the man left, and he was shrieking for water as he collapsed in the boat.

He had been forty-eight hours on a rough sea in a bad storm, with a hatch cover for support. He had been maddened by the fear of sharks and by the lost chances of rescue.

As he lay on a pallet, after he found himself able to talk again, his rescuers spoke of his wonderful endurance. He said, of course, he had done the best he could. He wanted to live.

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

There will never be a right conception of life until we have in mind what is taught in God's Word with reference to it. There must be a right knowledge of God, which is possible only when we are in right relations with Jesus Christ. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without Him as the Way there is nothing but wandering; without Him as the Truth there is nothing but error; without Him as the Life there is nothing but death.

A friend of mine made his way into the studio of a German artist. This artist placed in his hands what appeared to be a piece of parchment, and said to my friend, "What do you think this is?" Glancing at it casually, he said, "I should think it might be a piece of parchment on which you had cleaned your brushes." With a smile the artist said, "Hold this glass in your hand and I will take what you say is a piece of parchment a little bit away from you so that the light will strike it properly, and when I

[THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

tell you to look, then tell me what you see." My friend gazed steadily through the glass, and when he heard the artist say, "Now look," he said the transformation was remarkable. Instead of a meaningless piece of parchment he beheld a wonderful landscape. He saw the shoulder of a mountain; he detected the play of a little mountain stream; he saw trees so filled with life that he could almost imagine that the branches were being swayed by the wind. It was the glass and the light which made all the difference.

The Son of God is like the glass, the Spirit of God like the light, and as we study Christ in humility and submit our lives to Him completely, by the aid of the Spirit of God we will come to know Him, and as we know Him our conception of Life will be much enlarged. It is possible to know God in Christ if we will fulfill certain conditions. We must recognize the existence of sin. Minimize sin and the eyes will be blinded,

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

and the way to God be difficult to find. We must lay aside prejudice and seek Him with an open mind. A prejudiced study of God will end in confusion and increasing doubt and despair, while with prejudice laid aside the vision will be quickly cleared. We must lay aside our preconceived notions of what it means to know God, and we must accept Christ by faith. The things of God are spiritually discerned, first, and not intellectually. When once we know Him He presents a boundless field for mental exploration, but it is when we are born of the Spirit of God that we come to appreciate Him. Having accepted Christ by faith, we must follow His teachings as they are plainly indicated in the New Testament. With these suggestions kept in mind and practiced, the way to Him can but be cleared up, and life will come to be to us what God meant it should be.

There must also be a knowledge of God's Word as it reveals Jesus Christ

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

to us. If we are disposed to give Him lack of consideration, the Bible will be practically a sealed Book. He is the key, and with Him alone can the best storehouse of the Bible's treasure be opened to us. Question His Deity; unduly exhalt His humanity; make His message to be no more worthy of consideration than the message of other men, great and true, who have lived since His time, and the Bible will lose its power. If, therefore, we would make the most of life we must lay hold upon every influence that would strengthen the character, give power to the will to determine to do that which is right, give strength to our purpose to resist evil, and there is nothing that can so effectively contribute to us along these lines as the right knowledge of the Word of God. Many men doubt the Bible because they do not study it. Others minimize its influence because they do not live it, and still others fail of attain-

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

ing a strong position in life because they do not love it.

A daily familiarity with one verse of Scripture, or the mastering of a single incident recorded in the Scriptures, will profoundly influence one's thinking and living. Putting into practice the principles of Jesus as they are taught in the Scriptures will clear up many a doubt and make the way of duty plain. The Bible reveals its sweetness and power to all who will approach it with a reverent spirit and to all who seek to know its truth that they may consistently and constantly live it.

There must also be a yielding of oneself to God in full surrender. It is when God has all there is of us that He can use us in some special way. There are many who do not know the exact date of their conversion. They may know the time of their definite surrender. In consecration we are supposed to yield ourselves without reserve to God, and,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

yielding ourselves to Him, we must take our hands off from the gift we have placed on the altar; then what we give He receives, what He receives He uses, what He uses He fills with power, and what He fills with power, if it be a yielded life, is not only pleasing to Him, but contributes to His glory.

When the life is right, then we are ready to consider the problems which to-day face us on every side. There is the problem of the city. "The people of the United States are steadily deserting the country and the farm for the turmoil and delights of the city and town. According to statistics made public by the Census Bureau, during the last ten years the percentage of people living in cities, or other incorporated places of more than 2,500 inhabitants, increased from 40.5 to 46.3 of the total.

"Twenty years ago only 36.1 per cent of the total population lived in such incorporated places. In classifying the 1910 census returns the bureau calls

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

that portion of the population in incorporated cities or towns of 2,500 or more inhabitants urban and the remainder rural.

“On this basis, in 1910, 42,623,383, or 46.3 per cent of the total, lived in urban territory, and 49,348,883, or 53.7 per cent, in rural territory.”

There is the problem of the great underworld. Hundreds of thousands of people to-day are living, in our so-called Christian land, in darkness and despair. We have no right to show great zeal in the winning of the heathen to Christ, and think our duty done, and allow the crushed and broken-hearted people at our door to drift helplessly out into eternity because we give them no help. It is not enough that we should establish charities and generously support them. The time has come when we must consider the causes which contribute to such a condition of affairs and seek to eliminate those causes. We are not as Jesus would have us be if we have shut our eyes

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

to the conditions about us and stopped our ears to the cries of the multitudes on every side.

There is the problem of the great social and economic systems of the day. The armies of underpaid men and oppressed women, the throngs of little children engaged in work which only matured men and women should do, the crowds of fallen women and lost men—all these are moving past us, a pathetic spectacle, and a challenge to our sincere faith in Jesus Christ. We have no right, as Christians, to sit with folded hands singing songs and praying prayers without seeking to know what it is that has made such a condition of affairs possible, and without rebuking, at any cost, the men or the systems which permit them to flourish. The time has come when we can not be sincere, devoted followers of Jesus and ignore the awful conditions apparent on every hand.

“There is the problem of the youth of the day. We lead hundreds of thousands

THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

of children to Christ and admit them to the membership of the Church, and statistics prove that we allow many of them to drift away from the Church, their last condition being worst than the first. Go through the slums of the cities, visit our penal institutions, and you will find in these places vast companies of the lost sheep of our own households. It may be that we have not carefully studied the child nature, that we have oppressed too much and not encouraged enough along certain lines. It may be that we have failed to make the Church and the Sunday school sufficiently attractive; it may be that we have not suggested avenues of usefulness for busy minds and active bodies; or it may be that we have failed to show with sufficient plainness the spirit of Jesus. Whatever may be the reason, this one thing we know, that in what is known as the "teen age," great crowds of young people are permitted to wander away from Christ and the Church, and that

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

when we seek to turn them back again to Him the task is well-nigh impossible.”

There is also the problem of the Church herself. That the Church is decreasing in attendance in many quarters is plainly apparent; that she has lost in spiritual power can not be gainsaid. However, this is not the time for criticism of the Church. This is a day when every one ought to do his best, and seek to be most like the Master. This may be, and doubtless is, a day of trial through which we are passing; but the Church will come to her own one day—a better time will soon be dawning. We need only to be concerned about such questions as these: Is my loyalty to Christ unquestioned? Is my confidence in His Word unshaken? Am I doing my best for humanity? If I should stand to-morrow in the presence of the Judge of all the earth, would I be satisfied with the record I have made, and would He?

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

WHEN Job was answering the statements of his so-called comforters, he makes a strong defense of his manner of living, and ends it by saying, "Here is my signature."

To be an out-and-out Christian counts for much. A halting, hesitating, half-hearted way of living for Christ is naturally subject to criticism, and is the cause, not only of repeated failure of the one thus living, but of an increase of prejudice on the part of those who are only too glad to find some excuse for turning from Christ and the Church.

What does your life mean? What do your friends say concerning you when you are not present? Have you put down your name as standing for higher and better living? What does your sig-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

nature stand for? A signature should mean everything to us. It ought to stand for consistency and consecration. It should represent all that is good and great. Signatures were most effective in the times of the Scottish Covenanters, and the signing of names in those days meant everything. The crisis in the history of the Covenanters came when Charles the First ascended the throne. From all parts of Scotland men hurried into Edinburgh; because they lacked a leader there was the greatest confusion among them; but when the Earl of South-erland put his name down to the covenant then men crowded after him to do the same. They opened their veins and signed their names with their life's blood. They gave up their estates and became wanderers. They lived in damp caves and treacherous bogs. They died upon the scaffold. They were literally torn to pieces. Women suffered nameless indignities and humiliations all because they had signed the covenant. When

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

Job was in the midst of despair, when trials came like great waves rolling in over him, when sorrow had almost broken his heart, his so-called comforters came to him. They told him he was suffering because of the evil that was in him, that God was requiting him according to his iniquities. He declares that he is innocent, and in the plea that he makes for himself he is at his best.

He said: "If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit, let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity. If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands, then let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out. If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate; then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone."

He reaches his climax when, as recorded in the thirty-fifth verse, R. V., he cries: "O that I had one to hear me. Lo, here is my signature, let the Almighty answer me." It is as if he had said these statements—I will stand by through time and eternity; with them I will confront God, and in order that He may know that these are the things for which I stand I will add my signature." Thus it is that one's signature means much. There are scales so delicately balanced that if you should place pieces of paper of the same weight on both sides the balance would still be maintained; then, if you should write your name upon one of the pieces of paper, the scales would drop on the side

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

of the signature. Thus signing your name, which should be the representation of what you are and what you do, directs the current of your life. Put your name down so that all may see it. It is not necessary to put it down for God's information. He knows all that we are and understands why we act as we do. But let the world know that your best will go with the signing. When a life is given up to him power is the result. Some one has said:

“Lord Tennyson could take a penny piece of paper, write his name on it, and make it worth \$65,000. Mr. Rockefeller can write a few lines on a sheet of paper and make it worth \$10,000,000. The United States Government can take an ounce and a quarter of gold, and stamp upon it an eagle, and make it worth \$20. A mechanic can take a piece of material worth \$5, and make it into watch springs worth \$1,000.” But beyond all of these, you may put down your signature indicating an absolute

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

surrender to God, a turning from that which is questionable; a resolve to live for others; an unwavering decision to allow Christ to have His way in you because you have accepted Him as your Savior and counted Him as your Lord. A signature standing thus will forever mean victorious living. What we write is lasting. It will one day confront us at the judgment-seat of Christ. When Pilate had written over the Cross, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," and the angry multitude urged him to change the title, he significantly said, "What I have written I have written," and this expression presents to us the thought that what we write stands for or against us so long as time shall last, and faces us in the beyond. This is the day when only consistent, consecrated living counts for righteousness, when unselfish endeavor in behalf of others means real blessing, and so to all that is good and great, high and holy, let us put down our signatures. There are certain great posi-

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

tions which demand the signature; the first of which is salvation. It is an old-fashioned word, but has never yet been improved upon. It is the first step into the life that counts. The era of social service is upon us, and it is well. The day has dawned when men are saying, "Live for self you live in vain; live for others you must live again."

But it is well also to remember that Jesus distinctly said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." So regeneration must come first, and after that holy living.

In us, as followers of Jesus, must be exemplified all that the apostles of social service demand and all that Christian sociologists require. To be saved does not simply mean to be saved for eternity, but, first of all, for time. To be a Christian does not mean just to pass into heaven when life's journey is over, but it means to crowd heaven into the life we live here and now. Sin has weakened man's will, but the Savior is presented

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

that this same will may be energized and strengthened, and He makes possible, in the way of victory, that which before His coming was quite impossible. When one has accepted Jesus Christ as a personal Savior sins are forgiven, and when God forgives He forgets. He remembers against us our transgressions no more forever. The Savior comes in to abide with us, not only setting before us an ideal, but giving us strength to rise to the ideal. Life becomes transfigured because we toil and labor in the light of His countenance and are aided by His indwelling. Death is triumphant, for He is with us as He said He would be; journeying with us through life, He goes with us down to the end. Resurrection is sure. No grave can hold us. His Word abides forever, and when He appears to claim us the strongest tomb will be unlocked, the heaviest stone be rolled away, and the grave of the humblest follower of Jesus will witness but the repetition of the scene of His own triumph

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

over death and the grave. Eternity will be glorious. It will not be simply the singing of songs and the playing of harps, but it will be doing His will in perfection, and in ages to come He will show forth in and through us His marvelous kindness and His wondrous grace. Every conversion is a miracle, and, as a rule, comes after a struggle.

Standing one day before a store window, I saw a little card on which was printed the following: "I can't. I wish I could. I believe I can. I know I can. I will." And this is the story of the new birth of most of us who come to Christ to receive the gift of salvation. There is first of all despair because we feel we can not come, then the hope is born in us that possibly some day we may. Then we reach the conviction that after all it is going to be possible. Finally we come to believe that the day is not far distant when we may be able to accept God's gift, and at last, sometimes suddenly, under the strangest circum-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

stances and conditions, we find ourselves saying, "I will." And the tears begin to flow and our hearts to burn within us. It is thus that many come to Christ. It is also true that some have no such struggle. They come quietly into the Kingdom of God, much as a June day is born, and some are in the Kingdom who do not know the day or the hour when they passed over the line, just as when we sailed the Pacific Ocean we did not know when we crossed the equator; but we did cross it, and sailed on our way around the world.

"You ask me when I gave my heart to Christ,
I can not tell,
The day or just the hour I do not now remember well.
It must have been when I was all alone,
The light of His forgiving spirit shone,
Into my heart so clouded o'er with sin;
I think, I think that it was then I let Him in.
I do not know, I can not tell you when,
I only know He is so dear since then."

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

But it is not a selfish salvation for which we plead; just to keep out of hell and pass into heaven. It is far more than that. It is the spirit of Jesus manifesting itself in all that we do—lifting burdens, aiding the tempted, giving sympathy to the sorrowing, and helping to make earth like heaven.

President Hyde describes being a Christian thus—"In the home it is kindness; in business it is honesty; in society it is courtesy; in work it is thoroughness; in play it is fairness; toward the fortunate it is congratulation; toward the unfortunate it is pity; toward wickedness it is resistance; toward the weak it is help; toward the strong it is trust; toward the penitent it is forgiveness; toward God it is reverence and love." But such a life starts with the new birth. Ye must be born again. Then like the river described in Ezekiel, which at first only reached to the ankles, then to the knees, then to the loins, and afterwards became a river to swim in, and which,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

as it flowed forth, gave life to all that it touched. So do we grow into all that makes life beautiful; but we must start well, so let the name be put down to salvation. Then consider very carefully, as the second step, the subject of *sacrifice*. A selfish life never counts for good, and it is not Christian, whatever it may be called. Jesus never deceived His followers. "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath," He said, "can not be My disciple." He made it plain to them that His was a life of self-denial. He told them that the foxes had holes and the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay His head. But even because of this Jesus was glad and counted it all joy to endure hardships, and suffer humiliation, if only He might make the world better and lift individuals nearer God. A life of sacrifice always means blessing to others.

When Florence Nightingale entered the eighty-ninth year of her illustrious life the Lord Mayor of London granted

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

her the key of the city, and the King and Queen sent her congratulations. Her name was inseparably connected with the Crimean War. In 1824, 25,000 men sailed for Crimea. The following spring 13,000 men were sick in the hospitals. England was stirred through and through; more than a million pounds were contributed to aid the suffering. The medical staff was multiplied until there was a doctor for every one hundred soldiers. One day, Sir Sydney Herbert, representing the war department, said: "This is a woman's work, not a man's. There is only one woman who can do it well, and she is Florence Nightingale, and so she went forth to labor and love. Two great tributes were paid to her spirit of sacrifice. One was when the soldiers in the hospital wards would turn their faces to kiss her shadow when it crossed their pillows; and the other occurred at the dinner given to the officers of the army and navy on their return from the Crimea. Lord Stratford suggested that

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

every one should write on a piece of paper the name of the person who, in the Crimean War, had engraved themselves most indelibly in the history of the British people, and when the papers were examined, every one had written the name of Florence Nightingale.

Such a spirit of sacrifice is due Him in whose name we live and love and labor. He gave up everything for us. The least that we can do is to yield everything for Him. In the days of the Civil War a young man was drafted into service. He had just been married. His home was beautiful. His surroundings suggested every luxury that money could buy; his young wife, afraid to stay alone, asked that he might secure a substitute for the service, which he did. For him another entered the war and fought to death. With the end of the war came reverses in fortune; but joy was still in the home of the man who had been drafted and did not go to war.

Little children came to gladden the

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

hearts of father and mother; then troubles came. More and more they felt the pinch of poverty, until, at last, the mother died. Poorer than ever, the father had a great desire to see the grave of the one who had died in his stead; so gathering his few household effects together, he sold them, and with the proceeds started to find the grave. When the small amount of money was exhausted, the rest of the journey was taken on foot. The children were sometimes too weary to walk, and then he would allure them on by tossing a ball ahead and letting them run after it. At last they reached the grave, and, standing by it, he rehearsed to his children the story of his early life, and then said: "Children, this is the grave of the man who died for me; and kneeling down beside that grave they pledged themselves to better living and more loyal service to their country. In the presence of the Savior who lived, suffered, and died for us we too should pledge

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

our best, and determine that in all things we will fitly represent Him. To make the covenant more binding we should add our signature, and in signing the name let the will go with it in unconditional and complete surrender.

It is also necessary that we should determine upon a life of service. To drift idly with the current of life in these days when the need is so great is all but criminal.

A friend of mine, passing a building in process of construction, saw three men attempting to lift great timber. Two of them were very tall, and they stood each at the end of the piece of timber. The man in the center was very short, but while the other men had the timber upon their shoulders he could just barely reach it with his uplifted hands, and as the two went along bending beneath the weight that was upon them, the man in the center walked with jaunty step, whistling a tune and keeping time with his fingers upon the piece of timber, of

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

which he was not lifting a pound. Thus, many have the appearance of service in this day of opportunity; but it is only an appearance, while others struggle and strain and do their best. This is the day when the best that is in us should go out to those in need. Only the unselfish life is beautiful, and he who is always busy in attempting to make others better knows what it is to live a Christian life. Instead of trifling along life's journey I would prefer to be like John Wesley, who preached with a passion, who pleaded with men by day and by night to turn from sin, who perhaps shortened his years, long as his life was, because of his unceasing toil. Or I had rather be like John Knox, who, when he reached middle life, realized that there was more before him to do than he had ever imagined, and so cried out with an agony for his beloved Scotland, preached in season and out of season, and lived a life of power and victory, which is still felt in Scotland. Or I would prefer to be like Dr.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Duff, the great missionary who was making his appeal in behalf of the field so dear to him, as he stood before the General Assembly of the Church in Scotland, and during his impassioned address fainted. They carried him into an outer room, and when he came to himself he said, "Where am I?" As they bent over him they said, "Dr. Duff, you have fainted." He said, "Take me back and let me go on with my plea." And they said, "If we do you will die." And he replied, "If I do not I shall die." Or I had rather be like Dwight L. Moody, who, when he must have known that death was approaching, determined that he would yet turn another city, and left his home and friends to stand before a great assembly in a Western city, to plead with men to turn to God, as they say he never had pleaded before. Or I had rather be like William Booth, who may be coming almost to the end of his notable career, who is counted one of the greatest, if not the greatest, man of his generation

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE

in Christian service. He lives for others, and counts it a joy so to do. The spirit of all of these men is perfectly illustrated in the words that follow :

Lord, help me live from day to day,
In such a self-forgetful way,
That even when I kneel to pray,
My prayer shall be for—OTHERS.

Help me in all the work I do,
To ever be sincere and true,
And know that all I 'd do for you,
Must needs be done for—OTHERS.

Let "Self" be crucified and slain,
And buried deep; and all in vain,
May efforts be to rise again,
While thinking still of—OTHERS.

Therefore to the life of untiring service, devoted service, helpful service, let us put down our signatures and make our lives count for Christ, for the Church, and for suffering humanity on every side of us.

This is a day of marvelous opportunity. The fields are white unto the harvest, the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

demand for reapers is greater than ever before. With our lives right in His sight, with our wills surrendered wholly to Him, with a determination to make our lives count for Him in our homes, in society, in the Church, and the world, and with a disposition to follow the leadership of those who are placed in authority over us, unprecedented victories may be gained, and a countless host may be turned to Christ, who will ever find Him a personal Savior and a never failing Friend.

CHAPTER III

A FAITHFUL WARNING

WHEN the life is right with God, and as Christians we are in right relations with our fellow-men, we have an unanswerable argument in favor of all the claims we make for Christ and His power. Such a life God delights to use in winning others to Christ. This is a day when the subject of personal work is very much discussed. The methods of successful soul-winners are eagerly sought after.

God's Word has much to declare concerning this form of service. A very striking suggestion as regards faithfulness is spoken by the Prophet Ezekiel, in the thirty-third chapter and the ninth verse, where he says: "If thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

The Old Testament is very wonderful. The historicity of it is well established. I like to think that Abraham lived; that he walked and talked with God; that Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into heaven; and that when David had a revelation of God's protecting care he wrote such a message of comfort as "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." The Old Testament is a Book of thrilling illustrations. None is more suggestive than this one that centers in the text above quoted. A city is in danger. The enemy seems to be approaching. The watchman stands upon the walls; he has received instructions concerning his duty; he has to look away into the distance, to note the approach of the enemy, and seeing the men coming up against the fortifications, must sound the trumpet as a note of warning. If he is faithful, and the people hear and do not heed, he has relieved himself of responsibility, and the blood of the people rests upon their own heads. But if his eyes should

A FAITHFUL WARNING

be heavy, his spirit indifferent, and he may have fallen asleep; if the city be besieged and the walls thrown down and the people taken captive, or if they should be put to death, all because the watchman did not sound the trumpet, then the Word of God distinctly states, the blood of the people will be required at the watchman's hands.

If this be true, then the position of a minister, or indeed any Christian, is a very solemn one. We must speak to the people who are in danger, and we must speak in such a way that they will be made to realize their danger, we must make it plain to them that there is not *a* way of escape, as if there were many from which to choose, but that there is *the* way of escape, and while the door of God's mercy has been swinging wide open day and night, it may close, and there is danger.

Seated one day in conversation with the Rev. F. B. Meyer, he said, "Did you ever notice in St. Paul's Epistle to the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Corinthians how the apostle says that our works shall be tested by fire at the last, and that all our works may be burned and yet we ourselves be saved so as by fire?" Said he, "I believe a minister's sermon must stand the test of fire, and I am sure that a sermon which may be artistically correct, if it is inspired by a wrong motive, can not stand this test." If this be true, it is a solemn thing to preach; but it is also true that Christians generally must face the same test. We stand like watchmen upon the walls with the people depending upon us for warning, and it is a great thing to feel that we may be faithful in this position of responsibility and trust.

This is a day when the consecrated life must reveal itself in a definite, personal interest shown in others. We shall be obliged one day to answer for our failure to speak to others about Christ, and no profession of devotion to Him will stand in the light of such failure. Our religion is either true or false. If it

A FAITHFUL WARNING

is false, then it is useless for us to follow it or present it to those about us; if it is true, then we must give the message to every one who comes within the reach of our influence. It is a sad thing for a Christian to have one in his employ who is unsaved and not speak to him about Jesus; it is exceedingly solemn to think that one calling himself a Christian may go up and down the elevator of an office building, day after day, and not once speak to the elevator boy about Jesus; it is a shameful thing for a Christian to have a man work for him as coachman, or woman as maid, and not speak to them about their need of Jesus. If our religion is false, then let us give it up; but if it is true, then let us tell the story wherever opportunity presents itself.

The Bible is either true or it is not. If it is not true, then the ordinary religious service is a farce, and the minister's message is meaningless. But if the Bible be true, and we know it is, we have a right to say, "He that believeth not,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

is condemned already." Or again to say, "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." It is also our duty to declare to every Christian, thou art thy brother's keeper, and if you have worked by the side of another man for years, and given no warning; if you have lived in the home with your children all their lives, and—no warning; if you have talked with your friend to-day, and may never see him again, and—no warning; if you preached to your congregation last Sunday, and no—warning; then if the door of opportunity is closed and your friend or neighbor has slipped away from you, and the people whom you might have influenced have passed away, then, in the sight of God, you are responsible for failure. And one day you shall be obliged to answer for this at the judgment-seat of Christ. It is a solemn thing to be a minister; but it is quite as solemn to be a Christian and in either position not be faithful.

A FAITHFUL WARNING

You must remember you are not responsible for conversion. No one has the power to convert another. So when you are called to do personal work, when you are asked to speak to your friends, you are not expected to accomplish their conversion. That is not your work. You may introduce them to Christ, and He will do the rest. There are several ways by means of which you may be able to lead people up to the boundary line. Be faithful in prayer. I knew of a woman in a city of New Jersey who had six sons. The boys were all born in a humble home in Scotland. Five of them were earnest Christians. The sixth was a profligate, and had almost broken his mother's heart. One day one of her neighbors came in to see her and sympathize with her in her sorrow. "Mrs. M.," she said, "why worry about John? Let him go. You have five boys in the Kingdom." One of these boys, who was my friend, said his Scotch mother sprang to her feet, took hold of

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

the back of the chair upon which she had been sitting, and, with tears streaming down her cheeks, said, "Let him go! I will never let him go. I gave him to God before he was born. I carried him into the kirk the first day I could walk; I put him upon the altar and took my hands off, and he is God's boy, and God will have him if He turns the world over to get him." My friend said his mother lived long enough to see John a Christian; to see him a judge of one of the highest courts in America, and an elder in the Church. Let us have faith in prayer; it is a great way to bring our friends to Christ. By means of your personal influence you may lead those in whom you are interested to think of Christ, and in answer to your earnest prayers the Holy Spirit may lead them to accept Christ as their Savior. If you have been living a sincere Christian life; if in your home you have a family altar; if you have done your very best before your children; if when you have

A FAITHFUL WARNING

failed you have asked their forgiveness, then you have a right to expect your children to turn to Christ.

The third way to lead your friends to Christ is by faithful warning. I do not understand how one can trifle and appear to be indifferent when his boy is not saved. Better than to give him an education; better than that he should have the memory that his father had a great reputation; better than to make provision for his material welfare, is to lead your boy to Christ.

The fourth way to lead people to Christ is by persuasion. One of the editors of a metropolitan paper said to me recently, "There is one thing I want to ask you to do—it is this: Insist that the people who are interested in their loved ones do not let them go." "What do you mean by that?" I said. He replied, "My wife prayed and plead for me twenty-eight years, and I tremble when I think what might have been my condition had she ceased."

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Over in England a woman had been bed-ridden for twenty-four years. Her minister came to visit her one day and said to her, "I think you could win many of the people to Christ by prayer." He gave her a little book in which to write the names of those in whom she was interested. She wrote down fifty-seven names, and they told me, in England, that all of the fifty-seven came to Christ through her persistent and faithful prayer.

As a rule, it is better for us to seek those of our own class. A policeman may more easily win a policeman; a sailor may interest a sailor; a carpenter more effectually win a carpenter. And yet, while this may be true as a principle, it is also true that you must go to the one to whom God directs you. It is well to know methods of personal work, and yet the danger is that one may think that by learning the methods of men or by studying a few rules he may become a soul-winner. The secret of power in winning souls is found in definite and

A FAITHFUL WARNING

complete yielding to God and allowing Him to speak through the life, to look through the eyes, to ring in the voice. That is the secret of all successful Christian work. It is to become possessed of the spirit of Jesus.

When I was a boy there was a story often told of an old woman who, being found guilty of the vilest of crimes, was sent to prison. They kept her almost all the time in a dark cell. They frequently bound her with chains. Her cries were terrific. One day there went from the town where I lived an aged Quaker woman. She had heard of this sinful woman's distressing condition. She secured permission from the governor to go into her cell. The governor said, "I think possibly I had better have her brought out into the light for you." With her hair disheveled, her eyes flashing fire, she was brought out of her cell. The Quaker preacher put her hand upon her shoulder and said, "My sister ——" but the woman pushed her back and said, "I

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

am not your sister." Bending down, [the visitor put her lips against her cheek and kissed her. "Yes, you are," she said, "and I love you, and Jesus loves you." The chained hands went down, her head dropped on her breast, her tears began to flow. She fell from her chair upon her knees. The warden of the prison unlocked the shackles, and until the day of her death he never put them on again. She went up and down the prison corridors, like an angel of light, ministering to others.

There are two sides to personal work—going to God for the sinner, and going to the sinner for God; and both are necessary. One day, in Worcester, Massachusetts, a book-binder, much addicted to the habit of drink, was led into a temperance meeting then being held in the city. When the speaker rose to speak of Jesus Christ this poor book-binder, I am told, dropped on his knees and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." He was John B. Gough,

A FAITHFUL WARNING

and when he went home from the meeting, all through the night, like the boom of a cannon, he seemed to hear the words, drink, drink, drink. He says the struggle was awful. He stood it until eleven o'clock the next morning; then, putting his hat on, he started for the door, but just as he put his hand on the door on the inside, the man who had invited him to the meeting the night before put his hand on the door from the outside. When the door opened he ran past the Christian man, saying, "Do n't stop me, I am away to drink." "No," said the Christian friend, "you come with me to my house, and we will have prayer together and I will help you." And John B. Gough was not only won to Christ, but kept safe by personal interest taken in him by a Christian. It is one thing to lead a man to Christ; it is altogether a different thing to hold him afterwards, and this is our privilege.

In Cheltenham, England, I had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. C. B. Saw-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

day, a Baptist minister, upon whose ministry God has set His seal. He told me that when he was a boy he was an apprentice in the warehouse of Sir George Williams, the founder of the Young Men's Christian Association. Sir George Williams was in partnership with his father-in-law, Mr. Hitchcock, a man equally distinguished as an earnest, consistent Christian. When young Sawday's father took him into the private office of Mr. Hitchcock, and the papers apprenticing him to the Company had been signed, this distinguished business man arose, closed the door of his office, drew the curtains, and then said: "Mr. Sawday, we have now settled the question of your son's employment, would it not be a good thing for us to kneel down here and ask God to make it possible for him to find Christ while he is in our employ?" The three then knelt together a short time in prayer. Afterwards the boy was converted. In due time he became a student for the ministry,

A FAITHFUL WARNING

and his papers were canceled. God called him in no mistakable way to preach, and he became Mr. Thomas Spurgeon's assistant. It would seem to me, if this were possible in a great business house in England, it ought to be possible everywhere.

My plea is for the boy by your side, for the man in your employ, for the husband whom you love, for the children who are dear to you. And here is the sad side of it, "If he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity."

Out in our Western country in the United States a man owned a ranch of several thousand acres. His money in the bank amounted to millions. His wife had died, and left him alone with his little boy, thirteen years of age. The father was not a Christian. One day during the harvest season his boy was crossing one of his great fields, and, trying to climb on to one of the harvesters, he stumbled and fell. The fast-running knives of the harvester mangled his

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

little body. They carried him into the house, summoned his father quickly, his life was almost gone. The little fellow looked up into his father's face, and said, "Father, the men say I am going to die." The great, strong man looked down upon him, and said, "Yes, my boy, you are going to die, and it will break your father's heart." The boy said, "Father, you pray for me before I die." The man dropped his head upon his breast, hesitated a second, and said, "My boy, I can not pray, I wish I could." And before he could send for some one who could offer the prayer the boy was dead. A friend of mine who knew about him said that the father said, when his little boy was gone, "I would give all the money I have in the world if I could have prayed for him, or if my life had been such as to have helped him."

Mr. Moody used to tell about a father, in the city of Chicago, who came home one evening and found his boy sick unto death. He described the father going

A FAITHFUL WARNING

into the room, and taking the little white hand of the child in his own hand and saying, "My boy, the doctors say you are going to die before morning." He turned away from him, dropping his hand, and sobbed as if his heart would break. The little fellow, reaching out, took hold of his father's hand, and drawing him towards him, said, "Father, do n't you cry; the very moment I see Jesus I shall tell Him you always taught me how to love Him." "And," said my friend, "I would rather have my boy say that about me than have a monument of gold that would pierce the clouds. Here are two fathers, the one faithless, the other faithful—which are you?"

This is a day when, as never before, sincere Christian living is demanded. In the shop, in business, in the home, in our social circles. Consistency is a positive requirement. Such lives are unanswerable arguments in favor of our Savior. With such conditions existing it will ever be comparatively easy to

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

lead others to Christ. If, however, we are inconsistent and faithless, and because of our living souls are lost, what will be our responsibility at the judgment-seat of Christ?

CHAPTER IV

“THE NEXT AWAKENING”

THOUGHTFUL people are agreed that these are critical days in which we are living. Problems of the greatest importance confront us, and have demanded a consideration if not a settlement. Moral problems like that of temperance are having their day, and hearts are thrilled when it is known that entire communities may be found where there is to-day no licensed sale of intoxicating liquors; and all must be interested to know that the influence of the movement is constantly spreading throughout our land, and only God Himself knows what the end may be. Men may argue as they please against the entire prohibition of the liquor traffic, and may array themselves against local option, but the facts confronting us prove that communi-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

ties are better in every way where licenses are not issued and where the sale of liquor is not permitted.

Economic and sociological problems confront us, such as the relation of capital to labor, and labor to capital; the whole economic system of the day is under criticism, and, as a rule, justly so. Men out of the Church tell us that we are simply playing with the great question of the rights of the workmen and the condition of the underworld. Socialism, in its rapid development in certain quarters, indicates that there is, on the part of many, a growing disposition to discount the Church, to turn aside from the claims of Christ, and seek in a way, which is by no means His own, to establish a new order of living among men.

Theological problems are much at the front. The question of the integrity of the Scriptures and the Deity of Jesus seems again to demand settlement. Therefore it is not strange, with such

THE NEXT AWAKENING

problems before us, that many should ask the question, "What have we to expect in the immediate future?"

Over against the advocates of the claims of the socialist, and arguing against the position of the sociologists of a certain school, as well as against the disturbance which is so apparent on every hand, stands another class of people represented by the president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Sir George W. MacAlpine, who said recently: "The Church has of late years concentrated too much on social problems, and the person of Jesus Christ has been dragged into the controversy. The Head of the Church has been called a 'Demagogue' and 'the greatest Radical that ever lived.' Men asserted that He was against the rich and for the poor, or for the poor against the rich. But that was not the picture which the Gospels gave of Jesus Christ. They represented Him as moving about among men, not without a keen sense of the wrong

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

wrought between man and man, with a profound sympathy for human suffering, ever solicitous that man's natural wants should be supplied, but with a supreme indifference to his social or political ambitions. His message was ever to the individual soul, and was framed on the assumption that sin was at the root of all misery; and therefore He was solicitous, not so much about human inter-relations, as about the relations of men to God."

We are quite familiar with the experience through which we pass when storms are approaching. The skies are overcast, the air becomes heavy and oppressive, the birds hush their songs, and the cattle seek a refuge, and we wait for the summer rain or the hurricane; but when the storm is over the air is fresher, the grass all the greener, and everything seems to be better prepared for its struggle for life. So when great problems in these days are confronting us, and seem so difficult to settle and

THE NEXT AWAKENING

which indicate plainly that a crisis is upon us, and disturbances which no tongue can describe must be passed through by us, it is a good thing to realize that the storm will pass; the skies will brighten. I can not doubt that we are to have, in some form, a great awakening of spiritual interest in all that pertains to the advancement of the Kingdom of God. We have no channel marked out along which this blessing is to flow, nor are we at all convinced that it will be like spiritual awakenings of the days that are passed, but we have reasons for the consciousness of coming victory.

Let it not be forgotten that history repeats itself. It has always been God's way, from the time of Israel to the present, not to leave Himself without a witness. When the days have been the darkest the voice of cheer is heard; when the night has been the longest the star has appeared; when the Church has been the most depressed and disheartened,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

the night has passed and the day of awakening has dawned. Nor should it be forgotten that the Church is in sore need of spiritual quickening. Granted that the Church is benevolent, and that her gifts to missions, both at home and abroad, are increasingly large, yet let it also be remembered that the spiritual power of the Church is to be measured, not so much by gifts of money as by her ability to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

The Bishop of Durham, writing a letter recently to a gathering of Christian people in England, asks this question, "Do we see conversions?" And he expresses the fear that there is, on the whole, a less definite aim at conversion than in past days, and asserts that this aim should be, if possible, more definite now than ever, and then adds in a striking way: "The Evangelical fathers never wearied of aiming at the winning of men under the power of the Word and the

THE NEXT AWAKENING

Spirit to that standpoint. In other words they aimed day and night to beget, through the gospel, New Testament Christians. I think we need, with much searching of heart, to see that, whatever ideals emerge around it, this shall be, as much as ever, nay, more than ever, our ideal-in-chief, 'our earnest expectation and hope.' It is worth while to sacrifice to this a great deal of what passes for clever, thoughtful, striking preaching, but which somehow seems to miss the central fact that man has an evil heart, and that the Lord, the Wonder-Worker, claims it wholly for Himself, and is able to make it effectually new, at the cross and by the Spirit."

The need is great to-day, possibly greater than ever. The number of people turning from Christ, or at least indifferent to Him, seems to be on the increase. If the results of the past few years should be analyzed, it would, I am quite sure, be found that at least two-thirds of the additions to the Church

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

came from the Sunday schools and Young People's Societies, or from the foreign field. This is not a discrimination against the conversion of youth, for the noblest women and the strongest men in the Church to-day came to Christ in childhood. It is a suggestion that closer attention should be paid to the adult population and that more strenuous efforts should be made to turn them to Christ. If the Church were a business corporation, with an investment of millions and a great army of employed men and women, it is seriously questioned if the business men interested in such a corporation would believe that they were having an adequate return for their investment in what is to be seen of the public work of the Church. Nor should it be forgotten that multitudes of unsaved men and women will only come to Christ in the time of a spiritual awakening. I have seen it somewhere stated that almost one-half of the Presbyterian membership found Christ in the time of

THE NEXT AWAKENING

a revival; that at least one-half of the Presbyterian ministry came into the Church in times of special interest, and when some years ago the Presbyterian Alliance met in Philadelphia, it was recorded in the Minutes of that great meeting that seven-eighths of the members of all Presbyterian bodies came to Christ at the time of an awakening.

Let it not be forgotten that the great commission demands that we shall be filled with zeal in our work and that there is no place for indifference among the followers of Jesus Christ. Christ commanded us to go forward. Listen to His words: "And afterward He was manifested unto the eleven themselves as they sat at meat; and He upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them that had seen Him after He was risen. And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these signs shall accompany them that believe; in My name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

"So then the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word by the signs that followed."—Mark 16: 14-20.

We owe it to all men who are unsaved that we should obey the great commission, and the best life of the Church depends upon our obedience to the Word which He has spoken to us. If the question is asked as to when we may expect a spiritual awakening, there are two directions in which we may look for

THE NEXT AWAKENING

an answer. We should first examine God's Word. His promises you will find are written in the present tense. In the prophecy of Malachi we read: "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."—Malachi 3: 10, R. V.

You may say that this is Jewish if you please, but it is a picture of God and His willingness to move in blessing when conditions are fulfilled, and do not forget that He is ever the same. According to the teaching of God's Word there is no reason why, if conditions are met, if faith is triumphant and service abundant, we may not have an awakening at once. He said, "Lo, I am with you always," and that means now.

On the other hand, we must look at man's condition before we decide the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

time of the arrival of the awakening. Because of what He is, this sweeping victory could not come immediately. "Behold, Jehovah's hand is not shortened, that it can not save; neither His ear heavy that it can not hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, so that He will not hear."—Isaiah 59: 1-2, R. V.

When we confess and forsake our sins, when we put away the spirit of prejudice, when we are impressed with a deep concern for those round about us, when we have yielded ourselves to God in entire consecration, then, and only then, may we expect God to use us and to work through us; when we have fulfilled the conditions and He takes possession of us, victory is certain.

If the question is asked, "What are obstacles in the way?" Let it be noted that those on the outside of the Church are not to be considered. Infidelity, impurity, unbelief, these can not affect

THE NEXT AWAKENING

us; the difficulty within the Church is the hindrance. Let it also be remembered that there is nothing in the way of our progress that has not faced Christian people in other ages, and they have gone past the difficulties triumphantly. We have come to look at God through our difficulties; therefore our faith has grown weak. Would it not be better for us to look at our difficulties through God? How small and insignificant they would seem. It may be said that the Church is rich and increased with goods, and that commercial prosperity stands in the way of spiritual power; but let it not be forgotten that in the first century, when the gospel was preached, extravagance and luxury were carried to the extreme, society was demoralized, the worst forms of vice were practiced, and in such society St. Paul came, saying, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." And men heard and gave heed. If it is said that there are divisions in the Church, and the Spirit of God works

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

only where there is harmony, then let it be remembered that these divisions have always been in existence.

Hear St. Paul regarding these matters: "Now, I beseech you brethren, through the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you."—1 Cor. 1: 10, 11.

"For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?"—1 Cor. 3: 3.

And under such conditions as these victories were won. If it is said that there are heresies in the Church, alas! it is too true, but this has always been so. Listen to St. Paul again: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from Him

THE NEXT AWAKENING

that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel.”—Gal. 1: 6.

“O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?”—Gal. 3: 1.

St. Peter found the same thing: “But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that brought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their lascivious doings; by reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of.”—2 Peter 2: 1, 2.

But in spite of all this, the gospel was preached to the known world, the Lord working with them, and there were added to the Church daily such as were being saved.

If it should be said that sin is increasing in the world, what have we to do with that except to remember that we preach a gospel which is the very power of God, and which can not fail? It has been

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

preached ever since the day of Pentecost to all. It was declared to the Romans of ancient times, and where sin abounded grace did much more abound. The story has been told in Japan, and many have turned from their idols to God. It has been preached in the New Hebrides Islands, and on one of the islands where there were no Christians when the story was first told, there were no heathen when the missionary finished his labors. It has been declared in the Fiji Islands, and multitudes of the people have turned to God. It has been preached to drunkards, and set them free; to harlots whose sins were scarlet, and they became white as snow; to the outcast, and the angels sang their welcome home. We have a gospel that has never failed and never will fail.

If we are to have an awakening, we must not ignore the Holy Ghost. In the early Church He opened the doors and equipped messengers to enter them. He must do the same now. He designated workers and filled them with power.

THE NEXT AWAKENING

He waits to perform the same ministry in these days. Peter, who was a most unlikely man by nature, became a master preacher, and Paul, the scholar, was filled with the very passion of Jesus Himself. We must plan and pray. Preaching must have divine unction. The spirit of the Church must be Christ-like; praying must be full of faith. When these conditions are met the awakening will be upon us.

It used to be true that every Christian was a witness. Aquila and Priscilla made tents and spoke of Jesus. One slave told the story of his salvation to another. One member of the family sought to turn another to Jesus. Paul, bound in chains, did not forget to tell the story to the guard by his side, and to the utmost bounds of the Roman Empire the story of the cross was repeated. When these conditions again prevail the awakening will be due.

CHAPTER V

APPROVED METHODS

WHATEVER differences of opinion may exist among Christians as regards forms of service I am sure that all are united in this, that only the methods that have been owned of God are desired. That certain methods have had His very distinct approval, and that upon them man has set his seal as well, is undoubtedly true. These methods are illustrated in the life and ministry of our Lord. They are so plainly written that no one can go astray regarding them. They are found also in the experiences of the apostles, notably St. Paul and St. Peter, and they have been exemplified in the lives of godly men since the days of the apostles; so it would seem, if one desired to know the best of methods, he would only be required faithfully to

APPROVED METHODS

study the New Testament and to read carefully the history of the Church.

It is, of course, true that the letter killeth while the spirit giveth life, and there are certain things which Jesus did which we may not be expected to do, inasmuch as times and conditions have changed. There are also certain methods peculiar to St. Paul which it would be quite impossible for us to attempt to use. Yet it is possible to have the spirit of Jesus, and this is the all-important thing, and also to be possessed of the spirit of St. Paul and those who have lived since his day. When we yield to the Spirit of God, we may have His direction and become evangelistic in the truest sense of the word.

There were certain great principles back of Jesus which impelled Him to go on in His mission. Not to take account of them is to fail in appreciation of His public and private ministry. He knew better than any one else the nature of sin, and He was fully persuaded that it

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

was working with blighting and blasting power in the lives of those about Him. To Him it was an awful thing. We know this from His experience in the garden of Gethsemane. It is said that there He was sore amazed, or literally, suddenly affrighted, as if when He faced sin it was more hidious than even He had thought it to be. This makes all the more striking the expression—"He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." There is no such thing as true evangelism without a clear conception of sin. To minimize its power is to decrease enthusiasm in service. To appreciate its awfulness is to feel not only the need of help ourselves, but to be quick to offer it to others. He knew that all sin was against God.

There are two reasons why the sinner should turn away from his sin: The first, because living in sin he dishonors God. The second, while practicing sin he has drifted away from God and being weak-

APPROVED METHODS

ened in body and mind, is unable to comprehend Him. The first seems to be the stronger reason. He knew what effect sin had upon the human race. It was because He understood that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and that "the wages of sin is death," that He was instant in season and out of season, and sought in every conceivable manner to save a lost and ruined world, and realized that He was in the world to lift men out of sin and set them free from their bondage. If one has viewed sin from the standpoint of Jesus, then half-hearted service is impossible. With this conception of the weakness of men and their sad condition one can easily understand His preaching. There was no time with Him for trifling. He was ready at all times to declare His message, whether it be to one woman by the well curb, or to the multitudes thronging around Him. His was a very plain message, as, for example, when He said: "Think not that I am come to destroy

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”—Matt. 5:17, 18. “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”—Matt. 5: 21, 22.

“And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy mem-

APPROVED METHODS

bers should perish, and not that the whole body should be cast into hell.”—Matt. 5: 29-30.

His was a personal message. When he faces Nicodemus, who comes to Him in the night time, He does not generalize, but speaks directly to him in words that can not be misunderstood. “Jesus answered, and said unto him: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he can not see the Kingdom of God.” Nicodemus saith unto Him: “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered: “Verily verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again.”—St. John 3: 3-7.

His preaching was very practical. We are told in these days that the note of

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

social service must be sounded. It is impossible for any one to misinterpret His message along this line: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee: leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shall by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."—Matt. 5:23-26.

His was this ideal preaching. With His conception of sin and man's failure, one can understand His practice. No wonder He was untiring in His work. He must preach by day and pray all night, and forget to eat, and fail to remember that He is thirsty. Compare this with some modern service that we know, and we

APPROVED METHODS

understand the secret of His power on the one side and the reason for man's failure on the other. He was ever self-forgetful. One look at the woman of Samaria and He forgets that He has sent His disciples into the city to buy meat; forgets that His throat is parched with the heat of the day in which He has been traveling. His ease and comfort were as nothing when compared with the need of a human soul. He was most intense in His spirit: never more so than when He stood looking down upon the city of Jerusalem, saying: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."—Matt. 23: 37-39.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

St. Paul was a great servant of such a Master. His intense spirit is summed up in the words, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." He is always preaching. If he is in Athens he will tell his story whether or not men will listen. If he is in prison he will dictate his message. If he sits down by the side of Lydia, the seller of purple, he will speak of Jesus. If he is some time in Ephesus he will go from house to house pleading with men to be reconciled to God. His conception of sin is the same as that of Jesus. Hear him when he says, "For there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." So serious is this condition that in his judgment nothing can atone for sin but the sacrificial death of Christ. Because of the fact that men had sinned it was necessary that Jesus should be delivered; because of men's offenses it was demanded that He should die for man's sins according to the Scriptures; that He should be raised

APPROVED METHODS

because of our justification, that He should ascend unto Heaven, even to the right hand of God the Father, as a great High Priest; that He should take His seat because His work was finished, and that He should come again to receive His own. No wonder Paul was such a preacher! Who would not be with such a conception of the sinfulness of sin and the knowledge of such a Savior?

Consider His preaching. It was very plain, when in Antioch, He said: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."—Acts 13: 38, 39.

It was very personal. Of his preaching in Athens, it was said: "Now while Paul waited for them at Athens his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry."—Acts 17: 16. "Then Paul stood in the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

midst of Mars' Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD**. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."—Acts 17: 22, 23.

His message was very practical. Before Agrippa he said: "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand and answered for himself: I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews."—Acts 26: 1, 2. And again he said: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such

APPROVED METHODS

as I am, except these bonds.”—Acts 26: 27-29.

Compare the spirit of his teaching with the spirit of some modern preaching you may have heard and you will understand why Paul, who is such a preacher of righteousness, is owned and used of God, and why so many men of modern times have failed. Consider the life he led. He was untiring in his zeal. When he gave his charge to the elders at Ephesus he said: “You know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons.”—Acts 20: 18.

He was self-forgetful. What did he care for criticism. He was ready to be called a fool, ready to be stoned until he was left for dead. He had but one passion; it was to preach, and only to preach Jesus.

He was most intense. He went from house to house pleading. “And how I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have shewed you, and have

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

taught you publicly, and from house to house.”—Acts 20: 20.

He was in agony on account of the lost. “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”—Romans 9: 1-3.

St. Peter was possessed of the same spirit. His preaching was spiritual and Scriptural—notice his Pentecostal sermon—and whether he said more on the great day of Pentecost than is recorded in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, it is certainly true that there is recorded there only what the Spirit of God thought worth while. He, too, was personal. Hear him when he says: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of

APPROVED METHODS

you, as ye yourselves also know; Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”—Acts 2: 22, 23.

He preached with the expectation of results. “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying save yourselves from this untoward generation.”—Acts 2: 40.

We need have no other models than these. There have been great preachers since, but in imitating them we have lost Him. What must be our line of action if we are to win the battle we are now fighting? We must not ignore sin. To see it as it is gives a new power to preaching, and a new impetus for the work. We must be persuaded that men are lost without Christ. Lost here and now to all that makes life worth living. Lost hereafter to all that makes eternity blessed, if the rejection of Christ be final.

Preaching must be a passion if we are to win the victory. One has scarcely

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

a right to preach without a message, and that message must be positive. Sin must be rebuked in the spirit of Jesus wherever it is seen, and every sermon must have Christ in it from first to last. Preaching is not enough. However much we may pay tribute to it, we must go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. If we should say, our messages are Scriptural, our desire for men to be saved is keen, let them come and hear the message; this would be an un-Christlike speech, for in the spirit of Jesus we must go after them. If they will not yield to preaching, then we must try singing. If singing fails, use personal effort, if by all means we may save some.

We are told that we need a new evangelism. I suppose what is meant is that the methods of the men in the past are not considered useful to-day. It has been said that he who tries to reproduce Finney or Moody is a plagiarist, and not a prophet. I am by no means

APPROVED METHODS

persuaded that the methods of other days would fail to-day, and that the preaching of other times is not the preaching for this time in which we live. I am inclined to think that Edwards would still create a sensation if he should, in the presence of a modern audience, preach his great sermon on "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." I am confident that Finney would startle us into action if he should come before us to-day, as he once preached in Western New York, and I believe that Mr. Moody would have the old-time power in stirring an audience if he would come once again as in the olden days he came with faith in Jesus and confidence in His Word, and with the Holy Ghost resting upon him. The one thing that made all these men great is the one thing we must have to-day. Edwards prayed and people trembled; Finney prayed and preached with powerful conviction; Moody prayed, and they took knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus. This is the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

day of the preacher's trial; he is now being tested; but it is the day of his opportunity, too. Human hearts are as needy as ever they have been, and the willingness to hear the gospel is plainly apparent.

The men who have power to-day, as they stand in the pulpit, are they who have not lost their confidence in the authority of God's Word and the Deity of God's Son.

When followers of Jesus rightly represent Him and preachers of the gospel faithfully preach Him, then the Church will have her old-time power; it is when these conditions are not met that she languishes.

There has never been such a day as this for preaching—it is either a day of victory or defeat. The preacher himself may determine which.

CHAPTER VI

THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON

SOME sermons truly remarkable in their construction and message have been effectually killed by an audience. This may be particularly true of an evangelistic sermon. All sermons should be evangelistic in spirit. As a matter of fact, it is not so much what one says nor the way he says it, that moves an audience, as what he is himself. Many a great sermon has been powerless because back of it there has not been a true life, and many another sermon which would not at all bear the test of the rules of sermon making, has been counted great, because it has been delivered by one who was possessed of a passion, whose life was consistent, and who in his spirit reminded his hearers

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK.

of the Savior in whose name he was speaking.

One's ministry may in the truest sense be evangelistic, and the spirit of evangelism may be exhibited in his pastoral visitation; in a letter of condolence written to express sympathy in the time of sorrow; in the clasp of the hand, which gives evidence of the real desire to be helpful. Personality counts for much in all professions, but in none more than in the ministry. It is said that Napoleon was worth twenty thousand of his soldiers; that when he was in the lead failure was almost impossible. Consecrated personality is of inestimable value, and such should always be manifest in the man who preaches Christ. The sermon in the evangelistic ministry must be direct, personal, appealing, and convincing. There are two kinds of sermons which may be preached. The first seeks to build up in the faith. In such a sermon great doctrines are presented, great principles of living suggested. The

THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON

second, which is more essentially evangelistic, is preached in order that decision may be influenced, a crisis reached and passed, and such a manifest change in life as leads one out of great moral darkness into spiritual life. Yet I believe that one could, in his message, discuss doctrine and be evangelistic.

I have heard of a great university president who was preaching to the students on the subject of the Decrees of God. It would seem as if nothing could be further from an evangelistic sermon than this, but he preached it with such fervor and with such passion that his audience was profoundly moved. His appeal was direct and emphatic, and not less than sixty of the university men accepted Christ as a result of his invitation.

In an evangelistic ministry, whatever the theme may be, the preacher must impress his hearers with the need of Christ, and he must have the spirit of real concern. I attended a conference

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

in the West some little time ago, when an aged Church officer rose at the close of the discussion to say, "I know why many ministers fail in these modern times." Said he: "It is due to lack of real concern for the lost. My father was a minister, and at the same time a farmer. He toiled all the week and preached to his neighbors on Sunday. One day when there was special interest in my father's parish, the dinner bell rang, but he did not appear. My mother sent me to find him. I found him in the corn-crib, out near the barn, down upon his knees in prayer. He was pouring out his soul before God in behalf of his neighbors. I waited a moment, and then touching his shoulder, I said, 'Father, mother wants you.' He rose from his knees, came into the house, took his seat at the head of the table, asked the blessing, and served the children, but never took a mouthful of food himself. He sat through the meal with the great tears rolling down his cheeks. But," said the

THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON

Church officer, "I would like to tell you the result: sixty of my father's neighbors found Christ in that revival. And I have an idea that many ministers in these days have lost that spirit of overmastering concern which gave us our great revival preachers in the past and without which evangelistic sermons can not be preached."

In a conference I one day asked the ministers present to give a definition of an evangelistic sermon, and the following were suggested: "An evangelistic sermon," said one, "is one that is out after a soul. It is preached definitely; every word is aimed at conviction, and the evident desire of the preacher is that men should turn unto Christ and live." "An evangelistic sermon," said another, "is one that has enough of the gospel in it so that if there should be in the pews an unsaved man and he should hear the preacher only that one time, there would be enough of the plan of salvation expressed in that one sermon to save his

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

soul." "Then," said the one who gave this definition, "I am wondering if all our sermons could bear this test." Another said: "An evangelistic sermon is one that provokes a crisis in a man's thinking and living. It is preached with the definite desire for conversion. It is so practical that the plainest man can understand it. It is so persistent in its appeal that the most indifferent can not easily resist its power."

In Australia, I heard one of the ministers say that to his mind an evangelistic sermon was one that pleaded for a verdict. It seemed to me that this was an admirable definition, for if ministers would preach as lawyers plead with a jury, if they would realize that the danger for those who heard them was really and truly great, if they gave the impression, that they would not be content with the refusal of their invitation, results would be most gratifying, victories most remarkable. Conversions would be recorded in great numbers.

THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON

There are four marks of an evangelistic sermon. It is a sermon which is directed by the Holy Ghost, suggested by Him, and in the construction of which special aid is given by Him. He not only impresses the preacher with the text, but with the manner of its development, and also indicates the spirit in which the sermon should be preached. A friend of mine, a most spiritually-minded preacher, told me that he went to his evening service thoroughly prepared to preach, but was impressed with the fact that he ought to change his message and use a text which he had not studied. This impression so deepened that at last he turned away from his well-thought-out sermon and used the text as best he could. One of his Church officers asked him if he were ill, and said, "You did not preach with your usual freedom." He did not know until the next morning why the change had been made. In his mail came a letter in which the writer said: "I was on my way

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

to end my life. I heard the music in your church. Curiosity prompted me to enter. I do not remember anything you said in the sermon, but your text was my mother's text, and as you preached I saw her face and heard her voice. Before you had finished your sermon I had accepted my mother's Savior, and I am writing to thank you for the text you used." This may seem like an extraordinary case, but I can hardly think so. I firmly believe that if we walked in the Spirit, submitted to His teachings and waited upon Him for special direction, that He would lead us in a way so plain that we could not mistake it.

The evangelistic sermon is one that is nourished in prayer. A great preacher of modern times has said that when he prepares his sermon he prays it through word by word, and that he never rises from his knees until the atmosphere of prayer surrounds him and his sermon too. What he can not pray through

THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON

he cuts out, and he is a conspicuous success in the ministry, not only in drawing large congregations, but in leading a great number of people to an acceptance of Christ.

If the sermon is truly evangelistic, it must be preached to one's self. It is a never-failing test that if the sermon does not move the preacher it will in the same measure be powerless with the audience. What stirs me stirs my hearers. What I can read with indifference they receive in the same spirit. What brings tears to my eyes will, as a rule, bring answering tears to the eyes of the people. The natural pathos in one's voice, because of the message, will stir the hearts of those who listen. Better a fifteen-minute sermon preached with intense conviction than an ordinary sermon in which it may be apparent that the preacher is indifferent and cold. If a sermon is truly evangelistic it must be preached with the expectation of success. Doubt of victory, if ever ap-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

parent in the preacher, stimulates doubt in the minds of the hearers. When one is certain that his message has been indicated by the Spirit of God, nourished in prayer, and convincing to himself, it is almost impossible to give that message to an audience without creating in the majority, at least, the thought that the time has come for action.

A touching personal note was struck by the Rev. W. L. Watkinson, in the course of a strong address. "At the end of my life," he said, "with all the imperfections belonging to my ministry, I feel this consolation—I have not unnecessarily disturbed the religious convictions of my hearers. I have sought in my ministry and writings to do people good. It is ten thousand times better for a man to set before a congregation the simple beauty of the New Testament than to trouble a congregation with his own nightmares."

"If the Church of Christ to-day is going to repeat its ancient triumph it

THE EVANGELISTIC SERMON

will have to be loyal to the ancient faith. A great scientist says that persistence is the sign of reality. And a few great, simple doctrines of the New Testament have demonstrated their reality by persistence through the fluctuations of two thousand years. A certain writer complains that John Wesley did not bring any originality into theology. Thank God for that! But he did bring a bit of fire. I have not the least faith in the building up of a Church by any originalities of creed. The evangelistic creed which created the Churches will sustain them and extend them and secure their final and universal victory.

“Years ago there was a celebrated painter named Gainsborough. He had no ‘originality’—he kept within academic law. At the same time there was a painter of great ‘originality,’ named Fuseli, who used to eat raw pork for supper, and he slept on it, and the next day he painted what he had seen. His work was marked by great ‘originality.’

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

A few years ago there was a sale of pictures, and one of Gainsborough's pictures was offered. No 'originality,' but it was received with a cheer, and fetched eight thousand pounds. The very next picture was by Fuseli, and it fetched a guinea. These things are an allegory," said Dr. Watkinson, "but what a message they bring to preachers!"

Yet it should be remembered that there are pulpits where even St. Paul would fail to preach with power, and where Jesus could do no mighty works. And let us keep the thought ever before us that the most ordinary sermon may be made extraordinary and intensely evangelistic in its appeal by the people who hear it, and by the way they hear it they may make it count in winning souls and turning the thoughts of men to Christ.

CHAPTER VII

THE AFTER MEETING

IT is comparatively easy to make an impression on an audience when one is preaching about Jesus. There are certain well-defined reasons for this. If one is truly a preacher of the gospel, he is called of God, and he has the promise of the Master, in whose name he speaks, to be with him. Did He not say, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world?" He has the promise of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and it is He who convicts men of sin, convinces them of their need of the Savior, and magnifies the name and power of Jesus, of whom they have heard in the sermon.

Then there is the respect in which, as a rule, ministers are held by the people in the congregation. Regardless of what

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

men may say with their lips, in their hearts they respect the office of the minister, and they are disposed to listen with attention to his message. It is quite easy to understand how there would come upon an audience a profound sense of the presence of God and a deep conviction that the time had come to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. Thus the deepest impressions are often made upon an audience.

To secure the results of one's preaching is an altogether different matter, and to lead individuals in an audience beyond the place of conviction to definite action requires skill. It is a most delicate work. The greatest care must be taken in the attempt to secure results, for the moment the preacher becomes formal in his appeals or mechanical in his methods he has lost power both with God and with man. Success is attainable, however, and it is possible to give the testimonies of men who have been used of God in this direction, and these

THE AFTER MEETING

may be suggestive as to the spirit even though they may not altogether be adopted by the minister in securing the best results from his preaching.

As a rule, the evening meeting is the time for direct appeal, and yet oftentimes the deepest impression is made by giving the most personal and searching invitation at the close of the morning service. I have known ministers to use every method suggested for the evening service, at the close of the most formal morning gathering. One of the simplest methods known and one most easily used is, at the close of the sermon, when the appeal has been personal, to ask certain representative Church members, the Church officers, if possible, to pass through the audience with a card, on which may be printed only these words:

I would be willing to receive a call
from the Pastor of this Church.

Name.....

Address.....

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

It might be explained that the pastor will call upon all who will give him permission to do so, and in the call will explain more definitely the way of salvation. Many a person would sign such a card and welcome a call in his office or home, who would shrink from a public demonstration. Sometimes it is well to ask for a definite expression immediately at the close of the service, before any of the audience may have passed out. As a rule it is best to ask the audience to do the easiest thing first. A request may be made that those who desire prayers for their friends should lift their hands, or rise, or if the impression is deep enough, to speak out regarding their loved ones. If any individual in the audience makes the least possible movement towards the surrender of his will, the way to complete victory for others becomes easier, the invitation must be given in the spirit of confidence, that it will be accepted by some one.

While the above is the rule, yet there

THE AFTER MEETING

are times when the impression is so deep and the conviction so intense that the best move is made by asking those who have heard you to do the most difficult thing possible, such as to rise and make an outspoken confession, or to come to the front and kneel, either at the altar or at the front pew, or to stand beside the minister while he prays. Only the Spirit of God can tell us just what to do, and His instruction is vastly better than that of all the trained workers in the world. I believe it is a very safe rule if one is confident that he has preached the gospel, to follow impressions and convictions as to what he should do, for these impressions and convictions are, as a rule, the leadings of the Spirit of God.

There are many ways to hold an after-meeting. The following have been especially helpful: If the after-meeting is to be held in the audience-room where the sermon has been preached, then urge all the people to stay, but specially

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

ask the Church officers, Sunday school teachers, and the Church members who are concerned for their friends, to remain. Allow the others to pass out while the organ may be played softly, or the congregation joins in the singing of an impressive hymn. A loud peal of the organ at the close of an impressive sermon has driven away many a deep impression.

When people remain to attend an after-meeting the minister has a right to make the most definite appeal possible. The Church members, by letter or by personal visitation preceding the special service, might be asked to have the friends who are with them tarry for the after-service. Then all the methods that have been suggested could be used; the card, the appeal, etc.; only the minister may have a bit more confidence and firmness in his methods because the people have willed to stay with him. Where there is an extra room, such as the lecture-room or vestry, it is a comparatively

THE AFTER MEETING

easy matter to influence the people to remain for the after-service. They may pass out into this room during the playing of the organ or the singing of a hymn, and not infrequently the additional room is the best place for an after-meeting. If there is a change in the room it is quite necessary that the minister should again go over the points of his sermon very briefly, explain very definitely the plan of salvation, and make his appeal as if he had not made it in the preceding meeting. Whatever sort of an after-meeting is held, there must be trained workers in the audience. These may be the Church officers, Sunday school teachers, or the Church members who have been well instructed by the minister himself. They must know the plan of salvation. Their lives must be right with God, and they must be clearly told that without faithful, persistent prayer, successful soul-winning work is not possible.

One of the best ways of securing results at the close of one's preaching is

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

to divide the audience. When the sermon has been plain, practical, pointed, and powerful because God has used it, let the minister say, without even offering a prayer at the close of his sermon, "I want all the men in this audience to meet me in the lecture-room, or vestry, of this church. I have something I should like to say to them." Tell them if they are present as escorts to ladies, that all the women will tarry in the church and be led in a meeting by some one whom the minister may appoint to direct the service. Give the invitation as if you believed the men would accept it, and you will be amazed to see how quickly they will go to the other service, and you will marvel at the results that will come. The same sort of service may be conducted in both places, some one making the most direct appeal to the women, the pastor himself pleading with the men. Urge the men who are members of the Church and whose lives are not right to take a new

THE AFTER MEETING

stand for Christ. Call upon all men who are not Christians and have drifted to make an expression of their interest in the prayer that is to be offered; then let the minister step down upon the floor of the room so that he may not be above the people, and let him urge all who have expressed either a determination to rededicate themselves to Christ, or to come to Him for the first time, to come forward, stand about him, or take his hand. If they stand about him, when the prayer is offered let them kneel down by the minister. When this invitation has been accepted it is a comparatively easy matter to secure the names of those who are determined to be right with God, and after this the work is easy.

All of these methods are suggested with fear and trembling, lest some one should feel that a thorough understanding of the methods of men would mean victory. This may or may not be true, but it will be true if the Spirit of God

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

possesses the methods and the man using them. It will not be true if the Spirit of God is ignored or forgotten. He is the best evangelist who keeps closest to Christ and who relies the most perfectly upon the Spirit's teaching.

The following instruction, with reference to the use of the Word of God, should be given to the personal workers:

Always use God's Word, and if your experience is quoted at all, only let it be used to emphasize the Scripture. In the general meetings you will find it easy to put the question kindly and courteously to the people, "Are you a Christian?" If the answer is "No," help them in every way you can. You will find you about four classes of inquirers.

1. **CHRISTIANS WHO LACK ASSURANCE.**—The First Epistle of John was written to help this class. Emphasize 1 John 5: 13.

2. **BACKSLIDERS.**—Read the prophecy of Jeremiah for yourself and give them

THE AFTER MEETING

its spirit. Use Jeremiah 3: 12, 13. Read Hosea 14th Chapter, especially the opening verses.

3. **THOSE SLIGHTLY CONVICTED.**—Read Romans 3: 10, 23. It is useless to give the consolations of the gospel until there is a consciousness of sin.

4. **THE DEEPLY CONVICTED.**—Read Hosea 43: 25 and 44: 22; John 1: 11, 12. Tell them they may be sure of their salvation. Read John 3: 16; John 5: 24; John 6: 47; Romans 6: 23.

The following excuses may be presented; if so, answer them with God's Word:—

1. **I CAN'T UNDERSTAND.**—“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” Romans 3: 11.

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2: 14.

2. **AFRAID OF FALLING.**—“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will per-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

form it until the day of Jesus Christ.”
Phil. 1: 6.

“Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1: 5.

3. AFRAID OF TEMPTATION.—“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” 1 Cor. 10: 13.

“For in that He himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.” Heb. 2: 18.

4. INCONSISTENT CHRISTIANS PRESENT. “But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So, then, every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.”—Romans 14: 10, 12.

“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O

THE AFTER MEETING

man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself.”—Romans 2: 1.

5. **WHEN TO BELIEVE.** “Choose you this day whom you will serve.”—Josh. 24: 15.

“Come, for all things are now ready.”
—Luke 14: 17.

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”—
2 Cor. 6: 2.

CHAPTER VIII

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

THE Church is not the minister's field, but rather his force. An unorganized force is a mob, while an organized force may exert the greatest possible influence in a community. When I was pastor of the Bethany Church in Philadelphia, Hon. John Wanamaker proposed that the great Church of four thousand members be divided into groups of tens, and one person be made responsible for the other nine, so that reaching ten people practically meant the reaching of one hundred. These leaders were in turn divided up into tens, and one made responsible for nine, so that the pastor could come in touch with ten leaders and reach one thousand Church members. I believe every Church might be organ-

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

ized on the same basis. This would greatly simplify the pastor's work.

I know of a pastor in an Illinois town who announced to his people that for three weeks there would be no preaching from his pulpit. He said: "I have divided the Church members into groups and placed one person in charge of each group. I am prepared to give out the names of these groups and their leaders, and I expect my people for three weeks to do personal work in the community, bringing me in touch with all the men and women who ought to become members of our Church. On Sunday mornings, instead of preaching, I will tell you how this work may be done. On Wednesday evenings, in addition to the prayers we may offer, I will listen to your reports." As a result of the plan, properly worked out, and without a sermon, eighty-seven people joined the Church, the youngest, if I remember correctly, seventeen, and the oldest past eighty.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

I know of a pastor in a Church in the State of New York, who said to his congregation just as they were entering upon the last month of the old year: "I want as many people as will promise me to make an effort to win at least one soul to Christ to meet me at the close of the service." He formed a committee numbering one hundred. This committee labored for an entire month, each one determined to bring one person to Christ. In a single month the Committee won one hundred and thirty-seven people for Christ. The committee continued in voluntary existence for the second month, and won one hundred and twenty more. Two hundred and fifty-seven joined the Church without an extra service being held, except the meeting of the committee. I believe this is possible in every Church. The committee might be called the Committee of One Hundred, or the Committee of Seventy-nine, or the Committee of Forty, letting the number of the members of the com-

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

mittee suggest its name. The pastor may meet this committee as often as he thinks best. Some pastors have taken only ten minutes for such a conference and found it most effective.

The Sunday night service of the Church is the harvest time. Most ministers, as they are used of God, realize the sense of the conviction of sin on the part of the congregation, but to secure results is a problem often seriously considered and frequently not understood. One of the best ways I know is to have certain of the Church members, who may form a special committee, assigned to seats in different parts of the church. When the sermon is preached, the pastor might say something like this: "I would like to meet, personally, every one in this service to-night who would be willing to talk with me about Christ. If I could I would like to make the way easy. I am going to ask some of the members of my Church to pass through the audience with a little card on which you may

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

sign your name and address, if for any reason you would be willing to have me call upon you." During the week, or at any convenient time, calls could be made on those who had indicated their willingness, or an after-meeting could be held in an adjoining room, which is always better than the room where the main service is held. Some workers have very meager results because they have not expected greater.

The mid-week service is ordinarily the most poorly attended service of the Church. There are three reasons for this, the first being that, as a rule, ministers do not make careful preparation for the meeting. If they would prepare for this gathering as they prepare for the Sunday services, the attendance would be greatly increased. The second reason for the small attendance is that the meetings are frequently uninteresting, and not always helpful. With such a story as we have to tell, and with such miracles of grace about which we might

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

Speak, these meetings could be the largest in the church. The third reason for the small attendance is that the people do not always understand how beneficial such meetings could be to them. I would suggest that a series of three special mid-week services be held, and that particular attention be given to the singing and to the addresses to be delivered, and that at least three or four people be asked to speak on an interesting topic, not exceeding five minutes each. One of the meetings could be a "Promise Meeting," with many of the promises of God quoted and illustrated. Another might be a "Question Meeting," when questions could be sent in one week and answered the next. I am sure that the average minister could make these services a spiritual force in his Church life.

I know of a pastor who called his young people together and suggested that they have a week of special services. The first night was entirely of a social order.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Brief addresses were delivered and special music rendered. The second night a reception was held, and the young people and their friends were asked to be present. This was in the truest sense a reception. Innocent games were played, and the evening closed with brief prayers and singing. The next night was the mid-week service of the Church, and all the young people were asked to be present. It was their night, and they were asked to make it interesting. The next night was a song service, conducted in the most informal manner. The piano was placed in the center of the room, and the young people gathered about it as if they were at home. They sang and talked informally, the pastor made his appeal, and twenty-three decided for Christ. The next night, the young people came together to pray for their friends who were not Christians, and they went forth promising to speak to them. As a result, a goodly number confessed Christ and united with the Church.

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

It is impossible to have a special work for men unless you have men around you who are willing to assist you in your efforts. Three men standing by the pastor, ready to co-operate with him and sympathize with him and pray for him, could transform him. Let this number grow by individual effort; then give an occasional banquet, or hold such gatherings in private homes or elsewhere as would interest men of business. I believe every pastor could hold one, and sometimes as many as three services each year, for *men only*, in his church on Sunday evening, if he planned the work weeks ahead, prepared sermons that would interest the men and arranged a service that would be attractive. The attendance would be great; the effect wonderful.

In every congregation there are godly women of strong faith. If the pastor would call the women of his Church together and ask them to render some special service, they would respond. I

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

once had in my Church a society of seventy. It was made up of seventy women, and I sent them forth two by two, to work in the congregation. They brought back to me information that was invaluable. Their sympathy and prayers largely made my work possible.

Some of the strongest Christian characters in the world to-day among women came to Christ in early girlhood. Temptations quite as great face our girls as confront our boys. I would suggest that every pastor call together the Christian girls of his congregation, map out for them some line of personal work, and ask them to bring their friends to him that he might talk with them. This individual work would do two things: It would lead many to Christ, and it would greatly strengthen the characters of the girls who labor in such a way.

One of the most successful evangelistic pastors in the United States has worked the following plan with great success, and I believe that, with some

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

modifications demanded by individual Churches, the plan could be worked in any town, city, or State in the universe. The pastor holds an entire month of evangelistic meetings, preaching every night except Saturday, and making the Sunday services special in every way. He begins the preparation for this month of meetings three months before the preaching campaign is inaugurated. He insists that his members shall keep that month absolutely free from social, and, so far as possible, from business engagements. He tells them that he must have their hearty co-operation and their undivided attention. He issues a card which he asks them to sign. On this card is a promise to make every effort to attend all of the meetings which will be proposed, and influence others to do so, and by personal effort and prayer to make them in every way a success. At the close of this month of special meetings a special communion service is held, and not infrequently hundreds of

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

people join the Church. There is a great advantage in this plan of work.

The evangelistic spirit should pervade all the services of the Church throughout the year, but it should be remembered that evangelism is a spirit, and not a method, and that while the evangelistic spirit may at all times be apparent, yet if evangelistic methods were used constantly, the life of the Church might be weakened. It is possible to have so much fire that you will destroy your force; but for a solid month the most intense evangelistic methods may be used, and the most remarkable and satisfactory results be obtained.

There is no more important work than the proper training and spiritual care of the children. Unfortunately, in too many cases the responsibility for this work is allowed to rest upon the Sunday school teacher. The work must be well done because it is so important. Every assistance should be given by parents to the Sunday school workers,

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

Church officers, and ministers. Urge the Sunday school superintendent to make his work spiritual, and see to it that the teachers become personally interested in their scholars. The average boy or girl in the school may be won for Christ if approached in the right way and at the right time.

If a special Decision Day is to be observed, let it be well planned for; set the date far enough in advance to make its observance great in every way.

1. Have special prayer for the day and the teachers who observe it.

2. When the day arrives, have a meeting before the session of the school when special prayers will be offered for the teachers undertaking the work.

3. On the day appointed, set aside the lesson, tell the scholars only one subject is to be presented, and that has to do with their acceptance of Christ.

4. Let the teachers make the most direct appeal to their scholars.

5. Finally, let the pastor say and do

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

the thing which may, in his judgment, be proper to lead the scholar to a public confession.

6. Care for the scholars after they profess conversion.

7. Try and find some work which they can do for Christ.

8. It is very advisable to receive them in the Church. You can not take them in too young, if they are properly cared for after they become Church members.

The morning service of the Church must be of such a nature as to build up the congregation in faith and Christian character, and also to strengthen the men who are so heavily burdened through the week. The message must be positive. A man in need does not care for negative preaching. He does not wish to have ministers preach their doubts, but rather the things they know and believe. A series of sermons could be preached on the great vital doctrines of the Church which would call forth large and interested congregations. It is not

AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

well, however, as a rule, to have more than three sermons in a series. The evening service should be evangelistic in its tone.

At least once a month a great service of song could be held. New hymns should be used with the old. Tell how some of the hymns were written. These stories are often thrilling. Put in an illustration between each hymn, and when you come to the close of such a song service, it would be possible to give an invitation for people to come to Christ. I am sure that this would be attractive in any Church. Some Churches will need to dismiss their choirs before they can have very effective congregational singing. There is no greater blessing to the Church than a consecrated choir of men and women who sing for the glory of God, so that those who hear them may know Christ. There is no greater hindrance to the pastor's work than to have a singer in the choir loft who is not a Christian, and who is at the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

same time unmindful of the great spiritual interests of the Church and the great desire which controls the pastor's thinking and preaching. This could often be regulated if the pastor would talk frankly with the singers and tell them what he would like to have them do and how he would like to have them do it.

CHAPTER IX

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

FOR the spiritual condition of the Church we are individually responsible; for the ordering of our lives we have received most definite instruction. There are certain Scriptures which one must have very clearly in mind if he is to understand his mission as a follower of Jesus Christ and his position with reference to aggressive Church work. In no uncertain way did the Master speak: "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him they worshiped Him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”—Matt. 28: 16-20.

“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.”—Mark 16: 15-20.

“And said unto them, Thus it is writ-

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

ten, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”—Luke 24: 46-49.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”—Acts 2: 1-4.

From all of these Scriptures it is quite evident that God expects us to be evan-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

gelistic. This is not only true of the individual, it is also true of the Church. It does not mean that we are obliged to use exactly the same methods adopted in other days by other men, for this would, in some cases, be quite impossible, but it does mean that we are to have the same spirit, which is entirely feasible. It is also true that He equips us to be evangelistic. The possession of this spirit is not so much a question of genius, nor even of mental equipment, but rather of spiritual power, and it is not to be forgotten that the Spirit of God is no respecter of persons. The evangelistic minister is one who is filled with the Spirit of God, follows closely His leadership, and depends upon Him for repeated and renewed instructions. The evangelistic Church is one that follows the leadership of such a minister.

Possibly it is best to give a negative answer to the question as to what the evangelistic Church is: Not of necessity a Church that holds extra services; the

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

extra service is almost a confession of failure of the regular means of grace, and yet it is many times required because of local conditions. With the Church aroused, with the Church member seeking to do his best, and realizing that for the use or abuse of his opportunities he will be called to account at the judgment seat of Christ—with such a condition existing, then, without extra services, many will be added to the membership of the Church, having been won to Christ. This is the highest type of evangelism.

It is not of necessity a Church that has important accessions to the membership. A most unlikely boy joined a Church in Scotland and became one of the world's greatest missionaries. One who was quite unpromising as a boy united with a New England Church and became the greatest evangelist of his generation. It is the spirit that counts. When the Holy Spirit of God is given the leadership, then victory is sure, and

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

it is the kind of victory coming with His co-operation that pleases God.

It may be well to give a negative definition of an evangelistic pastor. He is not of necessity one who always preaches along evangelistic lines, for you may drop into an evangelistic rut quite as easily as any other sort of rut, and the results are equally harmful. You may say "Come to Jesus" so often that the expression will lose its sweetness. It is not necessary always to speak it to mean it. It is possible to give an invitation by the way one enters the pulpit, leads in his invocation, announces his hymn, offers his prayer and reads his Scripture. It is not so much what one says, as the way it is said, and let it again be repeated, it is what one is that really counts with God and men. He is not of necessity one who closes every sermon with an appeal. I know of a minister conspicuously successful, who says that sometimes for two or three weeks, or longer, he will not make a definite appeal

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

in a sermon, but he will preach sermons of a popular character, expecting to draw into his audiences a new constituency, and then for three or four weeks the appeal is made as concisely and clearly as possible. After-meetings are held, and the result is great. With the minister as with the Church it is the spirit that counts.

One of my friends preached his sermon one Sunday evening, and made his way to his home completely disheartened, telling his wife that he would never again enter the pulpit. He was literally crushed by what seemed to him to be a defeat. He did not dare to go to bed nor try to sleep. At one o'clock in the morning his doorbell rang, and the tenor singer in his choir stood on his step, saying: "Doctor, I heard you preach to-night. I went home and could not sleep, and you must tell me what I must do to be saved. Your sermon to-night convinced me of my need of a Savior." And when the minister felt that he would

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

like to know what it was in the sermon that moved his friend, he asked what he had said that had so stirred him. Then answered the singer: "It was not so much what you said, but when I saw you lean over the pulpit with your face so white, with your tears flowing, and your lips trembling, I said to myself, 'Christ is real to this minister,' and there came a great longing in my soul to know Him. It was the spirit of your service to-night that led me out of darkness, and I now come to you to know the way into the light."

Negative answers, however, are not enough. Let us give a positive definition of the evangelistic Church, and in order that we may start aright, let us begin with the minister. The evangelistic minister is one who realizes that men are lost without Christ. Question this statement, and the nerve of evangelism seems to be paralyzed. If Christ is only one way of escape among many, it is inconceivable that the preacher will

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

have much of a passion in preaching. But if He is the only way of escape, if there is none other name than His, if He is the only door into life eternal, if He alone is the Savior of mankind, then to reject Him is fatal, and to present Him with the most intense conviction of His power to save, this is to be evangelistic in the truest sense.

The evangelistic pastor is a man of prayer. All the great soul-winners of the past have prayed much, and all the great preachers of other days who live to-day in the memories of the people, conspicuous for their successful soul-winning work, knew how to pray. Spurgeon, Finney, Moody, and hosts of others talked with God. They came from their knees to the pulpit. They preached their sermons believing that God had heard them in their prayers. Their confidence in their message was strong because of the privilege they had of prayer, and without the atmosphere of prayer soul-winning is impossible.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

The evangelistic pastor is a man truly filled with the spirit of Jesus. For the evangelistic preacher Jesus is a perfect model. His conversations with individuals; His appeals to those who were wandering; His compassion for the multitude which stood round about Him as sheep without a shepherd; His sobs over Jerusalem; His final conversation with His own disciples, and His broken-hearted cry upon the cross, present the highest ideal to the evangelistic preacher. The possession of the spirit of Jesus is evangelism pure and simple.

The evangelistic Church must also have a positive definition. It is a Church breathing a spirit of welcome. A Church might have St. Paul as a minister, and the people in the pews could make his message ineffective. The Church member who welcomes you as you enter the door; the usher who directs you to your seat; the pew-holder in whose pew you sit; the Church officer waiting upon you for your collection; all these are mighty

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

helps or mighty hindrances to the preacher in the pulpit.

I attended a certain church with a member of my household, and was not permitted to sit with her because the pews were rented, and the usher did not dare to fill them with strangers. She was in the rear of the church, and I was in the front of it. I was a most uncomfortable listener to a magnificent sermon. The atmosphere of the church jarred upon me, and as I went away I said to myself that if I were an unconverted man I would not seek such a place of worship. This is not against the system of pew renting. Personally I favor it, for I entered another church crowded to the doors, the usher took me to a pew, and a young man arose to give me his seat. At the close of the service, the gentleman in whose pew I sat, who did not know me at all, told me that I must always occupy a seat in that pew when I came to the church, that I must look upon it as my own pew, and ever be as-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

sured of a welcome. The sermon made no special impression upon me, but the spirit of the man in the pew has warmed my heart ever since.

It should not be forgotten that there is a twofold responsibility in this matter of cordial reception and welcome to the church. Some people come to church to whom you could not speak, however sociable may be your nature. The responsibility is not all on the Church, and the visitor may find a duty in the following words of a Scotch blessing:

“If after kirk you bide a wee, there’s some
would like to speak to ye,
If after kirk you rise and flee, we’ll all seem
cold and stiff to ye.
That one that’s in the seat with ye is stranger
here than you may be.
All here hae got their fears and cares; add
your soul unto our prayers;
Be you our angel unawares.”

The evangelistic Church is one that is willing to use any method until one is found that can turn the attention of

THE EVANGELISTIC CHURCH

lost men to Christ. The shepherd sought until he found the lost sheep; the woman searched until she found the lost silver; the father waited until his lost son returned. We must change our methods to-day if they are powerless to help the people until we find a method to which God will give His approval, and which will be helpful to those who sit in the pews and are in need, or who walk the streets and are to all our appeals apparently indifferent.

An evangelistic Church is one that cares for its own. It is said in these days that what is required in order that we may have the old times of blessing is ministers in the pulpit who can draw, and I am sure that this is not always true. We rather need people in the pews who can hold; hold by their sympathy; hold by the atmosphere they create; hold by the kind words they speak. As a matter of fact, every minister draws enough people into his church to fill it many times over, if only they were thus

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

held by the officers who ought to welcome them, the Church members who ought to be glad to greet them. The lost sheep of our Church households to-day are some of them found in the penitentiaries; the places of evil resort and the slums. What is needed is not so much a great awakening that would bring a host of new members into the membership of the Church, but a mighty in-filling of the Spirit of God, which will lead the people to seek, in every possible way, to hold for Christ those whom the minister has drawn to Him. Given such a Church as this, and many of our present-day problems will be solved. The minister's burden's will be lightened, and the Great Head of the Church will be honored.

CHAPTER X

CHURCH OFFICERS

It is quite impossible to overestimate the importance of the position and influence of an officer of the Church. By Church officer I mean one having in charge the spiritual interests of the Church, such as Presbyterian elders and deacons; Congregational deacons, Methodist stewards, and others in various denominations who are charged with a special commission to assist the minister in the spiritual direction of the Church; although it may also include trustees, having in charge the financial care of the Church.

Sometimes the closest harmony and fellowship does not exist between pastor and Church officers. The relations are friendly, but they are not of that intimate sort which means mutual helpfulness. Occasionally this is due to the lack of

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

frankness on the part of the pastor in setting his desires before his official members, and sometimes it is due to the lack of definiteness in laying before them the particular plans which he would like to have carried out.

However, the responsibility for such a state of affairs does not wholly rest upon the pastor. Sometimes the Church officer does not realize that it is the little thing he can do for the minister which will make his burdens lighter. A word of cheer spoken at the right time is like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." The sympathetic hearing of a sermon which has cost the minister time and much effort means much to him. It is, however, believed that if the pastor and his Church officers are firmly united, seeing eye to eye concerning the great needs of the community and the great opportunities of the Church, a marvelous work can be accomplished; the effectiveness of the Church and the influence of the minister greatly increased.

CHURCH OFFICERS

I know of a minister whose senior officer came to him one day and said, "I have learned the secret of Mr. Spurgeon's power;" and when the pastor asked him what it was, he said: "The moment Mr. Spurgeon enters the pulpit, hundreds of people pray for him; and better still," said he, "his Church officers meet him in prayer before he ascends to the pulpit." The pastor replied, "Why could we not do that?" and the answer was, "We can, and we will." There are twenty-four Church officers in that Church. From that time on every Sunday morning they met the pastor before he entered the pulpit. They prayed for God's blessing upon him. They sat with him on the pulpit platform. Their silently spoken "Amen" and the assurance, once in a while given by the leading officer of the Church who sat near to the minister, that he was praying for him as he preached, transformed the minister, enabled him to lead more than a thousand people to

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Christ, and made the pastorate accordingly successful.

I know another minister, in a New York Church, who was never allowed by his Church officers to go into his pulpit, either on Sunday morning or on Sunday evening, or at the mid-week service, without the officers gathering about him for counsel and prayer. At the Sunday services they usually preceded him into the church, and by the time twelve men, some of whom were distinguished, had crossed over the pulpit platform and entered their pews, there was a spiritual atmosphere in the church which made preaching a delight. I confidently believe that if every minister in the country had such a band of praying Church officers his burden would be lighter, his preaching ability greatly improved, his effectiveness as a pastor many times multiplied, and the whole Church would feel a spiritual awakening.

We must have an atmosphere in which to work. Jesus insisted upon it. Doubt

CHURCH OFFICERS

hindered His work. He could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. Indifference troubled Him. "Why do you not understand my speech?" He said to His disciples, and if this is true of the Master, how much more would it be true of His servants? Many a minister who has a truly great message fails to present it effectively to his people because of the atmosphere which is so much against him. This is caused sometimes by the singing in the choir. There are choirs and choirs. Some of them should be either disbanded or reprimanded; others, by their singing and consecrated spirit, create the atmosphere of which I am speaking. The last place in the world for a non-Christian, unconsecrated singer is in the choir of a Church, and many a minister's sermon is killed by his choir. Sometimes it is due to the worldliness of his congregation, although, I am persuaded, did the people in the pews understand the measure of their influence to help or hinder, they

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

would make it much easier for the minister to deliver his message. Sometimes it is caused by thoughtlessness on the part of those who sit before the minister. One minute spent in prayer, after entering the church, that God's blessing would be upon the service and upon the minister, would change the atmosphere of a congregation and make preaching an unceasing delight.

One of the most successful ministers I know distributed a little card through his congregation, which read as follows:

TO THE MEMBERS OF MY CHURCH

I sincerely feel the need of your sympathy and prayers that I may do well the work which has been committed to my charge. It would greatly cheer me if I knew that you were enrolled with the members of the Church and congregation as belonging to a circle of prayer, pledged to pray for me each day, and especially as I enter the pulpit to declare to you the truth of God.

(Signed).....

Dated

CHURCH OFFICERS

He asked his people to sign these cards and return to him through the mail. Very many of them came back to him. He says that his Prayer Circle completely transformed him and greatly increased his ability to preach.

I know of a minister who called his Church officers together and told them, very frankly, that without their spiritual assistance he could not proceed in his work. He asked them to meet him every Sunday morning before he entered the pulpit, to spend a few minutes with him in prayer. They came. The minister entered his pulpit from the sympathetic presence of his Church officers, preached as he had never preached before. This was the testimony of his congregation.

Another minister I know of combined these two plans: he secured a Prayer Circle list from his congregation, enrolled his Church officers as members of a special inner circle of prayer, and then called his volunteer choir together,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

and asked them to remember that they could help or hinder him in his work. He urged upon them the necessity of being much in the spirit of prayer for him as he preached. The first day that this plan was put into operation there were thirty-two who accepted Christ as their Savior when the minister made his appeal.

The following plan has been known to work most satisfactorily: The card is supposed to be distributed at the proper time through the church, the Church members generally being asked to take it and return to their pastor as early as convenient. On one side of the card is printed the following, with the pastor's name signed to it:

Dear Friend:

I am persuaded that, as a member of the Church, you must have in mind at least some one person for whom you are concerned, and whom you would like to see come to Christ. There is no question but that your burden

CHURCH OFFICERS

would be easier to bear if you had the consciousness that some one was praying with you. I, therefore, would like to suggest that you write on the other side of this card the name and address of the person or persons in whom you are especially interested along this line, and that you sign your name in the place indicated. I will agree to pray with you for all these, and also agree that your name is not in any way to be used in connection with any work which I may do personally with them.

.....
Pastor.

On the other side of the card is the following:

I am especially interested in the following persons:

.....
.....
.....

I agree to pray earnestly for them that they may be brought to Christ.

(Signed).....

Address.....

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

I know of still another minister who asked the Church people to send to him requests for prayer in behalf of those for whom they were interested, and as these requests came in he called his Church officers together, laid these requests before them, and then asked them, as opportunity presented itself, to seek out these friends for Christ; and, as a result, scores of them were converted.

I sincerely believe that a pastor with a message, influenced by a vision of Christ, possessed with a passion for souls, and surrounded by a company of praying Church officers and sympathetic people, could be made a power for good in a community, his preaching would be a delight, and the entire Church would become an irresistible force for righteousness.

CHAPTER XI

ORGANIZING THE MEN

It is quite possible to over-organize one's Church. Too much machinery has a tendency to weaken spiritual power—but too little organization is quite as much to be feared.

It is not possible to overestimate the influence of men in connection with Church work, and how to enlist them in service is a most important problem. I am not unmindful of the power and helpfulness of godly women, but observation leads me to say that, as a rule, men are reached through other men, and wherever I have found a Church largely attended by men and the pastor strongly supported by them, I have found a Church in which they were well organized for effective and intelligent service, and where the pastor had ex-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

hibited some genius in the matter of influencing and attracting this mighty force to the Church. I am sure if I have had any success in the ministry, it may be traced, first, to my Church officers; after that to a great company of men who gave me their loyal and sympathetic support. Why could there not be formed in every congregation a temporary organization known as a Pastor's Council. This should be what its name indicates—a company of men banded together and willing, by their counsel and help, to assist the pastor in his arduous labors.

Every pastor is in need of such a Council. He needs to view his work from other standpoints than his own, and he will be benefited if his business men tell him how they think the power of his work could be increased and the mission of the Church more perfectly fulfilled. It is not necessary that this Council should be composed entirely of men who are members of the Church,

ORGANIZING THE MEN

it may include other men who are only members of the congregation, but who, whether they are willing to acknowledge it or not, have the best interests of the Church at heart, and would like to see her prosper.

Let it be noted that this is not a new organization, and it is not meant to be continued permanently. This Pastor's Council is just a company of men called out from various societies, from the Church membership, and from the congregation, who may, for a certain special time, by their counsel and advice, make the work of each society and of the pastor more effective. It is not an organization to be weighed down with by-laws and constitution. No regular meetings need be held. The Council should only come together at the call of the minister. There need be no dues and no fees of any sort. If any extra expense is incurred in the work of the Council, the funds to meet this expense may be easily raised in some way suggested by the members of the Council

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

themselves, and need not be taken from the Church treasury.

The effect of such a called-out body of men would be extremely beneficial. It would encourage the pastor in his work. It is very easy for the minister to grow discouraged with such burdens as ordinarily come to him, and a discouraged man can not render effective service. It would put new life into the Church. Most men do not work in the Church because they do not know exactly what to do, or because they think they must render some great service. Ordinarily it is the little thing, well done, that counts. It would strengthen every existing organization in the Church. The societies for men, for women, for young people, the Sunday school, and the various missionary organizations would all feel the impulse of a new power if such a body of men should give the work these societies represent the benefit of their counsel and advice.

Such a Council in the individual Church

ORGANIZING THE MEN

could work in harmony with similar Councils in other Churches in the same community, so that the entire town or city could be spiritually awake.

How may the Council be formed? Call a meeting of all the men of the congregation. This may be at the close of a Sunday morning service, when the men who tarry may be asked to join with the pastor for three months, in carrying on, in a special way, the work of his particular Church. A card worded as follows might be given out:

PASTOR'S COUNCIL

I enroll myself as a member of the Pastor's Council.

1. It is my purpose to aid my pastor with counsel and such personal effort as may be possible in extending the influence and increasing the effectiveness of my own Church.

2. I furthermore agree to co-operate with other men who have a similar purpose. In order that we may unitedly, as pastor and people, in every

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

legitimate way, further the interests of the Church and aid in the accomplishment of her mission.

Name.....

Address

Church

In a church or community where no special meetings are in progress, it would be comparatively easy to form such a Council, the pastor, in every case, to be its head and moving spirit. One man should be appointed secretary; possibly he might have an assistant; this would make his duties easier to perform. The beginning may be very small. It would be quite sufficient to start with three men, certainly with ten, and it should be an easy matter to secure this number in any Church when the Council is sufficiently large.

Various committees could be appointed, such as a committee for Sunday evening service, the mid-week service, the social life of the Church, the foreign missionary

ORGANIZING THE MEN

interests, and the local work of the Church. But it should be understood that, while these committees are appointed, the entire Council is to give consideration to the work as a whole. If the beginning is small, the growth may be constant. The members of the Council should keep on the outlook for men, in the Church and out, whose advice is worth having and whose sympathy is unquestioned.

When the Council has been formed the following is suggested: A banquet might be given by the pastor, for which I should think provision would gladly be made by the ladies of the Church. To this banquet the Pastor's Council should be invited. Let there be the strongest possible address delivered by the pastor. Let him tell the men how sorely he needs their support, and how highly he would value their counsel. Let him urge them to say frankly what would, in their judgment, increase the effectiveness of the Church, and let him

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

ask them to stand by him in his work, especially in the Sunday evening service and mid-week service of the Church.

The following plans may be worked out in any Church: An occasional reception or banquet may be given the men of the congregation or the community, and the Pastor's Council be made responsible for this. To this a well-worded and well-gotten-up invitation should be sent to those expected to be present.

The attendance at the Sunday evening service might easily be increased by the members of the Council. I know a pastor whose men determined that they would fill his church. The pastor carefully prepared a series of sermons, and the men sent out the following invitation, beautifully engraved:

M.....

It is a pleasure to inform you that our pastor is preaching a special series of sermons in the Church, the next three Sunday even-

ORGANIZING THE MEN

ings. I assure you that these sermons will be interesting and profitable, and well worth your while to hear. The music will be special. I personally invite you to attend.

If you will present this card you will be specially cared for at the church.

Cordially yours,

.....

The mid-week service could easily be increased in attendance and in spirit if the members of the Church composing the Pastor's Council would agree with the minister that they would be prepared to speak not more than a minute on a topic which he would previously announce. The ordinary prayer-meeting talks are not interesting because the message is not thoroughly prepared, and, as a rule, is altogether too definite. The largest room could soon be filled with people at the mid-week service if the best preparation were made for the service.

It would be comparatively easy to

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

influence many people to attend church if the pastor only knew them and knew where they lived. Enough people attend every church to fill it to overflowing, if they were but anchored in the church. Let the Pastor's Council assist him, by distributing through the congregation after he has preached, a card similar to this:

I would be pleased to have the name and address of any one who would permit me to call upon them as the pastor of this Church.

Name.....

Address.....

.....Pastor.

The attendance upon the Sunday school and the adult classes could be materially increased by the efforts of the members of the Council.

The following was sent out by a New England pastor and may be adapted to any congregation. It would be well to have this printed on a card, and by

ORGANIZING THE MEN

the Pastor's Council distributed through the congregation. Let the pastor suggest that the card be properly marked and returned as soon as possible.

WAYS TO WORK

In which of the following ways are you willing to work for the Church if called upon?

Please indicate upon this card your preferences by placing an X opposite the number or numbers referring to work you are not now doing, or would like to do, and return to me not later than Sunday

1. To teach in the Sunday school.
2. To be a substitute Sunday school teacher.
3. To join the Home Department of the Sunday school.
4. To join a class in Sunday school.
5. To join the Young People's Association.
6. To sustain the Mid-week Prayer-Meeting.
7. To help in the evening services—Choir, Personal Worker, Attendance.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

8. To join the Young Men's League.
9. To join the Mission Study Class.
10. To send the pastor money, when called on, for special cases of distress which come at times to his attention, and are thoroughly investigated by him.
11. To help in some way not mentioned in this list.

.....

Name.....

Any suggestion you may have for the welfare of the Church and its larger usefulness will be gladly received and carefully considered. Please return this paper when filled out, either through the mail or by placing it in the pastor's box in the vestibule.

* * * * *

There are many other suggestions which may be made, but it is confidently believed that if these plans mentioned be carried out, and others which in the opinion of the individual pastor may be better, are also adopted and well

ORGANIZING THE MEN

worked, there will come a new life in the Church and a new inspiration to the pastor.

Many men say they are out of sympathy with the Church to-day—they might better be out of humor with themselves; they put little into the Church; they draw out an equally small amount. They do not expect dividends in business when no investment has been made. Let them put into the work of the Church their money, their time, and best of all, themselves; and they will marvel at the joy that will come to them and rejoice in the increasing power of the Church.

CHAPTER XII

A SPECIAL DAY

IF conditions in the Church were ideal, then at all times the unsaved would be ready to confess Christ as a personal Savior and to become members of the Church. Alas, this is not true, and so special efforts are a necessity. A special day, when the winning of the unsaved might be emphasized, could profitably be set apart once or twice a year. The plans for the day should be suited to the local needs and conditions and specially adapted to the Church, or the co-operating Churches. The effect of the day would be twofold.

Many people who are living in an indifferent attitude towards Christ and the Church would be led to a confession of Christ. Those engaged in the work of the day would find their own faith

A SPECIAL DAY

strengthened and their zeal increased. Mr. Moody used to say that it was far better to set ten men to work than for one to do the work of ten. No greater blessing could come to a Church than that the members should be inspired to enter upon some special service, particularly the winning of others to Christ. Each pastor would be more effective in his work if he could know that his people were actively aroused to the duty and privileges of personal evangelism, and were engaged in direct effort to reclaim the lapsed Church members and to win the unsaved to Christ, and Church members thus engaged would live more consistently. If the following suggestions were carried out with enthusiasm a complete transformation could be worked in either city or town. What may be accomplished in one day is an illustration of a plan which might be worked again and again throughout the year. In order that the special day may be effective, it will be necessary for special prepa-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

ration to be made on the preceding days.

SUNDAY.—The services of the day ought to be unusual. At the morning service such themes as the following might well be presented: "Personal Evangelism," "The Responsibility of the Church to the Unsaved," "Being Right with God that One may be Used." In the evening an evangelistic service might profitably be held, at which time not only the unsaved could be invited to come to Christ, but Christians themselves might be called upon to express their interest in their friends, and be urged to have some special objects of prayer for the days that follow.

MONDAY.—In the afternoon there might be held a conference with the officers of the different women's societies. In the evening it would be most helpful to call together all the officers of the Church, the Sunday school, the Young People's Societies, and any special committees which may exist in the Church,

A SPECIAL DAY

when the plans and purposes of the work may be fully explained. If this evening should be much given to prayer, the effect upon the observance of the particular Church Day would be most marked.

TUESDAY—CHURCH DAY.—If a pastoral letter should be sent out to all the Church members, asking for their presence at the Tuesday morning service, the pastors would be surprised at the large response. In many cities and towns the most prominent business men have given the time from their businesses; others have given up half of the day in shop or office; women representing all phases of society have been present, and the service held at an usual hour has made a profound impression.

Tuesday is the day chosen for the special effort because it is so near Sunday, and also because the results of the day's work could the more effectively be presented at the regular prayer-meeting service of the Church, ordinarily held

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

either on Wednesday or Thursday evening.

A list of all the families who are members of the congregation, and not of the Church, may be given to the members of the Church, who will agree to call on them during the day and to urge them, kindly, to identify themselves with the Church as soon as possible. Many people are not members of the Church to-day because they have never been personally invited.

It is the purpose of this CHURCH DAY to set the Church people at work. There are many Church members who are leading useless lives largely because they do not realize how inspiring it is to labor for Christ. It is also the thought of this day that the people may assist the pastor in his arduous labors. No pastor, however gifted, is able to carry on the work of the Church as he would like without such assistance as may be given him by the members of his church.

Such a day of service is also meant to

A SPECIAL DAY

cheer the hearts of those who are the "shut-ins," and a call upon them might serve to enlist their personal and special interest in the work of the Church and also result indirectly in the winning of souls, because of their intercession in prayer. Should such a day be observed frequently it would serve to relieve the Church of responsibility for the unsaved and indifferent, for while we are not responsible for conversion and have no power to bring it about, yet we may introduce others to Christ, and are not freed from our obligation to them until we have attempted to do so.

Such a day spent in service might also mean that the enlisted Church members would be able to reach and influence the stranger who may have but recently become a resident of the city, or community; reclaim lapsed Church members who for various reasons may have lost interest in the Church of Christ; enlist the prayers and sympathies of others for those for whom we are ourselves concerned; and

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

surely it would directly mean the winning of many to Christ. Church members themselves need the stimulus which comes from such active personal effort as is suggested here.

There are many persons in the community whose Church membership has not been transferred from their former place of residence. They have no identification with the Church in the town or city where they now live. Feeling no responsibility for the Church, there is danger that even the child of God may become a hinderance to the cause of Christ, and, as a matter of fact, the presence in a community of so many lapsed Church members lowers the spiritual atmosphere even more than the presence of the unsaved. The pastor sorely needs the assistance not only of his Church officers, but of his entire membership along the lines indicated.

There are many persons waiting for a definite invitation to come to Christ. The preaching of the minister is not

A SPECIAL DAY

enough. It is believed that scores would come to Christ if they were personally invited. There are many who are pre-engaged; their activities are controlled by their own personal interests, and they require a direct and definite appeal that they may realize the necessity of devoting themselves to Christ and His service.

What is here indicated as to the plan for Church Day is only suggestive. Each pastor, with his officers, will doubtless know how to direct his own Church forces, but the following may be helpful:

Let the pastor call together his own people at some hour during the morning of the day set apart as Church Day, say from 9 o'clock until 10:30, when the whole matter of personal work may be discussed. The unusualness of the hour will in itself be impressive. At this time the pastor may express the desire that all his Church members should be enlisted throughout the day in personal evangelism. Where evangelistic meetings are being held let the ministers and visiting

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

evangelist hold a service of prayer in the afternoon, praying for God's blessing upon the personal efforts being made. If the plan is being carried out by a single Church, then let the pastor and such others as he may invite spend the time above indicated in prayer.

There must be thorough preparation for a work so important, and when the people are gathered together in the church there should be a time of quiet waiting before God in order that his children may be right with Him.

“Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth wouldst teach.
Thy soul must overflow
If thou another soul would reach.
It takes the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech.”

It is well to definitely decide concerning the persons upon whom the calls may be made during the day, although many others will naturally be suggested as the work proceeds. If necessary let two Christian people go together. Jesus Him-

A SPECIAL DAY

self sent out His disciples by two. It is not unwise for several persons to call upon the same individual, although this should hardly be pre-arranged. Four men carried one sick man to Jesus.

When committed to the work, spend some time in prayer before putting into operation the plan suggested. When calling upon the people in the community on the special day it will be well to avoid all controversy and general conversation. Enter upon the purpose of the call as directly as possible. Avoid all spirit of criticism, and assure those upon whom you call of the welcome which awaits them in the Church of their choice.

In the most direct personal and yet kindly way invite the lapsed Church members, or the one who has not before been a Christian, to publicly acknowledge Christ.

Present a record card, of which the following is a sample, asking the lapsed Church members to use the form at the top of the card, and the one not a Chris-

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

tian to use the form at the bottom of the card.

“THE MASTER IS COME AND CALLETH FOR THEE”

I am a member of the Church elsewhere. It is my purpose to unite with the Church in this city.

Name.....

Address.....

Church Preferred.....

“CHOOSE YE THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE”

I am not now a member of the Church. I accept Christ as my personal Saviour and hereby confess Him.

Name.....

Address.....

Church Preferred.....

Report to your pastor the result of the call.

Return the cards signed to your pastor.

Ask all upon whom you call to attend the services of the Church, and, if opportunity is offered, be ready yourself to

A SPECIAL DAY

report your personal observations gained during your day's work. Seek in every way to invite the children, if there are any in the home visited, to the Sunday school.

Beyond all question the day will be one of rich blessing. Certainly the community will be stirred. It stands to reason that those who have not been personally invited to attend the Church will appreciate the invitation given to them, and that those hitherto not outspoken in their allegiance to Christ will at least be deeply impressed. If only one person should be won to Christ the day will be well spent. If one lapsed Church member should be turned again to his Father's house, the day would not have been lived in vain.

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest. He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathered fruit unto life eternal; that he that soweth and

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

he that reapeth may rejoice together.”
John 4: 35, 36.

An idle Church member will find it very easy to doubt and drift, and before he realizes it will be found questioning the faith he once held. Criticising the Church will be easy for him; indifference to the minister will grow in some cases into violent opposition. Such Christians are always miserable, and certainly unfruitful.

The difficulty in most cases to-day is not with the foundation upon which our faith rests, but with ourselves. “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” Work and the way to Christ is plain; serve Him and drifting will be impossible; Seek to turn others to Him and faith will strengthen; Love Him and you will become like Him.

CHAPTER XIII

UNION SERVICES

WHEN Union Evangelistic Services are held in a community they should in no wise be considered as a criticism of the pastor. They have been found to be a necessity. Every pastor quite understands that people become accustomed to his voice, attractive as it may be; also to his methods, effective as they may have been in the past; and because of their familiarity with his manner of thought and his way of working, unconsciously the message loses power with them. Before they realize it they have become indifferent, and this is fatal to the best interests of the Church. Then, too, communities sag, as do individuals, and something more is required than the steady, faithful work of the pastor of the Church. A new voice arouses interest,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

a new method commands attention, and when wisely conducted and carefully guarded, the evangelistic campaign is certainly a blessing to the individual Church and to the community.

But there are certain things that should always be kept in mind. If an evangelist is called to lead the Church forces he should certainly be accredited. It is a great encouragement to realize that more and more the evangelical denominations are coming to look upon the evangelist as a necessity. They are assisting in his training, guarding him in his services, and strengthening him in his mission.

Again, no evangelistic campaign is worth while if it disturbs too much the regular life of the Church. The purpose of the campaign is not to hold a meeting, but to assist in changing or deepening the spirit of the Church, causing it to be more aggressive, making the work of the pastor easier, and calling to his assistance and support an additional num-

UNION SERVICES

ber of men and women who will be glad to follow his leadership. I should myself consider a campaign almost fatal to the best interests of the Church if the Church people were for too long a time disturbed in their Church life, and should have their attention distracted too much from the great mission to which they, as members of the Church, had been called. It is also to be remembered that evangelistic work, if it is to be permanently effective, should be simply an added emphasis given to the regular work of the Church. Therefore it is not strange that some conservative ministers look with a bit of suspicion on a movement which is too sensational in its appeal, too erratic in its methods, and too unlike what is known as the real life and work of the Church. Anything that decreases the respect of the people for the true minister of the gospel and causes them to feel that the Church is not all that she should be because her methods in the past have not been like those of the evangelistic campaign, is

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

harmful rather than helpful to the community.

There are ways of testing the genuineness of an evangelistic movement. Does it honor Jesus Christ in both method and appeal? Does it magnify the office of the true minister of the gospel so that when the meetings have closed he is stronger in the affections of the people than before? Does it properly represent the Church of Jesus Christ in spirit and in power so that when the evangelistic meeting is over the people love the Church better and long to do more for the Church? Does it create a better spiritual atmosphere so that it is easier for men to preach and far easier for them to work for Christ? Does it make it easier for men and women to live and more difficult for them to do wrong? Does it plainly present Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of men? If a movement can bear these tests, then it is genuine and it is well worth while.

Any pastor will do well to enter upon

UNION SERVICES

such a campaign, and he has a right to expect from it a great blessing. It used to be the custom of evangelists to insist that all services be given up during the continuation of the meetings; now some are insisting that no services be given up, and that it be understood that the Church is in perfect harmony with the evangelistic campaign, while at the same time it holds to its regular services. This is an indication of the coming of a brighter and better day for evangelism.

If an evangelistic meeting is held, then even the mid-week services should be held in the church, and on the same evening an evangelistic meeting might be held in addition to the Church service in which there would be called together a special audience of non-church goers. The Sunday evening services might also be held as usual in the churches, only, of course, with added interest, every pastor preaching an evangelistic sermon. It is surely better that all the churches should be filled than that a great throng be gathered

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

for the evangelist, with many turned away. A principle which is well worth considering is that the evangelistic movement should not interfere with the life of the Church, but quicken it; not make it more difficult for the pastor to call his people together when the meetings are over, but rather easier, to enlist them in permanent and continued service.

Evangelistic meetings seem to be on trial to-day. The methods of some evangelists are being severely censured. Some of these criticisms are just, others are unjust, but out of the fire of criticism will come a better day for the best sort of evangelistic meetings. If an evangelistic meeting is held then the most thorough preparation possible should be made. The measure of the preparation will be the measure of the blessing, and it should never be forgotten that pastors will get out of the meeting what they put into it, only with added interest. God is willing to bless His people. He is waiting to pour out His Spirit upon them.

UNION SERVICES

The following suggestions are made in order that the work may be well planned for the people, thoroughly aroused, to take advantage of God's willingness:

There should be a determination to have a better state of things in the community with God's help. This is the best sign of an approaching awakening.

The indications of God's providence are sometimes so plain as to bring about a clear revelation of His will. Sometimes by peculiar and alarming events, sometimes by the presence of great need, and often by the burden which so rests upon a few of God's faithful ones that desire for a revival is really an agony of spirit.

When the wickedness of the wicked grieves, humbles, and distresses Christians it is a real indication that God's Spirit is working.

When there is a revival of the spirit of prayer on the part of even a few we may make ready for a coming victory.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Another sign that a revival may be expected is when the attention of the minister is especially directed to this particular object, and when his preaching and other efforts are aimed at the conversion of sinners.

As the farmer tills the soil, sows the seed, and cultivates the growing vegetation, so are we obliged to make preparation for a genuine work of grace. Revivals are born in prayer. When Wesley prayed, England was revived; when Knox prayed, Scotland was refreshed; when the Sunday school teachers of Tannybrook prayed, 11,000 young people were added to the Church within a year. Whole nights of prayer have always been succeeded by whole days of soul-winning. With these preliminary remarks the following suggestions are made as to the plan of the work:

Let the minister call a conference of a few of the most spiritually minded people in the Church. Let the circle be small at the beginning. Following Nehemiah's

UNION SERVICES

example when he went to view the ruins with some few men with him. Nehemiah 2: 12. The first conference may or may not consist of Church officers. In general Church officers are preferable. The circle of conference and prayer may be increased, taking in the Sunday school teachers, and all, together, plan and pray for the best interests of the Church, increasing the numbers in attendance only by such as you are sure would be in sympathy with your great work. A whole week might be taken for such gatherings in the pastor's home, in the church, or in any other place which might appeal to the greatest number.

Let the preaching be along very direct lines. I do not know anything better for the preliminary preaching than that which is suggested by one of the great preachers of a number of years ago. He said: "On Monday, I considered the infinitely holy character of God; on Tuesday, I considered my own particular sins and the sins of my people in the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

presence of that Jehovah of whom I had spoken before; on Wednesday, I considered God's kindness to me, my family, and my Church; and I was amazed at His munificence and abased at my own unthankfulness. On Thursday, my questions were: 'Why do you want a revival of religion? Are you seeking it in the honor of Jesus?' On Friday, I was prepared as never before to look to Jesus. I laid myself upon His altar to do His will, and with great confidence I sought His spirit. Each evening during the week I poured forth to my Church the experience of the day, and the effect was wonderful." With such a week as this in every city and town in the land a mighty revival of religion would be upon us.

There can be no better way to prepare a community for a spiritual awakening than to plan neighborhood or cottage prayer meetings. District the city or town so that every one may be reached, and then secure as many homes as possible,

UNION SERVICES

one or two at least in each district. Send to the representative of that home a note something like this:

Dear Friend:

We wish to hold a neighborhood meeting in your home. We want to reach every one, so far as it may be possible, in the immediate vicinity of your house. We desire that you should pray for a revival and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon the Church. Please send around these little cards which we enclose, properly filled out and signed.

Yours cordially,

.....

Enclose in this communication a card of which the following is a sample, and ask the one in whose house the meeting is to be held to have them printed, or written, and sent out:—

You are most cordially invited to attend a neighborhood meeting to be held in my home, No. Street,

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

on from.....
to o'clock. You
are privileged to bring a friend with
you. This meeting is held in the inter-
ests of the Church of Christ and with
the desire that God may pour out His
Spirit upon us.

(Signed).....:.....

Appoint a day of fasting and prayer
in addition to the suggestions already
made.

With the circle of people with whom
you have been in conference pledged to
your support and the spirit of prayer,
announce such a series of meetings as may
be adapted to your work and observe the
following rules:

Have absolute confidence in God, that
He means what He has said in His
Word.

Expect results from God.

Do not preach simply about Christ
and tell the people how to come to
Him, but give them an opportunity to
come.

UNION SERVICES

Let the plan of salvation be perfectly stated in every sermon.

With such planning and such preparation, victory is certain, and permanency of the results can not be questioned.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

EVANGELISTIC meetings in themselves have not been so much of a problem for the minister as one might expect, inasmuch as there is usually a thrill about them which makes them interesting. But the days following are trying indeed. It is to be seriously questioned whether an evangelistic campaign is worth while if the meetings are not to be followed up with more persistent work, more faithful prayer and waiting upon God than preceded the meetings.

A successful pastor who solved this problem says: "The next day after a revival is as important as any day of the revival. There is less enthusiasm, but there is no less responsibility, and there should be no less work. It is ecstasy to hear a chorus of hundreds of voices

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

when supplemented by a congregation numbering into the thousands; it is rapturous to be part of the great throng and be held spell-bound by an earnest appeal; it is a delight to hear religious matters spoken of on every street corner, in every trolley, and in every store and office. Any one can shed tears of penitence, grow happy shouting, and live like a saint when the flood tide of revival fervor lifts him on its waves.

“But the day after, when the multitude has scattered and the enthusiasm has died away, tests the man and the quality of his religious life. It is then Satan, like a wolf, rends the lambs and scatters the flocks unless they are guarded and protected with great care by the shepherd.

“The day after the close of the meetings I found myself with the names of many people, a majority of whom were men who had been aroused to a consciousness of their spiritual needs, and who had expressed a preference for my

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Church. At once I set myself to the glad work of bringing these men and women into the fellowship and the benefits of the Church.

“Some of the successful plans and methods which have filled the days since the special services, and have resulted in enlisting hundreds of new members in the active work of my Church, are as follows:

“The first work after the close of the special services was, with the aid of a stenographer, to address a personal letter to each one whose name had been handed in, expressing pleasure at the step they had taken and extending a cordial welcome to all of the services and privileges of the Church, together with best wishes and the expressed desire to be of any possible assistance, and the promise of a personal call at the earliest hour possible.

“The week following the simultaneous meetings all who had signed cards were invited, through the mail, to meet the

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

pastor and a small committee of personal workers at the church. The object of these services was to ascertain the needs and the desires of each individual and to give personal counsel according to the needs of each. Three such services were held. To the first those were invited whose names began with letters from A to G. The second night included letters H to O. The third night completed the alphabet. There was great freedom in these services, and before the close each one present gave evidence of having entered into a satisfactory Christian experience.

“A committee, called the Committee of One Hundred, was organized early in the meetings and was composed of the most active and spiritual members of the Church. When the names of those who had signed the cards the previous night were received from day to day, assignment was immediately made to the members of the Committee of One Hundred, no person having more than one name

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

on any given day. Each was requested to call on the party at once, and return to the pastor a written report on a specially-prepared blank. This gave the pastor, at the close of the meetings, exact and valuable information concerning each individual who expressed a preference for his Church.

“A personal call was made possible by the aid of private carriages which were kindly offered the pastor to save time and strength during the specially-busy days following the special meetings, so that in a very short time, by calling both mornings and afternoons, and on such evenings as he was not engaged at the church, every home had been visited.

“The Sunday following the close of the special meetings seats were reserved at the front of the auditorium for those who had expressed a preference for the Church, and the sermon was addressed especially to them, a notice and invitation having been sent to each through the mail.

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

“On the Thursday of the following week the Church gave a public reception in the parlors to the new members for the purpose of expressing their welcome and aiding them in becoming acquainted. Refreshments, music, and short addresses made the evening one of rare pleasure and profit.

“The names of all men coming to the pastor were grouped, after the close of the special meetings, and given into the hands of the men’s organization of the Church. Within three weeks each one had been called upon and invited to join the Brotherhood, and also to come into a newly-organized Bible Class under the auspices of the Brotherhood. Soon after a banquet was tendered to its new members.

“The President of the Women’s Association was given the names of the ladies. These were assigned to ladies living in the respective neighborhood of the new-comers, with a request to call at once. Each person expressing an interest

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

was also assigned by the president to one of the ten or twelve working divisions in the association for service, making it possible thereby to quickly become acquainted with the women of her own division.

“Classified lists of names were also furnished the officers of the Sunday School, the Young People’s Society, and the Missionary Societies, and each in their own way sought at once to bring the new members speedily into touch with the various activities of the Church.

“In order to bring the individual members of the Committee of One Hundred to feel their great and continued responsibility for the welfare of those who in such large numbers were coming into the Church, a personal assignment was made of each new member to some congenial and spiritually minded person, of about their own age and condition of life, who, for a period of not less than six months, should consider them as under their personal care and give them

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

their personal interest and attention.
The following is the form of card used:

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT CARD COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED

M.....

From the large number who recently have united with the First Church, either on probation or by certificate, I desire to entrust to your personal care:

.....

The object of this assignment is to bring each new member into personal touch with, and under the personal care of, some one who already is active and acquainted with the Church, who will aid in every possible way during the next six months those who have recently begun a Christian life, secure the regular attendance of these, and also of those joining by certificate, upon the means of grace, and introduce any who are strangers to those whose acquaintance will be both pleasant and helpful. Your consecrated good sense will suggest ways and means of thus making yourself helpful to the individual and to the Church.

(Signed).....

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

“Every person calling on a new member was requested to learn particularly concerning the progress being made in their religious life, and to report all cases requiring special consideration to the pastor.

“Once a month a convert’s roll-call at the mid-week prayer service is exceedingly helpful, both in interesting the young converts in the Wednesday evening meetings, and also in interesting the older members in the converts, whose prayers and testimonies are always full of inspiration.

“One evening each month the pastor has spent with the new members in studying the history, doctrines, Discipline, and polity of the Church. These meetings were largely attended and resulted in much profit.

“The homes of the new members have been enriched and their minds stored with helpful, stimulating thought by the introduction of religious periodicals which, with their weekly visits, are ever fur-

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

nishing new food for healthy spiritual growth. Helpful leaflets on various important topics have also been mailed by the pastor to each home.

“Special services to meet the needs of an open-door down-town church during the summer have given opportunity to many not previously familiar with Church work to distribute literature, give personal invitations, and render other forms of service which have proved useful both to themselves and to the Church.

“The seven months’ work following the simultaneous meetings had cost many prayers, much time, many dollars, the mailing of some thousands of letters, leaflets, and cards, and the making of several thousand personal calls by the pastor and members of the Church; but the results have proved the wisdom of the investment. The older members of the Church were never so interested or so active. The Sunday school, the prayer meetings, and the young people’s meetings are the largest in their history. The

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

gifts of the people are larger by one hundred per cent than ever before, thirty-four per cent of the contributors being from the new members. Nearly all of those who expressed a preference for our Church have been enlisted among its interested and active workers. The membership of the Church has been augmented by the reception of over two hundred and fifty persons, making an increase of about fifty per cent to the total membership.

“The day of the revival we thought to be beyond comparison; the day after, as we have gathered the fruits, has been equally blessed.”

Such plans as here described are well worth while. This is business method applied to the King's business. It is little wonder that so little is accomplished in some Churches when we detect the almost utter lack of plan and method and the absence of real enthusiasm in pushing forward the work. The Church needs a baptism of enthusiasm. She ought to

THE NEXT DAY AFTER

be on fire with a holy passion. If she were, multitudes would be run to Christ, and being new, they could be held by bonds of love and the constant exemplification of the spirit of Jesus.

CHAPTER XV

THE EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

IF you will test any congregation of Christian people you will be amazed to realize how many of them come to Christ in the days of their youth. Seated not long ago on the bench with a distinguished judge in the city of Brooklyn, I was told by the judge that the majority of those who are sentenced in his court were from sixteen to twenty-two years of age. Inasmuch as he was a Christian man it was not strange that he said to me, "It would seem to me that this should make a deep impression upon Sunday school workers, and it ought to stimulate them to greater effort in behalf of the youth." Then he said: "I should like to give my own personal testimony to the value of Sunday

EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

school work, when I say that not in the five years that I have been upon the bench have I ever had a boy before me for sentence who was in regular attendance upon the Sunday school. It is when a boy feels that he is too old to go to Sunday school or that to attend the school is a useless expenditure of his time that he begins to drift, and when drifting begins there is danger ahead." The judge stopped his conversation long enough to sentence a boy to the penitentiary. He said to him, "Do you go to Sunday school?" The boy answered, "No, Your Honor." "When did you stop?" said the judge. The reply was, "Two or three years ago." "Why did you stop?" was asked him. He said, "I do not know, Your Honor, but I am sorry that I did." Then said the judge to him, "It is boys like you who feel the Sunday school to be of no interest who appear before me for a sentence." "No man," said he, "ever becomes a criminal suddenly. It is when he plots and plans

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

and waits and watches and thinks so constantly about things that are wrong that the criminal instinct is developed. I will sentence you to prison; I am exceedingly sorry to do so; if you had been faithful to your Sunday school duties I would not be under this painful necessity, nor would you have this blight and blot upon your life."

One of the most successful pastors, in speaking of his work in the Sunday schools, gave the following testimony:

"I have been reviewing my ministry in various Churches, extending over a period of eighteen years, and I am amazed to find how large a proportion of those whom I have received into the Church have been scholars in the Sunday school. I think I do not exaggerate when I say that of those who have come into the Church upon confession of faith, eighty-five per cent have been under twenty-one years of age, and of these ninety-five per cent have come out of the Sunday

EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

school. That is to say, of all I have received, eighty per cent have been Sunday school scholars.”

I dare say the proportion will not materially differ in most Churches. Is it not a startling fact that eight out of ten of our new members come from the Sunday school? Does it not remind us—and do we not need reminding anew—that here is our opportunity? The Sunday school is our recruiting station; not the Sunday evening service, as some of us have imagined, but the teaching service offers the most promising field for evangelism.

The statistical tables of Drs. Starbuck and Coe reveal the fact that more people confess Christ between the ages of fourteen and eighteen than during any other period of life. It is to classes of boys and girls of this age, therefore, that the call to Christian life and service most appeals. To make sure, then, that the call is heard by the largest possible number; to make

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

sure that the call is given at the right time, and in the right way, is the pressing problem of the Sunday school.

This is not the time nor the place to engage in criticism of current Sunday school methods. But it is pertinent to the theme to inquire why so large a number of those who enter the Sunday school in the kindergarten and primary grades drop out before reaching the intermediate classes of "recruiting age." Somewhere towards the end of the junior period there is a falling off in numbers. Observation convinces me that there is no corresponding decrease in the number of public school scholars of the same age. If, however, there were a similar dropping out of the grammar school towards the end of the eighth year grade, it might be accounted for by the considerable number of boys and girls who are compelled to go to work at fourteen or sixteen years of age. The same reason does not operate to take them from the Sunday school. But some reason exists. Is it lax

EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

discipline at home? Is it that we have not accommodated our methods to the needs of scholars who are in the transition period from childhood to adolescence?

Whatever may be the answer, not alone the Sunday school, but the Church is vitally interested in it. For if we keep our scholars from infancy to the bend in the road where adolescence is in sight, and lose them then, we are like farmers who bring their corn from seed to stalk, but not ear. I have no theory to exploit, no remedy to announce, but I cry with all urgency to those who are at work perfecting the methods of Sunday school work: "Mend the leak! Stop the gap! Heal the breach!"

I do not offer it as any other than as an experiment, but I give it for what it may be worth—my experience in holding boys of that age when they are most likely to escape the care and culture of the Church.

A "Boy's Brigade" gathered in forty boys of the average age of fourteen. A

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

“Junior Brotherhood” has thirty-five of the same age, who did not take kindly to the “Boy’s Brigade.” The latter organization has been in existence but three months, and five of its members were received into the Church last Sunday. A “Girls’ Missionary Club” has a membership of thirty, of high school age, but most of them have been identified with the club for three or four years.

The strongest current in local Sunday schools is towards *organized* classes. Most of these are of adults. One or two, however, are of younger scholars, and they are flourishing. May we not look for good results in this direction? I have my eyes on a class of girls who are near the transition age. There are twenty of them. If we can hold them two or three years longer most of them will enter the Church. I am going to suggest a class organization in view of the success of the others.

But even as matters and methods are, we do hold many scholars through that

EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

age in which they are ripe for gathering into the Church. But not all are thus gathered. Not all are led to "the great surrender." What is the hindrance on their part, or what the lack on ours?

1. Does the pastor do all he can to make sure that no scholar leaves the school without an urgent invitation to confess Christ? He can do much to stimulate the evangelistic zeal of the teachers, by public prayer, in the mid-week service, in teachers' meetings, and in personal conversation.

I know a minister who often passes from class to class, stopping to inquire of the teachers how many of their scholars have publicly confessed Christ. He learns that in this class all but three, and in that all but one, are already professed Christians. That helps to fix in the minds of the teachers the fact that they have before them one or three or more, as the case may be, who are potential, but not actual members of the visible body of Christ. This same pastor, four

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

times a year, announces that he will teach an "Inquirers' Class" in his study (in the church) during the Sunday school hour, and teachers are requested to send to him at that time any of their scholars who are willing to join such a class. Thirty accessions last year came to us through such a channel.

2. But more, perhaps, depends upon the teacher. He alone knows the intimate thoughts of the scholar. He perceives, if he be sensitive to signs, the "psychological moment," the acceptable time, in the life of this or that scholar, and a word in due season is weighty with possibilities.

3. To the superintendent falls the duty of arranging for "Decision Day," selecting as the speaker one who is tactful and experienced in presenting the claims of Christ upon the individual. And, if the superintendent be alive to his task, he will himself make reference to the practical end of all Bible teaching, which is to make the person taught "wise

EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

unto salvation." I am convinced that a judicious word from the superintendent at the close of a particularly evangelistic lesson is more effective than a formal address. Let us take a recent lesson as an illustration—the first eighteen verses of the first chapter of John. What an opportunity to say in a two or three-minute review some such words as these:

"His own received Him not. The heart of man is the only thing in the world that rejected Christ. Winds and waves obeyed Him. The forces of nature were under His control. The heart of man, the human will, alone in all the world, received Him not! What is it to receive Him? It is to follow Him; to do His commandments; to love Him; to confess Him as our Lord. Have we done that? If not, why do we not begin to-day to receive Him? He asks us to give Him a place in our love and in our lives. Shall we not each of us say to Him now, 'Lord Jesus, I receive Thee; be Thou the light of my life?'"

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

4. The part of prayer in the preparation of pastor, teacher, and superintendent for personal evangelism can not be overestimated. What timidity it will overcome! What winsome solicitude it will engender! What unknown influences it will bring to bear upon the subjects of our intercession.

By all means let prayer for wisdom and power in leading our scholars to Christ have a place in every gathering of teachers for conference or training. By all means let the prayer with which the school opens include a petition "that some one may this day begin the Christian life."

I have known it to have an impressive effect upon a whole school for the superintendent to announce, after each communion, that so many of the scholars had united with the Church. And it seems a perfectly natural thing that before a communion service, either the superintendent or the pastor should announce that on such and such a Sunday

EVANGELISTIC SUNDAY SCHOOL

opportunity will be given to any who desire to confess Christ and their faith by uniting with the Church.

Right well I know that joining the Church is no sufficient evidence that the candidate had an adequate idea of the significance of Christian experience. But it is a step in the right direction. It is a putting on of the uniform. Now follows the drill-master. Afterward comes the soldier life. "What is more natural than that a youth should join the company of good men who own allegiance to the Best?"

I myself came to Christ, at least to the place where I publicly confessed him, under the influence of my Sunday school teacher. I know what the touch of her hand, the tears in her eyes and the pathos in her voice meant to me. And what one teacher accomplished with a boy who was thoughtless, other teachers may bring to pass with scholars whose indifference is only assumed.

CHAPTER XVI

THE PREACHER A PROPHET

A TRUE preacher is a prophet. He should be able not only to draw lessons from the past, present high ideals for the present, but he should speak with authority concerning the future, for the Bible in no uncertain way unfolds God's plans for the days to come.

He is a herald, and is sent forth with an imperial proclamation which is to be declared in the presence of the people.

He is an evangel and has a story to tell of matchless love which sent a Saviour into the world, hurried Him up to the cross, and because of His death upon that cross, made it possible for a lost and ruined world to be saved.

He is a man under authority, and should not fail to let this be understood. His message is the Word sent from God

THE PREACHER A PROPHET

to man. He is but the channel through which it is to flow, and the mouthpiece to declare it. His is the most exalted position in the world, and he should count himself fortunate indeed who has the call of God to such a position and has had offered to him the opportunity to exert an influence which is as lasting as time, and which prepares men for eternity.

He should also be "Mr. Greatheart." Eloquence, oratory, intellectual brilliancy, all these characteristics combined, can not make up for the lack of greatness of heart.

Jesus was moved with compassion when He saw the multitudes, and if we follow in His footsteps we must have the same spirit. It is a marvelous thing to be a preacher. The man divinely called to preach moves in a procession of great and noble souls. He keeps company with Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Spurgeon, Brooks, Moody, Cuyler, and hosts of others not so well known, and yet one

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

day to be quite as highly honored, because they did their best for Him.

It is, however, a solemn thing to be a prophet of God. I have been much impressed with the expressions of the Old Testament prophets. Nahum, when he speaks of the burden of Nineveh; Isaiah, when he cries out, "I am a man of unclean lips;" Malachi when he writes of "the burden of the word of the Lord," and I could wish that we were as little disposed to trifle as they, and that we had the same conception of the dignity of our office, than which there is none greater.

I never see a true minister of the gospel that I do not fear for him. I think of Jethro's words to Moses when he said, "Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone." No one understands the minister's burdens, and no one can appreciate his difficulties save the man who has served in the ministry. It is the most joyous

THE PREACHER A PROPHET

work and at the same time the most wearing. It is the most thrilling service and also the most depressing. It means again and again an aching head, a tired body, a depressed spirit, but it also means at the end, a welcome home, and the "Well done, good and faithful servant," spoken by Him in whose name and for whose sake the service has been rendered.

But there is another side to the ministry. So much has been said about the hardships of our work, that it is well to hear the testimony of men who have spent the best years of their lives in such a service. All faithful ministers of the gospel unite in saying that they have fewer trials, larger rewards, brighter inducements to service, and greater joys in toiling on than any other class of men in the world. Call together one hundred merchants, lawyers, or doctors, and one hundred ministers. The ministers may have less money, but they may have more joy than may be found in all the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

other professions put together. There is the joy of interesting work. They help to shape character; they mold and strengthen lives for the struggle and the conquest here, and they help to prepare men and women for eternity.

There is the joy of elevating associations. They move with the best the world has known and associate with the greatest souls that have ever lived. There is the joy of administering comfort in the time of sorrow, and only he who has stopped the sobs of the suffering, dried the tears of the sorrowing, and lifted the gloom from the household understands what this means. There is the joy of the Church's sympathy. It is a marvelous thing to have an abiding place in the affections of a congregation. There is also the joy of seeing souls saved, when miracles are wrought greater than changing water into wine or raising the dead to life. And yet when all this has been said, the minister's position is a solemn one, because he is a teacher of the

THE PREACHER A PROPHET

Word of God. If God is the Creator, if Jesus Christ is His Son, if there is none other name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved, if those who have not accepted stand in danger,—then it is a solemn thing to preach the gospel, and he assumes an awful responsibility who attempts to preach anything else.

There is something needed in the minister's life in addition to a college education, the training at a theological seminary, the ordaining hands of Church officials, and the call to a Church, and that something is a deep heart experience. True preaching is artesian. It wells up from great depths. We can not comfort others until we ourselves have been in need of comfort, and not infrequently by the way of disappointed hopes, shattered plans, and broken hearts do men go on to power. It is not always easy to tell what the preacher has in mind. Sometimes hearers are too poorly prepared to receive the truth. Those who

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

hear and see Shakespearean plays become absorbed in reading Shakespeare, and are ready to appreciate the plot to the fullest extent, but the same people listen to the Word of God without an appreciation of its grandeur,—listlessly, indifferently, and sometimes drowsily, they listen and fail to give heed. The room may be too hot, the light too poor, the people too weary. A hundred things contend against the preacher to kill his message. He must be a careful thinker and his message well rounded out, appreciating all sides of the truth. Grace must not be so exalted as to give latitude to sin; heaven must not be preached to the exclusion of hell, and when the sermon is ended and the preacher looks for results, and looks in vain, and his heart is heavy, he proves the statement that it is a solemn thing to be a preacher of the gospel, and not infrequently a heart-breaking experience.

Then, too, responsibility is increased with every utterance. No preacher can

THE PREACHER A PROPHET

ever be the same again after his sermon. He will surely give an account for what he has said or failed to say. He will surely be asked to explain why he was not clear in his exposition of the Truth. It is a great responsibility to be a preacher, and most men have found it so. The position is not an easy one to fill because of the fact that too often the people do not appreciate their responsibility in hearing, which should, of course, be equally as great as that of the preacher. The pew is responsible for much of the poor preaching of the day. There are times when it is easy to preach. There are often times when the minister's voice comes back to him like an echo, and his message dies; many times the audience is responsible for this.

We are told that earnestness is required. Jesus was in earnest and they crucified Him. The preacher is told that he must preach the gospel and preach it plainly. Jesus was a preacher of marvelous simplicity and equally marvelous

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

power, and He could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. And yet, when all this has been said, there is no work in all the world like preaching the gospel. No man so loved by the people as he who preaches it faithfully, no work so fascinating as that which means the shaping of lives for time and eternity. It is to such a ministry as this the preacher has been called, and it is a high calling, and he is to be pitied who fails to make the most of his God-given privilege; who fails to preach the gospel because he thinks men are not interested in it, and who is not in all that he says, and does, and is, a soul-winner.

Many of us have given up personal work. We have overestimated the importance of public ministry. If the modern minister were possessed of Isaiah's vision of the Lord and his desire to be used, and of the spirit of other prophets of the olden time who felt that they were called of God to speak for Him and warn men of their danger, then going forth in

THE PREACHER A PROPHET

the power of such conviction, they should, with the added spirit of Jesus, be faithful to those with whom they come in contact, or go after those to whom they may have heard a call to go. The results would be in every way remarkable. No minister will drift spiritually or doctrinally who appreciates his position as a prophet of God and seeks to be faithful in the matter of winning men to Christ by personal work.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WANING PULPIT

THIS is a day when the minister is under sharpest fire. By some his motives are questioned, his spirit is censured, and his failure to secure such results as came in days gone by, when the gospel was preached, is used as an argument against him. However, in the midst of such criticism it should not be forgotten that it is, by no means, as easy to preach to-day as in the olden times. The minister formerly was recognized as a man under authority; his words were generally received as the truth; now the genuineness of his message is sharply questioned, and even his authority is subject to criticism. When Mr. D. L. Moody preached the gospel and urged men to turn to God, his statements were accepted without question; but to-day all this is changed, and

THE WANING PULPIT

one must not only preach his sermon, but he must prove his authority and be ready to substantiate the integrity and genuineness of the Book on the basis of which his message is delivered. But a brighter day will come for the minister, and it is only necessary that he should be watchful in these troublesome times, have the approval of his own conscience in the matter of preaching, and also be sure that he has His approval in whose name he speaks and from whom he has received his call to preach.

As an illustration of the sharpness of the criticism it may be well to note the words spoken by a professor of law, in an Eastern university, in an address before a ministers' conference:

“The waning power of the pulpit is one of the most lamentable signs of the times. The intellectual pre-eminence of the preacher has passed and gone. The pulpit no longer attracts the brightest minds, and theological seminaries swarm with intellectual weaklings.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

“Pulpit deliverances of our day often lack every element of real oratory; they are largely dreary monologues and complacent soliloquy. The speaker’s wits, instead of being sharpened by adversity and defeat, are blunted by his unvaried weekly duel with an imaginary foe. Our present-day divines are not deficient in the arts of finished elocution, but they have dropped the old theme of salvation from an inherited curse of sin. But when the pulpit has moral earnestness, it rises to the loftiest elevation of eloquent expression. It was homely language of a country deacon speaking to a person who had prayed long and loudly for power, ‘What you want, doctor, is n’t power; it’s ideas.’ And when the clergy have ideas, and grand ideas, they deliver noble orations, ranking with the finished work of the greatest masters of expression.”

This opinion may or may not be correct; the one who gave it evidently thinks it is, and unquestionably he rep-

THE WANING PULPIT

resents a certain element in the Church. Whether true or not, it is the sort of criticism facing the preacher to-day. It is claimed that we have failed to give sufficient emphasis to the importance of prayer, and we read that this was the secret of true greatness in the pulpit of other days. It is said we have lost our power because we have not given sufficient attention to Bible study; not Bible study in the preparation of sermons, but Bible study in the development of our own spiritual life. Unquestionably the secret of Spurgeon's power was found just here. During the days of the week we must become saturated with the Scriptures so that on Sunday the message comes flowing forth like the current of a mighty river. Men tell us we have lost this, that we preach about God's Word, but not the Word itself.

It has been said that we have given up personal work, and depend too much upon our pulpit efforts to turn men to God. "How do you like your minister?"

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

said one of my friends to a plain woman in the mountains of Kentucky. She hesitated a moment and replied: "We do n't like him so very well. He preaches well enough, but he has the 'college habit,' and studies so much that we do not see him except on Sundays," "and," she said, "you know a minister must speak to you out of the pulpit as well as in it if he is to influence you."

We are told that we have also failed in the matter of direct preaching. The son of a minister told me that he had never in his life heard his father, when preaching, give a personal invitation from the pulpit to those listening to him to accept Christ. While this is, of course, the greatest exception to the rule, yet it seems strange that even one man feeling called to preach the gospel should not urge men at all times, in season and out of season, to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as a Saviour. I am quite persuaded that we would be able to meet and overcome these criti-

THE WANING PULPIT

cisms, whether they be just or unjust, had we firm convictions on the following essential points: First, we must have a message to preach, not for the sake of preaching, but for the sake of convincing men of their sins, as the Spirit of God may lead us.

When asked one day his opinion regarding sermons of ministers, Hon. William J. Bryan said: "I desire my minister to preach every Sabbath the simple gospel. The old, old story never wearies the average congregation, if it comes from a devout mind with preparation in the message. My ideal sermon is one which has an appeal to the unconverted and a spiritual uplift for the Christian. I want my minister to be abreast of the times on all new theological questions and research, but I do not want him to bring them into the pulpit. I have formed certain fixed views of Christ, His gospel, and the inspiration of the Bible from a careful reading of that Book of books and of the Shorter Catechism, and it will

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

not make me a better Christian or profit my spiritual life to unsettle these views by a discussion in the pulpit of new theories of Christ and the Holy Scriptures. Finally, I want my minister to act on the belief that Christ's gospel is the surest cure of all social and political evils, and that his best method of promoting temperance, social morality, and good citizenship, is to bring men into the Church. In a word, I want my minister to emphasize in the lifework the declaration of the most successful preacher, Paul: 'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.'"

Second, we must have an unwavering conviction that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God. If we give any evidence of uncertainty at this point, the message we deliver will scarcely be received with enthusiasm, and it is inconceivable that it could be delivered with very much power. At the close of an editorial in the *British Weekly* was the following: "Whatever else is in the Bible

THE WANING PULPIT

or not in it, man is in it, and it is still the one supreme Book for finding the man in all men. But it will not yield its treasure except to the humble and the reverent, in whose soul the flame of inquiry burns as a lamp in the temple. Neither to the idolator nor to the iconoclast does divine truth appear, but to the praying worker who gives his best to both prayer and work.

“We believe there are signs of the preacher’s return to the Book. While giving science and literature their due place, the preacher will do well to become yet a man of one Book. It is inexhaustible, its phrase ever fresh, as the greatest masters have ever found. Who can forget the use Thackeray made in ‘Esmond’ of one of its healing phrases? Who can forget the thrill of many of them on the lips of Doctor Parker, of Canon Liddon? They are still wanted amidst all the weariness of men in haste to be omniscient. And they are wanted to bring in a new era of deep conviction.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

And yet more than they, the spirit of the Book is wanted, for to it alone will the spirit of man everywhere harmoniously respond."

When one is filled with the Word of God, when he loves it, when it profoundly moves him, every one with whom he comes in contact will take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus, and whether he is in the pulpit or out of it, he will have power.

"A perfumer bought a common earthen jar and filled it with attar of roses. Soon every atom of the substance of which the jar was made was saturated with the rich perfume, and long afterwards, when the jar was broken, the fragments retained the fragrance. So it is that a human life become filled, saturated with the Word of God, when one loves it and meditates upon it continually. One's thoughts, feelings, affections, dispositions, and character become colored with the spirit of the Word of God. Such a filling of the mind and heart with the pure Word of

THE WANING PULPIT

God is the best way to prepare for any future of darkness into which the life may pass. It is like hanging up a hundred lamps while the light of day yet shines in order that they may be ready to pour down their soft beams the moment the daylight fades."

There must also be a clear presentation of the claims of Jesus Christ. I am told that in every German barrack there is a picture of the empress. What is that for? It was a decree of the emperor. While Her Majesty was traversing one of the gardens in Berlin, she was greeted in a rough fashion by one of the soldiers who knew her not. No royal salute, no response to Her Majesty's salutation was given, and when she went home, and her royal husband heard of it, he said: "That will not occur again. Her Majesty's face must be known by every member of the German army, in order that when she comes and goes, whether in royal attire or in plebeian costume, she will be honored." And so, in the

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

German army they say, "Do you know that face? That is the empress."

Should it not be so with Christ? Up to this time He has not always been greeted with a royal salute. The nations were in darkness, bowing down to idols; they had forgotten the lessons God had taught them, and the instructions He had given them. When Christ came by they did not salute Him. His own people murmured and seemed to behold Him as through a mist. And Christ said: "Study Me. Know the lineaments of My face, so when I come by, in the visitation of national mercies, I may be greeted by a royal salute." That is the first duty of the Christian soldier—to know Christ. From every pulpit His story must be told, else preaching will be in vain.

It is a sad thing that it should ever be said of the minister that in his preaching, Christ is not presented. I am persuaded that those in the pulpit who forget Him are few in number as compared with the great army of preachers who sincerely

THE WANING PULPIT

love Jesus Christ with all their hearts. Then it should not be forgotten that the way must not be made too easy. General Booth says the chief dangers in the twentieth century are: Religion without the Holy Spirit; Christianity without Christ; Forgiveness without Repentance; Salvation without Regeneration; Politics without God, and Heaven without Hell.

The fires of criticism will soon burn lower than to-day. The minister may more and more, if he will, come to his own. If out of it all we come to a better likeness of Christ, with more of a passion for preaching, more of a love for souls, more of a desire to see lost ones turn to the Saviour, then the fires will not have been in vain, and the criticisms we have faced will have been helpful.

CHAPTER XVIII

WHY SOME FAIL

MANY Christian workers have sadly failed. It is not so strange that Church members may do so, it is remarkable that so frequently we face failure in the pulpit.

It would seem as if there were no excuse for ministerial failure. If success were to be measured by genius, then some might fail, because not all are possessed of genius. If success in the ministry is to be determined by culture, some will face defeat, because they have been denied the possession of a certain kind of polish and refinement which the world has called culture. If success in the ministry depends entirely upon mental equipment, some may fail. How grateful we should be that true success does not depend upon the things mentioned above. Success really depends upon God

WHY SOME FAIL

and our full surrender to Him, and the fact that following the surrender the Spirit of God takes possession of one's life. With all this made possible, and with such a story as has been given us in the life and death of Jesus; with such a Book as the Bible, and with such a call as we have had to preach, there is really little or no excuse for failure. And yet some ministers fail, because they consider their work a profession and not a passion. This makes all the difference in the world in preaching. Those who hear us always know when we are professional. We may be eloquent and be professional. We may be intellectual and be professional, but it will be detected. By the ring in our voices; the look in our eyes, the impression we make as we stand in the pulpit, men will know whether preaching with us is a passion or not. It is a fatal mistake for the minister to treat his work as professional. Preaching is always a passion.

I once met Doctor Grenfell, the great

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

missionary to the deep-sea fishermen on the coast of Labrador, and heard him say in an address: "What has made the difference between my friends who graduated with me in London and myself? Some of those men may outrank me in learning, some are possibly more scholarly than I, but what has made the difference between us? I say with all humility, I think that which has made the difference between my friends and myself is this: I have been possessed of a passion to preach Jesus Christ to lost men, as well as to heal their bodies; practicing medicine has become preaching to me. And preaching to my mind is not a profession, it is a passion."

Some ministers fail because they have a wrong idea of the manner of approach to men. When there is a wrong conception of human nature and human need we may choose wrong themes. There may be an occasion when we might with some profit speak on Tennyson, when we might discuss Browning, or might give

WHY SOME FAIL

to the people the great and salient points in an essay on Emerson; but these times are rare indeed. I should say, let a minister turn to a secular theme only when the Bible runs dry, when the name of Jesus does not charm, when human hearts are not needy, when eyes have ceased shedding tears and when souls have ceased to be lost. We have no warrant to believe that God will bless any other sermon than that which is full of the story of Jesus Christ as the only hope for lost men. And so, because we have the wrong idea of the manner of approach, we seek to be classed as intellectual. I put a high premium upon intellectual greatness. I admire the man who is truly great along these lines, but the one who is always parading himself as intellectual is not necessarily classed as such. Whenever a man is thus equipped in the highest degree, when his intellect has been yielded to God and been set on fire with a holy passion for God, and has become a weapon which he uses to

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

persuade men to turn to Christ and bring honor to God, then the more intellectual he can be the better.

There is one sure way of getting into the deepest nature of the people, and that is by the way of the heart. How did Jesus preach? He said the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto this or that, and He used illustrations constantly. If the minister of to-day were to use illustrations as homely as those of Jesus, his hearers might almost be disposed to criticise him. He told about a woman baking bread; about the fall of a little bird to the ground; about a crystal of salt. Jesus always illustrated His truths. Why should not you? You can secure the attention of your people when you have a bright illustration, which is calculated to make a great theme plain to them. We sometimes fail because we have had a misconception as to the proper manner of approach to those who listen to us.

Some ministers fail because they think they ought to preach so as to have the

WHY SOME FAIL

approval of other preachers. This is only natural. But preachers are not to be our final judges. We must face Christ and answer to Him. We must preach to the people in the pews; in His name speaking comfort to the man who does not think as a preacher thinks; we must reach the man with the heart that is heavy, with a head that is throbbing, with a soul that is reaching out after God, and saying, "O that I knew where peace might be found!" The preaching that is worth while in these days is that which moves the heart and then makes it right. We are not called to display our own greatness nor to exhibit our genius. We are called to help. Many a minister has failed to-day because, somehow, he has forgotten this.

Sometimes ministers fail because they have departed from the following: First, from the Bible as the authoritative message from God to men. The man who sits in your pew and listens to you preach is not interested in negations, and your

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

indifferent listener does not draw fine distinctions, such as you might be able to make with your years of study and training, but he takes half the truth you throw out, and when you say something which causes him to lose regard for the Bible, as a rule, his character begins to weaken, his life at some point to fail, and the man himself begins, almost unconsciously, to drift. When the minister preached years ago, he had a far easier time than has the preacher of to-day. When he preached, it was only necessary to make a statement, and people said: "That is in the Bible, and we know it is true because it is in the Bible." But you make a statement, and the man in the pew who questions the integrity of the Scriptures, says: "The Bible is not more than half true anyway. I will not accept this message until the authority is proved." The man who has lost his grip on the integrity of the Scriptures as God's Word has lost his power in preaching. We can not be soul-winners and

WHY SOME FAIL

undermine men's confidence in God's Book. We can not help the masses of humanity and weaken their confidence in the Bible. There is no place for any kind of criticism in the pulpit, valuable as some forms of it may be in the reverent professor's room.

Second, some, it may be not many, have departed from Jesus as the very Son of God, equal with God in power and authority. Some have almost unconsciously weakened the power of Jesus in the thought of many. It is so wonderful to tell the story of Jesus Christ, to face a company of people and know if there is one in the audience who has gone far towards ruin and despair, that there is a Name, the power of which can lift him out of his difficulty; if there is one before you who has been perplexed all the week and whose heart is crushed because of trial, that you have a story that can heal his breaking heart and give him peace. It is a great thing to know that if there is a mother in the church who has put

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

her baby in the grave during the past week, you have a story that will enable her to brush away her tears and take fresh courage. It is great to know that if you go to the man who is poorest or to the one who is richest, you have a message that can thrill them both. Life is too short, and eternity too long, to tell any other story.

I know of a world
That is sunk in shame,
Where hearts oft faint and tire;
But I know of a Name,
A Precious Name,
That can set that world on fire.
Its sound is sweet,
Its letter flame;
I know of a Name, a Precious Name,
'T is Jesus.

I know of a Book,
A marvelous Book,
With a message for all who hear;
And the same dear Name,
That Wonderful Name,
Illumines its pages clear.

WHY SOME FAIL

The Book is His Word,
Its message I 've heard;
I know of a Name, a Precious Name,
'T is Jesus.

I know of a home,
In Immanuel's land,
Where hearts ne'er faint nor tire,
And His marvelous Name,
His own Dear Name,
Inspires the heavenly choir.
Hear the melody ringing,
My own heart singing;
I know of a Name, a Precious Name,
'T is Jesus.

Third. Here and there ministers seem sometimes to give the impression, perhaps unconsciously, that there may be a substitute for the gospel, or they may, as in the days of St. Paul, think they have another gospel. I can not imagine that any minister does this consciously or willfully. It is the story of Christ on Calvary that saves. There is only one way to help men to be better and truer, and that is to point them to Jesus. The gospel is the only hope.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Ministers sometimes fail because they have lost the evangelistic note. It is easy enough to lose it. When they preach in their churches Sunday after Sunday; when they see the same people sitting in the pews, and they know their needs better than they know themselves; when the circle is a narrow one; when the sphere is a small one, they are apt to think, "With such a field as mine—so limited in its possibilities—I must preach about many different things." And so they turn to other subjects which depart from the spiritual and approach the secular, and then there is danger. I know the temptations of ministers, and I know how difficult it is always to keep up to the pitch. But it is a great mistake to allow the evangelistic note to drop out of preaching.

What is the evangelistic note? It is that spirit that possesses a man when he has a constant view of Jesus. You can not easily define it. It is preaching that comes as a result of praying, and of a

WHY SOME FAIL

constant and continual fellowship with Him. Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, had a dream. He says that in his dream he saw a stranger enter his church. The stranger was plainly clad, but he had a marvelous face. As he came down the aisle, the usher showed him to a seat. "But," said Doctor Gordon, "for some reason I could not take my eyes off him. I was profoundly impressed with him. When I pronounced the benediction, I started at once to speak to him, and behold, when I came to the place where he had been sitting he was gone. I said to one of my Church officers, 'Who was he?' And the answer was 'Jesus.'" He had been in his audience; He had been listening to his sermon; He had been weighing his utterances; He had been studying his methods; He had been looking him through and through. And Doctor Gordon said, "I made up my mind that from that day until the day of my death I would preach no sermon that could not stand the test

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

of His presence.” Could the sermon of the average minister have stood that test? I am sure it could in the case of many, but there may be some in the ministry whose sermons could not. Then, would it not be well to say, I will never again preach a sermon that could not bear up under this test, because, as a matter of fact, He is in the audience. And the evangelistic note sounds out when we know He is there.

Some fail because they have not realized how small things contribute to the power of preaching and effectiveness of the service. A minister rushes into his pulpit, picks up the hymn book, begins to turn over the leaves, and says to himself, “Now, what shall we sing?” He finds the hymn, “Come, Thou Almighty King.” He has sung that again when he was in doubt as to what should be sung. That is not the kind of preparation for the Church service that makes it great. Can you imagine one appearing on the stage of a theater with so little

WHY SOME FAIL

preparation? How long would he hold the people in the theater if he prepared himself as imperfectly as some ministers appear to do to give their sermons a setting? A sermon many times fails to win a victory, not because of its own weakness, but because of the force which the preacher fails to put into it. I went once into a prison for women. I think there were fifty or sixty women in the chapel, and not a man within two blocks of the place of meeting. When I entered they were singing the hymn, "Have courage, my boy, to say No." Many a minister has sung hymns in his church just as inappropriate as that. A minister says, "Why do my sermons not count?" Possibly they did not have the right setting. The reading of the Scripture, the order of the service, the offering of the prayer, the singing of the hymn—all these are the setting for the sermon, and help to create the right atmosphere. We have not realized how easy it is to win souls to Christ when the service is impressive.

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Some have failed because of neglected Bible study. Let us remember that if we study God's Word for the people only, we drift. There is no heart that needs spiritual refreshment so much as that of the minister. He lives a busy life all the day, and sometimes all the night he toils. While the lawyer may plead for a verdict and then go away to his rest, the ministers all the time have the poor in their arms or on their hearts. While the physician may come into a home and give his prescription and pass out, and go on to the next case, or to his home, the minister can not. While the merchant may close his store and go back to his house and sit down in the presence of his family and enjoy their fellowship, the minister can not. He has passed many a night restlessly tossing to and fro on his pillow. Nobody but God and himself and his loved ones know his agony of mind. I heard a man say that Mr. Spurgeon prepared his evening sermon in ten minutes on Sunday evening. You, too, may do

WHY SOME FAIL

that if you are saturated with the Word of God, as Mr. Spurgeon was. They say that for six days of the week he did nothing but pore over the Scriptures. If ever for five minutes he lost the consciousness of the presence of Christ, he used to get away to his room, so I am told, and drop on his knees and say, "O Jesus, what has come between me and Thee?"

Some have failed because of the neglect of prayer, and that is the most cause of failure of anything I know in the minister's experience. When we forget to pray we will surely fail. D. L. Moody was wonderful in prayer. One of my friends was Mr. Moody's guest in Northfield. The great evangelist was taking him for a drive in his old-fashioned buggy, which could easily hold two men like himself. They were driving through the country, talking about New York and Philadelphia and other cities, when D. L. Moody said, "Let us spend a little time in prayer," and he pulled his horse in under a great elm tree, dropped the lines

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

over the dash, turned about, knelt down in the buggy with his head in his arms, and my friend told me the great tears rolled down Mr. Moody's cheeks and bathed the cushion of that seat, as over and over he kept saying, "O God, give us another revival. O God, stir the cities of America again," and when I see God moving these cities, I know that we are in part receiving an answer to Mr. Moody's prayer.

Some have forgotten to pray. I have a Scotch friend who one day told this story of one of his friends in Scotland—a pastor of a Church. He said the people were all assembled in the church, but the minister was not in the pulpit, and they said to the beadle, "Go and see where he is." He found him in the tower and heard him speaking with some one. The beadle came down to the waiting officers and said, "He is up in the tower, talking to somebody." And they said, "Go back and listen, and see if you can tell from the tone of the voice who it is." After a

WHY SOME FAIL

while he came back and said: "Yes, I know who it is. He is saying, 'I will not go in without You go with me. I have gone in too many times alone. I have preached too many sermons without You. I will not go in unless You go with me.'" And the officers said: "We know who it is. We will wait." Pretty soon the pulpit door opened and the minister came in and there was Another with him. They could not see Him with their eyes, but He was there. And, as the minister rose in the pulpit and began to preach, there came upon his audience one of those blessings such as made Pentecost. That is the way to preach. Prayer, much prayer is necessary; let us never fail here.

Some fail because they do not give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to work. I had a letter from a gentleman recently, who in his letter asked this question: "Do you think it a good thing to read sermons?" I should it would depend upon the sermon. I like what the old

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORK

Scotchman said, "R-E-A-D does not spell preach." But, you must remember that almost the greatest sermon that was ever preached in America, the sermon that accomplished most, was preached by a man who held his manuscript in his hands so near to his eyes that the people could not see his face, and the light was so dim that he held a tallow dip in the other hand to shed light upon his sermon. And you call to mind that as he read on and on, and on, men threw their arms around the pillars, fearing they were being hurried into the presence of God, and they walked down the aisles with uplifted hands saying, "Mr. Edwards, have mercy, have mercy!" They thought the day of judgment had almost come.

I do not know that makes so much difference whether the sermon is read or not, if God is back of it; if preaching is a passion; if Jesus is real to you. If He is so near to you that you can lift your eyes from your manuscript occasionally,