

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN JOURNAL

*A Presbyterian monthly magazine devoted to the
statement, defense and propagation of the
Gospel, the faith which was once for
all delivered unto the saints.*

REPRINT

Volume I — Number 3

JULY 1942

Yearly Subscription \$1.00

UNHOLY ALLIANCES

By Rev. Robert Ervin Hough, D.D.

THE REAL WORD OF GOD

By Rev. Wil. R. Johnson, D.D.

THE BROKEN IDEAL

By Samuel McPheeters Glasgow, D.D.

WHY NOT TRY GOD?

By Robert A. Lapsley, Jr., D.D.

WORKING OUT ONE'S OWN SALVATION

By Rev. George H. Gilmer, D.D.

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT FOREIGN MISSIONS

By Mrs. J. P. McCallie — Chattanooga, Tenn.

THE SABBATH PERMANENT BUT MOVABLE

By The Rev. E. E. Bigger — Clearwater, Fla.

"PENNY-WISE"

By Tom Glasgow

SONGS OF VICTORY

By Rev. Charlton Dobyns Hutton

open Bible, a simple prayer for the voice of God, a listening heart, as I quietly and prayerfully read, and presently, without fail the light of the Spirit shines on the written message, and God speaks in the sanctuary of my soul "This is the way, walk ye in it." And if we walk in the light as He is in the light, how can we have dark times. We can only walk with confidence when we walk

by faith, and "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." What a blessed world this would be if the perplexed people of the earth only knew this.

*Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Galveston, Tex.

The Broken Ideal

By Samuel McPheeters Glasgow, D.D.

"My little children of whom I am again in travail until Christ be (fully) formed in you." Gal. 4:19.

There was a serious sag in the Galatian Christianity. The group in that Church had been caught by a mechanical legality and thereby had lost the preciousness of the gospel of grace. Paul feels that they are his spiritual children, and that their real life, their spiritual life, is growing only as Christ grows in them. His father-heart can not be satisfied with arrested development. Nothing will satisfy him short of the complete and symmetrical formation of Christ in them, Lord of every area of their life. Retarded growth grieves his heart. There continues in his soul the birth-pains which had marked his sacrificial service in bringing them into spiritual life. However far short they may have stopped of the precious ideal which was the passion of his soul for them, Paul holds fast to the ideal.

One of the tragic spectacles of life is to note the arrested development, the malformation, the anaemic and bloodless complexion of many Christian lives. The reasons for these distressing conditions are often manifest.

There are deadly foes cunningly feeling for the throat of the Christian that they may strangle his life, and that spiritual health and vigor may not be his portion.

Paul's practical ideal in this figure is that within the Christian Christ is born and grows, that it is no longer the old man that is living but Christ living again His life in the Christian, and the great objective is that Christ may be full-grown, symmetrical and complete in the Christian and in possession of the great citadel of his will and undisputed as Master of his life.

There are three foes to which we now direct our attention that lead to The Broken Ideal, that make the heart of Christ cry out in the words of the apostle of our text.

I.—Suffocation.

The first method that is used to deplete the strength and to defeat the growth of Christ in the Christian is the method of Suffocation. In Luke 11:1 one of Christ's disciples said to Him: "Lord, teach us to pray." Note, beloved, that the disciple does not make the request, as it is usually quoted by us: "Lord, teach us 'how' to pray." The "how" of prayer is inconsequential. The "fact" of prayer, and the "spirit" of prayer are fundamental.

Every growing life in human body must have oxygen. Cut down the oxygen you endanger the life and insure weakness, insipient disease, arrested

growth. Oxygen, beloved, is not a luxury for the body. It is an elemental necessity. So is prayer for the Christian's life, and health, and growth. You, as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, can in no wise expect a thrifty spiritual experience apart from the fundamental element of spiritual health that we call prayer.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death—
He enters heaven with prayer."

We are dealing with a practical and fundamental reality here. The Christian life within us shrivels and dies away because of Suffocation, for prayer is the Christian's native air, and when the Christian is cut off from his native air, then his strength dwindles; he becomes bloodless, his resistance is gone; he is an easy prey to every manner of spiritual disease.

An old classic story tells us that Hercules, the giant, sent out a challenge to wrestle any man in the world. The dwarf-like Antaeus answered the challenge, and Hercules looked upon him with disdain as Goliath sneered at David. With a great crowd in the arena Hercules advanced to promptly vanquish his unworthy opponent, but found himself withstood. Greater and greater effort of his magnificent strength is put forth. His muscles are tense. Sweat runs from every pore of his body, but Antaeus does not go down. The great crowd laughs and jeers, and Hercules, humiliated, slinks away to his tent. That night a traitor to Antaeus for gold reveals to Hercules Antaeus' secret: "Your antagonist is the son of the earth. As long as his feet touch the earth he can not be overthrown. Sever that connection and victory is yours."

And the next day saw Antaeus, as he met his antagonist, Hercules, unaware that his secret had been betrayed, suddenly snatched from the ground, crushed in mid-air by his mighty opponent.

Ah, beloved, how thrifty our growth, how mighty our strength, how invincible our cause as long as we are vitally connected with God through prayer! How helpless and hopeless when that connection is broken!

Prayer. Private prayer. Public prayer. Family prayer. The Christian's native air!

At a recent Church meeting this occurred: The officers of the Church were gathered upstairs, and a speaker asked them, as he was discussing the great subject of family prayer, how many of them, the officers of the Church, came out of homes where there was the family altar. More than 90% witnessed to this great source of spiritual power. A little later the same day the same speaker met the group of young people, the sons and daughters of the officers of the Church, and the question was put to this group in this form: "How many of you live in homes that have the family altar?" And only about 5% could respond in the affirmative. Ninety percent of the church officers came out of homes with the family altar while 90% of the Church officers are building homes without the family altar.

God help us, beloved! We are suffocating Christ. He can't breathe. He can never hope to be fully formed in us when we cut off the native air, prayer.

II.—Strangulation.

There is another deadly foe, and it is pictured for us in the parable of the sower as follows: "And others are they that are sown among the thorns. These are they that heard the Word, and the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things entering in choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful." Mark 14:18,19.

Weymouth translates this last verse thus: "Worldly care and the deceitfulness of wealth and the excessive pursuit of other objects come in and stifle the message, and it becomes unfruitful."

Here we have pictured the Strangulation of Christ, choked by the "deceitfulness of riches," by the "excessive pursuit of other objects."

Riches deceive in that they promise to buy and to give their possessors things that they can not buy. Riches can not buy happiness, or courage, or peace, or hope, and because they promise to buy these things men break health, and sacrifice home ties, and responsibility to accumulate them.

Riches deceive in that they gradually master the life that loves them. The ordinary process is the desire, the inordinate desire for riches, the effort, the accumulation, and the man gets the wealth; then spiritual and moral depression, and the wealth gets the man, and instead of the man owning the riches he is deceived and the riches own the man.

Riches deceive in that they elude our grasp and fly away. Among the distinguished architects celebrated in ancient Greek mythology were two brothers, Trophonius and Agamedes. King Hyrieus employed them to build his treasure house. They betrayed their trust and left a secret stone in the

wall which they could remove and replace at pleasure. So adroitly was it done that none could detect their perfidy. They constantly purloined the king's treasury, and he was amazed to find his locks untouched and seals unbroken, and his treasure gone.

Many is the man, who, having guarded every possible exit, and having sealed with every human safe-guard the possession of his wealth, finds that in spite of all human efforts its elusiveness mocks his self-confidence and it flees away.

Its greatest deceit, however, is that it absorbs us. The "excessive pursuit of other objects!" The late Bishop S. T. Henderson of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was speaking on this subject with great power, and he made us to see how the world is panting today after "things." The Psalmist cries: "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." My soul is panting, as a spent and thirsty deer pants and thirsts for water, for the living God. The thing that causes the Strangulation of Jesus and defeats the ideal of His being fully formed in us is that we pant after the dust of the earth, and we thirst and pursue passionately other things. Whether they are good things or bad things, they are hurtful if they are the object of our central yearning and supreme effort.

III.—Starvation.

Not only we, who claim to be believers, inhibit and defeat the full growth of the Lord Jesus in us by Suffocation, and by Strangulation, but we do it just as effectively by Starvation. Jesus said: "My meat," the thing upon which I live daily, the thing that sources my strength, my growth, my vitality, the thing without which I wither and die, "my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to accomplish his work." John 4:34.

Beloved, if Jesus' Spirit lived upon that meat in the days of His flesh, He is living upon that meat today. He is dependent today upon glad obedience to the known will of God. If we want Jesus to become fully formed in us, then we must feed Him glad and sustained obedience to the known will of God. We must fill life with a practical demonstration of the reality of our faith in the actuality of our service.

We read in Matt. 4: that following the long fast this was true of Jesus: "He afterward hungered." Beloved, the explanation of The Broken Ideal, and the inhibited growth and development of Jesus in many a Christian today is that Christ in us is half starved. We have made impossible His thrifty and vigorous life throbbing with vital strength because we have refused to feed Him the one, lone meat upon which He can live and grow. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to bring to completion His work."

Slow Starvation is defeating the fully forming of Christ in many a professed Christian's life.

SOUL-WINNING

Dr. Philip Marquart, Army and Navy Medical examiner, Ft. Worth, Tex., is a consecrated Christian, an unusual psychiatrist and a very successful soul winner. He rarely misses an opportunity to speak to men about their souls welfare, in his own characteristic manner. Not very long ago he witnessed to a young man whom he had under examination for the Navy, definitely won him to Christ, and gave him a Gideon N. T. With his new found

faith in Christ bubbling up in his heart, the young fellow was soon sent aboard a battleship. In a little while he had led 66 of his shipmates to the Lord, and gathered them together in a Bible class, for study and prayer. One night the captain of the ship attended, and was very wonderfully saved. Since then the work has been going on in its God appointed way. All the gospel needs is a faithful witness, and the Spirit will apply the Word in miracle working power.

W. R. J.