

**"UPON THEE, O LORD, I DAILY CALL"**

**A Thought and a Prayer to Make the  
Day Go Better**

By

**Charles Haddon Nabers**

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to the gracious and sympathetic men and women who continue to listen every morning, and who are kind enough to say they are thereby helped for the remaining hours by the broadcasts I have been giving five days each week for the past ten years over WFBC.

Charles Haddon Nabers

To Frances & Shovel  
With Appreciation of  
Your Gracious Hospitality  
again after many years,  
Charles Nabers

## They Came To Bethlehem

★ ★

The world was trekking to Bethlehem when Jesus was born within the dull grey stone walls of this little city of David, the great King, which even now holds only 5,000 people, nearly all of whom are Christians.

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child."

And the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see."

And Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem.

Bethlehem, the house of bread. Nearby was the field where widowed Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz, but a greater than Ruth is within the walled town. Nearby was the region where young David sang among the herds of sheep before he was called to be anointed King; but a sweeter song than all the songs of David will break the silence of the night over these same fields. Bethlehem is the city where childhood is glorified. Bethlehem is the place where God stooped to earth to become a citizen of this little planet; it is the focal point for the love of God to enter the world.

Those who came to Bethlehem caught the spirit of love and of unselfishness. We may journey into all the nooks and crannies of the ancient Judean town, peer into every chapel of that church which is the oldest of all Christian places of worship, and miss a visit to Bethlehem of the soul unless the love of Jesus comes with us with contagious radiance, with overpowering kindness. We may never cross the ocean to find the place where Jesus was born, but we are citizens of Bethlehem, true dwellers there, if we take Jesus into our souls and minds, as did the shepherds and the wise men who journeyed there in obedience to the guidance of God many centuries ago.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel."

*As Joseph and Mary had to go fifty long miles to reach Bethlehem, lead us, O Thou guide of every land and of each night, to the place where we shall find the Christ, and give Him all we are and all we have, and receive Him by faith into our lives forever. In His name, the name of the Child born in Bethlehem, we pray, Amen.*

## Have You Written Home This Week?

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In World War Number One the "Y" huts in the army camps were places where the soldiers came for rest and recreation. Those of us who had charge of these huts tried by the things promoted in the program to help the men in every needed way. We did that by the daily schedule; we did that by the games, sports, and entertainment provided from both within and from without the army. We did it by the appearance of the huts, and by the pictures and signs hung on the walls. The huts were decorated at first according to the whim and habit of the secretary in charge, but later a general pattern evolved. When this was completed by the end of our first year's participation in the war, you found that practically every hut had on its wall a plainly lettered sign, saying, "Have you written home this week?" When soldiers came to the desk for any service, it was the business of the secretary to suggest that a little time be found for a letter to the folks back home. This was done for many reasons—it was the Christian thing to do. It was good religion. It was the decent thing to do. It was good citizenship. It was the means of maintaining morale both in the camp and at home, to keep a constant contact between the man in the service and the loved ones elsewhere.

Today, in addition to the fact that many men are in camp we have the problem intensified in that more men and women are torn away from home ties and from home towns than ever before. Let each of them ask the question, "Have you written home this week," and do something about it now. A bit of verse requested in the New York Times suggests an often forgotten angle to this story. The poem is called, "My Mother's Diary." It is as follows:

I found a little record of her days  
At the old home. A few short lines  
Each day were all she wrote. My mother's ways  
Were simple. When she planted columbines  
She put it down; the day she set a hen;  
The little calf she weaned from mother cow;  
Her daily household tasks, or when  
She visited the sick . . . But O somehow  
One line apart from others seems to stand—  
"I went to the postoffice" she would say  
I look upon it—here in her own hand—  
That one short line she wrote from day to day.  
Dear God on high, can mother see tonight  
These tears for letters that I failed to write?

*Dear Lord, we thank Thee for the loved ones on whom we depended for so many years, who helped us all the time when we were neither strong enough nor wise enough to help ourselves. We thank Thee that they never forgot us, and we pray, O Lord, keep us alert that we may not forget them at any time. Not only keep our love alive, but keep us regular in the definite and positive expression of it. Comfort every Christian mother separated from son and daughter. Guard every son and daughter from danger without and from temptation within. Hear every mother's prayer for her child far away, and bring them home again.*

## Hail to Godly Motherhood!

★ ★

The approach of Mother's Day reminds us again of the great mothers of the world, the sweetness and light that came into our own lives from the inexplicable love of our mothers, and of the truth that the world adored the thought and the name of mother long before Anna Jarvis of Philadelphia started the movement which has led to the establishment of the Second Sabbath of May as Mother's Day throughout the nation.

The Bible praised motherhood in the book of Proverbs:

"Strength and dignity are her clothing;  
And she laugheth at the time to come.  
She openeth her mouth to wisdom;  
And the law of kindness is in her tongue.  
She looketh well to the ways of her household,  
And eateth not the bread of idleness;  
Her children rise up and call her blessed,  
Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying:  
'Many daughters have done virtuously,  
But thou excelleth them all'."

Mother's Day is properly observed by the wearing of red and white flowers by sons and daughters, by the personal expression of love and appreciation to one's own mother, if she is alive, and by the expression of this love and appreciation to some other mother, if ours is not alive. But Mother's day is even better celebrated by striving to live the ideals, hopes and prayers of mother for her sons and daughters. Whether our mother is alive on earth or in heaven, we are certain of certain facts. Mother always wanted her children to be faithful to God, loyal to the church, and active in all things good. Mother always wanted her sons and daughters to be true, to be pure, to be good, to be brave, to be strong, to be loving, to be faithful. We celebrate Mother's Day best by keeping the ideals and hopes of our mothers. An unknown author lays this garland of flowers at the shrine of Mother:

"O magical word, may it never die from the lips that love to speak it,  
Nor melt away from the trusting hearts that even would break to  
keep it.  
Was there ever a name that lived like thine? Will there ever be  
another?  
The angels in heaven have reared a shrine to the holy name of mother."

*Dear Lord, sweeten the memories of all godly mothers this Mother's Day, and grant that every one of them everywhere may be graciously remembered by their children. May sons and daughters be led by God to speak and live in holy love for mother at this season, and at every season of the year. Deliver mothers from carelessness in living, and sons and daughters from sins of omission as well as of commission. Bind mothers and children close together, and bind them both to Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.*

## The Habits of a Home

★ ★

She was sour; and he became sour. As was the wife, so became the husband. For many years I watched the gradual, certain deterioration of character as this sad but significant quality in the life of the wife became significant and cut deep in the life of the husband.

She was critical; and he became critical. As was the wife, so became the husband. For a few years I listened to the conversation of the husband and wife. She never talked for more than ten minutes without using a bitter tongue to rob the character of somebody of all its beauty and goodness. He used to listen, and put in a word of defense occasionally. Then he used to listen, and be silent as she condemned. Now he agrees in full, and makes his positive contribution to the criticism at which she has been an expert for so long a time.

Her face was lined with an expression of distaste for things and for folks. It rarely lighted with a smile unless the smile was caused by learning or seeing something wrong or bad, and in that she rejoiced. And the lines that are cut so deeply upon her face are now showing plainly upon his face.

And something even worse is now taking place—the sourness, the criticism, and the habitual ugliness of expression is now being definitely transmitted to the next generation.

What happened to produce such a tragedy? It was the habit of a home to look not upon the things that are true, honest, just, lovely, pure of good report, of virtue and of praise, but to dig into the garbage with a muck rake, and bring forth and feast upon all that is of the gutter. It kills every attractive element in character. It sets much distance between the life and Christ. It saps the joy out of the days, and the peace out of the nights; and it puts on the lips and in the heart of every man and woman the sneer of Satan, "Does Job fear God for nought?" It lessens to an amazing degree one's influence for good, even taking the spirit out of one's charity. When James Barrie spoke to the students of St. Andrews University on Courage, he reached his climax in these lines: "Never ascribe to an opponent's motives meaner than your own. . . . Nothing so lowers your moral currency. Give it up, and be great."

*Dear Lord, we thank Thee for folks that are good, and for folks in the spirit of Jesus who expect other folks to be fine. We thank Thee that such lives lift us to new heights of living and planning and thinking and loving; and we rejoice that all around us are set lives of this nature, lives that have become grand and happy because God is living within them, and they are carrying on in the world the life Christ began many years ago in Galilee. Help us to respond to their cheer and to carry on to others their goodness and their joy; and forgive and refashion all lives that are sinfully doleful, depressingly critical, and contagiously sour. May the joy of Christ break the crusty shell and bring them new life, even now. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## That Big Diamond in the Capitol Floor

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In ancient Rome a golden milestone stood in the Forum. This milestone, long ago destroyed, was the zero point for that vast system of Roman roads built by the soldiers of the empire, some miles of which are yet usable after nearly two thousand years.

In like manner in modern Havana you find something almost the same. Cuba's beautiful eighteen million dollar capitol building is surmounted with a magnificent dome very much like the dome over the capitol of the United States in Washington. Directly beneath the center of the dome, set in the floor and securely fastened beneath a small slab of plate glass is a 22 carat diamond, valued at at least thirty thousand dollars. Every visitor to Cuba pays the twenty-five cents required for a personal conducted tour of the capitol building, and gets his biggest thrill as the guide gets on his knees, strikes a match just above this diamond, and moves it around as the light sparkles gloriously from the many facets of the valuable stone. While the match is slowly burning in his fingers, he says: "All the highways on the island of Cuba lead from this spot. This is the zero point in calculating distances in the nation." It is the place—this 22 carat diamond—like that golden milestone in ancient Rome where you begin to measure.

Every life must have its focal point. Every personality needs possess some spot that is the center of everything, the spot from which all distances are reckoned, to which every road of thought and purpose comes. For the Christian, the focal point should be the Christ. Jesus Christ is the Golden milestone to which every highway of thought and purpose should lead. Jesus Christ is the huge diamond from which every trail of endeavor and every bypath of achievement should lead. Lives that radiate about themselves are small lives, for self is small, and every diminishing as long as such rotation continues. Lives that radiate about the Christ are large lives, for Christ is great, and ever growing larger for the man who sincerely seeks to follow His direction for living. In the last quiet conversation which Jesus had with those who loved Him most, He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is the direction and the goal; he is the interpretation of the universe, and He is the power that brings the human personality from death to vitality.

Jesus, Lover of my soul,  
Let me to Thy bosom fly,  
While the nearer waters roll,  
While the tempest still is high.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;  
More than all in Thee I find;  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,  
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.

Just and holy is Thy name;  
I am all unrighteousness;  
False and full of sin I am,  
Thou art full of truth and grace.

*Keep us near Thee, and stay Thou beside us, for cleansing, for salvation, for guidance, for power, for inspiration, for peace, for life. In Christ's name, Amen.*



## Money, Money, Money

★ ★

Did you ever hear of the San Blas Indians? They live on some islands off the shores of Panama, maybe 80 miles from the canal, and they have remained in almost the same primitive condition for the past 400 years. When you bounce your way out to one of the islands in one of the steamer life boats, you go ashore to a tiny island, the size of a city building lot, the entire surface of which is covered with thatched huts, from which emerge the people in great numbers. The boys up to twelve are perfectly nude, the girls and women are wrapped with gaudy colored cloth, and big rings hang from the nose and ears, and great clusters of coins are suspended about their necks. There is no interpreter, and you hear only one word while you are on the island, but it is repeated again and again. "Money, money, money." You start to take a picture, and the boy shouts it, "Money, money, money," and no picture can be taken until you produce a coin. You try to get one of the woman, and she covers her face with her shawl, and murmurs, "Money, money, money," until the money is produced, and then the shawl comes down. And when two kodakers take the same picture, well, you have to pay twice, or get some of the language I heard, and although the words were unknown, the meaning was clear. The motto over the island with all its poverty and primitiveness and pathos might well be this one word we heard while there, "Money, money, money."

But do you not suppose these primitives clinging close to the shores of the continent, are only more candid than many who deem themselves quite civilized? If you had to get the motif of many lives written in a single word, might it not well be, "Money, money, money?" Release life from that emphasis, and how differently men and women would act. When Amos spoke to Israel in the eighth century before our era, he lay his finger on this particular sin: "You have sold the needy for a pair of shoes." When Jesus looked at life calmly and clearly, he said, "The love of money is the root of all evil." Might not a very pertinent prayer for all of us be in the words, "Lord, save us from the cry of money, money, money, set us affection of things higher than the material, our love upon that which is more substantial than money, money, money."

*Grant that we shall see values with the insight of those who have been taught the principles of life and living by Jesus Christ our Lord. Save us from greed and from hypocrisy. Deliver us from coveteousness and from brutality. For Christ's sake, Amen.*

## All Members One of Another



A block beyond the eighteen million dollar Capital in Havana is a square known as Fraternity Park. In its center stands a tree whose history is definitely different. The soil out of which this tree grows is not Cuban soil, but soil brought to Cuba from each of the twenty-one nations of the Western Hemisphere. Its planting was one of the high water marks of the Pan American conference held in Havana more than fifteen years ago when all these nations were represented by official delegates, the heads of these delegations all having a part in the planting of this tree. On the bronze tablet are the names of the planters, and among the Americans can be read, Oscar W. Underwood of Alabama, and Charles Evans Hughes of New York. I am glad the tree grew, and I hope it will continue to grow. Its symbolism is needed to draw the peoples of the hemisphere together, for we have been too late in coming together. Only when all of us feel ourselves seriously threatened do we emphasize our unity. More than a hundred years ago, Simon Bolivar, liberator of much of South America from Spanish rule, called a council of all the American nations in Panama to unite them in all ways by which they could be united. Only four nations answered Bolivar's call and the American delegate came months late, too late.

But we are all members of each other. What affects one, affects all. Together we rise; together we fall. We must plant more fraternity trees in the soil of men's hearts all over the world.

And yet it comes so slowly, so slowly that we feel that no progress is being made at all, until we get terribly frightened at some evil monster. Well, there is a way to make progress in getting to understand one another, and getting to like one another and in getting to serve one another. That way is the pathway charted by the Son of man in Gallilee many hundreds of years ago. He said that God hath made of one flesh all nations, and that we are all brothers because we are created by the same Father, God, and redeemed by the same Savior. That is his gospel from the master interpreter of the New Testament. Real fraternity is born out of a realization of our unity in Christ unto God. When we grow into this fraternity, much of the pain and sorrow of men will be outmoded forever. The inscription of the Christ of the Andes, "He is our peace," is true because Christ makes us realize that we are brothers through Him.

*Divine Lord, through whose abundant and amazing condescension we are brought face to face with our dependence upon each other, and our brotherhood one with another, kindle within us the spirit of mutual understanding and esteem, and lead us to give ourselves for the sake of others that the bonds of Christian brotherhood may be so enlarged as to cover the whole world as the great waters cover the seas. Forgive us when we fail to understand, rebuke us when we don't try to understand, and lead us so near Thee that we shall be near all Thy people. In Christ's name, with whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free, but all one, Amen.*

## I Accept

★ ★

Have you ever read the Letters of Franklin K. Lane, secretary of the Interior in Woodrow Wilson's cabinet, published after his death at the age of 57 following an operation for a most serious trouble in the Mayo hospital? If you haven't, you have missed the inner heart beats of a great soul. One of these letters is written soon after the operation from which it was at first believed he would recover. He says:

"I have seen death come to men in various ways, some rather novel and western. I once saw a man hanged. And I have seen several men shot, and came very near going out that way myself two or three times, but always the other fellow aimed poorly. I was being shot at because I was a newspaper man, and I should have been shot at. There must be public concern in what is printed, as well as its truth, to justify it. After the earthquake in San Francisco I saw walls topple out upon a man . . . but never before have I been called deliberately to walk into the Valley of the Shadow, and say what you will, it is a great act. The best statement of my creed could be fitted into the word, "I accept." "Lead Kindly Light" is my gospel.

The final letter written the morning before he died contained these sentences: "And if I had passed into that other land, whom would I have sought—and what should I have done? No doubt, first of all I would have sought the few loved ones whose common life with me had given us matter for talk and whom I had known so well that I had loved dearly . . . and then for my heart's content in that new land, I think I would rather loaf with a great soul along a river bank. We would sit down where the bank sloped gently to the quiet stream, and glance at the picture of our people—" well, that sentence was never finished on paper; but the great soul who wrote it finished it in person before the passage of another day.

One of the earliest letters written when he came first to the hospital had in it this paragraph: "In William James you will find a questionnaire, 'Why do you believe in immortality?' 'Because I think I'm just about ready to begin to live.' Lane added: "I'm there, too."

The greatest of all voices said to dear friends: "Let not your hearts be troubled . . . in my Father's House are many mansions . . . I am the Way, the truth and the Life.

*Master of the Universe, and Upholder of the Human Heart, grant Thy guidance unto us every morning, no matter what glad surprises or painful shocks the hours of the day may give us as we turn the corners of the road. May we accept Thy will, and rest in Thy wisdom, live in Thy love, and advance through their power. For the mellowed hearts who are watching the autumn leaves beginning to fall, we pray as well as for the buoyant radiant minds who unthinkingly see the tiny green branches ruthlessly pulled off the most beautiful pieces of shrubbery. Youth and age, gladness and gloom, ignorance and culture, we all turn to Thee, for we need Thee, our most gracious Lord, and we would receive Thee as we look in faith to Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our Faith. In His name, Amen.*

## The Greatest Detective in the World

★ ★

When the Bible says, "Be sure your sin will find you out," its words are giving us a personal introduction to the greatest detective in the world. He is not a creation of A. Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Edgar Allen Poe or any other fantastic writer of mysteries, but the reality, "Sin," which has left its slimy and repulsive trail over the entire world, and over every human life.

In what sin does one's sin find one out?

Our sin finds us out in the actual uncovering of that which we have sought in vain to hide.

Our sin finds us out in the deterioration of character, for character is warped and twisted and destroyed by even the most secret sin. In fact, the more secret the sin the more devastating its effect on character.

Our sin finds us out in the loss of reputation in the community where we live. Sin punctures reputations like pin thrusts puncture red balloons.

Our sin finds us out in the penalties which come upon the life for the breaking of the moral and spiritual laws by which the universe is upheld, and which are our guarantee of a wise and righteous God at the helm of the world.

Our sin finds us out in the cowardice, fear and loss of initiative that comes into the life as the direct and indirect result of sin.

Our sin finds us out to God, to our fellowmen, and to ourselves.

You tell on yourself by the friends you seek,  
By the very manner in which you speak,  
By the way you employ your leisure time,  
By the way you make your dollar and dime.

You tell on yourself by the things you wear,  
By the spirit in which your burdens bear,  
By the kind of things at which you laugh,  
By the records you play on the phonograph.

You tell on yourself by the way you walk,  
By the things of which you delight to talk,  
By the manner in which you bear defeat,  
By so simple a thing as how you eat.

By the books you choose from the well-filled shelf,—  
In the ways you move you tell on yourself.  
So there's really no particle of sense  
In an effort to keep up false pretense.

*"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to Thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight; that Thou mightest be justified when Thou spokest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation." In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Definitions of God by the Man Who Knew Christ Best

★ ★

The first letter from the pen of the sainted apostle John is noteworthy for many things, but for nothing more significant than for its three answers to the greatest question which can come from the lips of men.

That question is, "What is God like?"

The answer of John is made in three little sentences, each of which is so simple that the child in kindergarten can catch his meaning, and each so wonderful and deep in meaning that no eminent philosopher or scholar can plumb to the utmost depths of it.

The first answer is: "God is light." "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." For those who seek to know, for those who seek to be relieved of the pressing burden of darkness and shadows and gloom, there comes the radiant answer that light is of God, for God is light. He is the inspiration therefore of every movement and every purpose to rid the world of darkness, and to usher the hearts and souls of men into light, light intellectual, light physical, and light spiritual. We are grateful that God is light.

The second answer is, "God is love." "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love." Away with all hatred; down with all bitterness, forever remove all rancor and indifference and complacency, and self-satisfaction. God is love, and men through the grace of the Most High must exercise towards each other this quality which marks the attitude of God towards them. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth his brother abideth in death."

The third answer is: "God is true." "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ." Someone has said that when Pilate asked the question, "What is truth?" he had before him the personification of truth, and knew it not. Before Him stood the personality who had declared: "I am the truth." It is our guarantee of the moral integrity of the world, and the ultimate victory of righteousness.

God is light; God is love; God is true—so writes John for our instruction and inspiration.

*God of light, remove all darkness from our minds and hearts. God of love, slay all hatreds and envies within us. God of truth, write thy eternal laws of righteousness upon the walls of our souls, and lead us forward in the direction these laws call. Build Thy divine attributes into the lives of men and women everywhere, and grant that groups, sects, classes and nations may discover that these ways are the ways not only of God, but of glory, and beauty, and inward satisfactions. Help all in sorrow and pain; guide all in the shadows, and advance Thy kingdom and prosper Thy church, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

## The Long Trails Back to the Pioneers

★ ★

In the ticket office of the Pan American airways I bought a round trip ticket from Miami to Havana and return. The time for the flight is ninety minutes each way. The distance is 230 miles, and the price is twenty-nine dollars. Four round trips are made every day, and the planes are unable to take care of those who want to make the flight. It has become a commonplace affair, and men and women take seats in the huge 21 seated Douglas airliner with not much more concern than they do in a bus for a ten cent trip across the city.

But behind that simple flight are the studies, experiments, and labors of many men in many places. That flight was possible because of the great plant out on the Pacific coast that makes the machines in which you travel. That flight is possible because of the weather observations carried on by the government. That flight is possible because of the perfection of the gasoline engine which supplies the power. That flight was possible by the work of Orville and Wilbur Wright at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina many years ago on the sand dunes near the Atlantic Coast. That flight was possible because of the labors of Langley in a more distant time, and because of the experiments and dreams of Leonardo da Vinci in Italy about the time that America was discovered, by the daring dreams and the successful work of many men whose names will never be cut on the Halls of Fame; but who nevertheless have made a definite contribution, and to each of whom I owe a positive debt of gratitude when I spend twenty-nine dollars for a ninety minute flight from Miami to Havana and back home again. And as the plane rides high over the Florida keys, disclosing the blue waters dotted with coral islands, giving glimpses of tankers, fishing smacks, and ocean steamers through broken mountains of clouds, I remember how much I am indebted to God for the goodness poured into my life from every direction, from every land, and from every worthy achievement of every man. We are a part of all we have met; and no man liveth to himself in any task of work or play; and the goodness of God bringeth treasures from near and afar for the enrichment of life.

*Dear Master, whose love is infinite and whose thought is everlasting, we cry with Thy servant of old: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, Bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. We cannot name them one by one, for Thy blessings never cease to come, blessings material, and benedictions spiritual, blessings new each morning, and renewed and enlarged each evening. Make every day for us a Thanksgiving day, and receive the gratitude our hearts pour out as we bow in love before Thy throne of everlasting mercy. Make us sensible of Thy goodness, that we may never receive divine blessings as merely matters of course. Keep alive in us the quality of heart that will thrill us with Thy love every day. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Having Personal Knowledge Behind Our Words

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Once upon a time I waited in the Paris Office of the New York Herald to see a member of my congregation, then editor of this English paper published daily in the French capital. While waiting, I asked the members of the reportorial staff about the French Colonial Exposition then open in the city. "It is a good exposition," they told me, "and the attendance is all the officials hoped it would be." How do you get there. One said he didn't know, and so said another, and a third. Finally I asked: "Have any of you been there?" To the surprise of myself and of the people in the city editor's room, none had been, and the exposition had been open for three months. They talked from second hand information, not from personal experience. And they could have had the personal experience any afternoon for fifteen cents, as I discovered later that day.

Sometimes we try to talk to people about religion, to people who are dead in earnest about the supreme matters of life. And we are giving them information that comes to us only at second hand, for we have not had a vital personal experience with the saving and sanctifying power of Jesus Christ. We need not be surprised when the words we speak seem to fall flat, and the person turns away with an undisguised look of disappointment, for there is something about second handed information that labels it plainly as second handed information. And we can have the personal experience. Jesus is ready to hear us, to heal us, to forgive us, to guide us, and Him that cometh to him, He will in no wise cast out." To know whereof we speak from personal experience is to be in a position to bring help and healing in the name of Christ to others.

The Christian faith has two great commands: Its first "Come to Me." Its second: "Go to others." When we have experienced the power of God manifest in Christ, we can with assurance and power bear this message to others.

*Grant to us, O Lord, a vital, saving, personal experience with the grace of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, and use us to testify of this experience to others. Forgive us our sins, that we may see God clearly, and deliver us from the temptations which daily assail us, and lead us to help others. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Nil Desperandum

★ ★

In one of the Carolina colleges is a famous literary society whose motto is "Nil Desperandum." The free translation of that Latin phrase is "Never despairing." It is a good motto for life, and illustrations of its worth abound in every direction. It is so easy to get disgusted and quit, to feel hope slipping away, and to be willing to throw in the sponge; but any study of history shows that often man was tardy in the realization of his greatest dreams, and that it was only at long last that his purposes worked out. Take, for instance, that superb engineering triumph we call the Panama Canal. Its final success was the growth of many hopes, of many dreams, and of many trials, including some tragedies.

The first steamer passed through it from Atlantic to Pacific on August 3, 1914, and it was open for public traffic eleven days later. But behind that simple statement lies a long line of dreams and hopes, and over each of them was well written, "Nil Desperandum." The French began the canal on June 20, 1882. They worked at it in some fashion until 1889. In 1902 the rites of the old French company were purchased by the United States Government, and the American canal was begun May 4, 1904.

But behind all that is a Spaniard, Alvares de Saavedra, companion of Balboa, who in 1529 made the first known plans for a canal to unite the two oceans. Nearly four hundred years before the plans were carried to completion. Unless hope had been kept alive, the project would never have been completed.

So with our plans to help men and things. It is easy to drop them, when we do not see them realized before the weekend is over. It is the mark of greatness to hold them before our eyes steadily and enthusiastically, working at them, until at long last we see the dream come true. God must do that with us. We disappoint Him so often, but he continues to have faith in us, and to hope for us. And this hope that He has for us must be reflected in the high hopes we hold for others. When propositions get hard, "Nil desperandum." When disappointments arrive on trains expected to bring great gifts, "Nil Desperandum." When the beautiful, rose lined boulevard turns into a winding trail that lies through the dense jungle where thick growth blots out the sun from the narrow path, "Nil desperandum."

*We are glad, O God, that Thou dost plant the flower of hope in our hearts. Let it ever grow there, and bring forth beautiful blooms. Keep us hoping in Thee, keep us hoping in our fellowmen. Keep us hoping in the advance of Thy church, and the victory of Thy cause. Keep us clean and strong and gentle, for Jesus' sake. Amen.*



## An Open Door

★ ★

To an old home that has stood on a large lot for half a century there is a door way which long years of service have not yet rendered useless. That door faced a street in its youth upon which the very best folks of a growing city walked. During the years the complexion of the street has changed, and not for the better. Some of the peoples who were so proud of the homes they built along here, grew wealthier, and moved out to more fashionable suburbs. Some lost their means of livelihood, and sacrificed their homes to take cottages elsewhere. But all these years one family remained within this home, and its open doorway is an epitome of the life of that family. Through that doorway, the old feeble couple entered many Junes ago as bride and groom. On the stone steps leading to the door baby carriages were lovingly lifted up and down. On those same steps little boys and little girls played in the twilight, and in and out they walked, on way to and from kindergarten, grammar school, high school. At this door they were kissed goodbye as they went to college, and at this door they were joyfully welcomed home again for vacation periods. Through this door came friends, and friendship grew into love, and these stone steps were showered with rice. Through this door entered the physician, sometimes in the morning, and sometimes in the middle of the night, when sickness came. Through this door a silent crowd watched pallbearers carry a casket when the home circle was broken. From this door the men went to business, the women went to visit their friends. Through this door the family went to church, and returned from church. At this doorway they picked up the papers that told of war, and peace, and depression and prosperity, and life and death, and joy and sorrow. The open door to yonder home is a summary of the experiences, merry and sad, glad and gloomy, of the men and women who within the home saw life and saw it in these minute particles which unite someday to form a whole.

And they found life good, because they lived it as a family loving God, and serving Him in the church, the home, and the community. Into that home through the open door have come many who were deeply and permanently blessed by coming to see faith personified and love embodied in the lives of these modern saints of God, who would be the last people in all the world to claim sainthood.

The open door—where you go out; the open door—where others come in. We can bless, and be a blessing; or we can sorely disappoint. People enter our doors with joy or with fear; they love it, or they hate it; and it remains for us to make it the one rather than the other.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, of every home and of every heart, for the open doors through which we and others enter the houses we call our own, and for the doors through which we leave these houses to present Thyself and Thy cause to others. In the midst of so much strife, kindle a haven of peace within every home, a peace where Jesus reigns as its Prince. In the midst of so much sorrow, erect a temple of happiness in every home and in every heart, with Christ reigning as its Giver. For Jesus' sake, Amen.*

## Looking Down On Jerusalem

★ ★

Every visitor to Jerusalem who climbs to the summit of the Russian tower on the summit of the mount of Olives, a tower marking the place where many believe that the foot of Jesus touched the earth the last time before He ascended to heaven, thinks of the 122nd Psalm as he gazes down upon the city which is twined so closely about the heart-strings of every Christian. Below are the churches on the Mount of Olives. Between the mountain and Jerusalem is the valley of Jehosaphat with its multitude of Jewish, Christian and Moslem tombs on every possible place. Around the city of Jerusalem are the low dark brown walls. Over the walls are the hundreds of colorless, flat roofed houses, the monotony of which is broken by the domes of Christian churches and the minarets of mosques. The modern city extends far beyond the walls both to the south and to the north. Beyond the farthest stretch of houses are the mountains of Judea. As one looks down upon this scene, one feels that the glory of Jerusalem is a unique glory, unlike the glory of Egyptian Thebes, for she has no structures of granite designed for eternity unlike that of Greece, for she boasts of no artists nor dramatists to give her immortality, unlike that of imperial Rome, for she never prided herself in her wide domains or in her conquering armies. Rather her glory has been the glory of the unseen, her pride is that her peoples worshipped a god who dwelt not in temples made by human hands, but whose dominion was from the rivers unto the ends of the earth, and whose reign was from everlasting. The citizens of Jerusalem knew full well that his earthly capital would pass away, but he loved it with an exceedingly great love, for it resembled a city of God, eternal in the heavens, that would never pass away, but which would endure when the pomp and the pageantry of earth had fallen to rise no more. And when he prayed for the peace of Jerusalem, he is praying for the peace of all God's people in all the earth, for the scattered believers in every land, and those who pray and labor for peace unto them shall ever prosper in the ways of God.

*O Thou God of ancient Jerusalem, and God who has promised us a new Jerusalem coming down from heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, in which there is no night, no sea, no tears and no sorrow, and no death, come into our lives, and lead us towards the realization of these mighty visions which thy Holy Spirit brings to trusting seers in every great age. Give Thy people peace: Peace be within the borders of all the nations of the earth, and prosperity within the homes of Thy faithful disciples. Exalt justice, and promote righteousness, and even dare to do so though those of us who put our time and resources wholly at Thy disposal. "Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south," and bring us to see that "The Lord is doing great things for us, whereof we are glad." In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Play Ball!

★ ★

Summer days are "Play Ball" days! To the average American on a hot afternoon no call is more welcome than the voice of the umpire, saying, "Play ball!" And the game of baseball is in many ways like the game of life; and what makes for success or failure in the one makes for success and failure in the other.

For instance, the personnel of the team is important. The team must be made of clean, dependable men. Billy Sunday used to tell how the greatest of all pitchers became useless to the team because he would not keep in condition. The men on the team cannot depend on past performance for success today. Every game is a new game, and every man must keep on doing his best. Every type of good player has a place on the well balanced team—bunters, hitters, fielders. So in the greater game of life, God wants clean dependable men, men who do not depend on the past, and men of every type.

The Spirit of the Team is very important in the winning of games. Enthusiasm wins. Indifference always loses, unless your opponent has more than we have. Every man counts. One idler and one traitor can bring defeat to the entire team. Every player must remain steadily on the job until the final ball is not only thrown, but caught. In the greater game of living for God and the good, the Spirit in which we enter the contest counts much. He who has zest for life will get more out of it, and will put more into it.

The Manager of the Team counts much. The manager must know the game; he must know his men; he must know the nature and quality of the opposition his men will face. In the greatest of all games, our Lord Christ is the Manager for Human life. He knows the game of life—he played it in Galilee. He knows His men—He made us, and He redeemed us by His death on the Cross. He knows the plans and power of the enemy—He met the devil, and vanquishes him in battle, and he steadies His men in every stage of the game.

*Master of Life, guide us into living in the spirit that the writer to the Hebrews manifest when he said: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beat us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Give us strength, and make us dependable not only to our comrades, but to Thee. Give us enthusiasm and zeal for matters dear to the Master's heart. Give us loyalty and love for our Lord. In His name, Amen.*

## Rejected

★ ★

Comes a day when the little sticker on the windshield of the automobile that says that the state inspectors have found the car in good shape for driving on the public highways has outlived its usefulness, and another with a later date must be stuck there in its place. Such a day arrived, and I drove the car into the line where inspectors looked at every part of its mechanism, and drove it with all the varied tests. But when the tests were completed, the new sticker was not applied. Instead the inspector gouged the old one off, and put in its place a sticker which said: "Rejected!" When I asked for an explanation, he handed me a card which said that there was something wrong about the way the brakes worked, or the way the breaks did not work. I was to report to a garage, get them fixed, and then return for further inspection. I rode to my regular garage, business was so good that I could not get attention until late afternoon, and for the whole of the day, I was compelled to drive a car about the city streets, with a big word shining out from its windshield: "Rejected!"

Like unto that, it seems to me, is the way it is with many lives in the eyes of the Lord. We serenely and carelessly continue our routine of living, and think so little upon our ways that we are given a sudden and rude shock when the hour for divine inspection arrives. Happy indeed when it comes, and we are brought face to face with the verdict, "Rejected," in sufficient time for us to do something about it.

On the following morning I drove the car through the line, had the "Rejected" sticker removed by the proper authorities, and a passed sticker glued there in its stead.

So with life. Lives are given the passing grade in the divine inspection when they have been given into the keeping of the Lord Jesus Christ who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, who died for our sins, and who bears our infirmities; and we are saved through the grace of God by faith in Him.

Hours of judgment come through a serious and personal study of His word, and the quiet questioning of ourselves as to whether we are living as He wants His children to live. They come as we listen to the whisperings of conscience, and let the voice of God within tell us how we are failing, and point out the way to righteousness and trust. They come when we pray, and wait for an answer at the throne of Grace.

*Help us each so to trust in Christ Jesus our Lord, and show forth our trust in daily living in such constancy and sincerity that we can know that when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory and say unto us: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me, I was sick, and ye visited me, I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Keep us from being rejected, and lift our lives now to the plane of Thy acceptance. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## How a City Builder Made Good

★ ★

In the life of Nehemiah are remarkable contrasts as that life is presented in the old Testament book of the same name.

Nehemiah had been an important official in the palace of the King of Persia, but he gives that up of his own free will and accord to return to Jerusalem that he may help the released captives to build again a nation in the land which the Lord their God had promised them as their very own. Nehemiah's life there is a story of toil, of real work, of the sort of labor which is pleasing unto God and definitely helpful to the world. That labor of Nehemiah suggests four fundamental facts about work.

All true work calls for wholeheartedness. No work can be worthy of the name if it is done in a careless or slipshod fashion. There may be some excuse for our failing to do any particular work, but if we begin that or any other task, there is never any excuse for carelessness in its performance. Whatever we are called upon to do—and surely this applies to the daily task with which we seek to provide a livelihood for ourselves and our loved ones, we must do heartedly, as unto the Lord. There is no magic in getting things done, except the magic of concentration and thoroughness and total abandon to the purpose in hand.

All true work is done in the face of difficulties. The tale of the building of the walls of Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah is the tale of a success despite the fiercest difficulties that could have been encountered. There was trouble from without—the leaders of the tribes who lived around Jerusalem held it to be to their advantage to prevent the construction of the walls of the city, and they resorted to bribery, to trickery, and to open warfare in order to prevent the erection of these walls. There was trouble from within, and trouble from within is always more dangerous than trouble from without—for the people had to be organized for work and even before this could be done, their minds and hearts had to be organized to a desire for work. Every stone that went into place, every bit of mortar that was laid represented a victory over great odds.

All true work is accompanied with prayer. The book of Nehemiah is a story of great deeds, and it is likewise a story of fervent prayer. The highest work never prevents prayer, and the true prayer never retards the success of true work. Every great forward movement in the ministry of Jesus was preceded immediately by a period of prayer. We work better when we pray more.

All true work is done in the spirit of the soldier. These men labored to build, but they were crusaders for God, and were ever ready to fight against their enemies.

*Dear Lord, we thank Thee for the blessing of work, and we pray for Thy blessing upon those who are at present deprived of this benediction. We thank Thee that our Master said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," that we serve a working God, and that in His name and for the building of His Kingdom we are called upon to labor. Help us to put ourselves wholeheartedly into our daily task, help us to stick to that task despite all the difficulties that may arise both from without and from within, help us to maintain both the attitude of prayer and the spirit of the soldier as we continue that task until it shall be accomplished. In the name of Christ, we pray, Amen.*

## Why Go to Sunday School?

★ ★

The word of the Lord endureth forever.

The Church of the living God is the greatest institution in the world. It is the greatest because it is the only institution in the world that is founded by God Himself. Our Lord said: "I will build my church." It is the greatest institution in the world because it is the only institution which deals with things of everlasting value. Its material is the human soul. It is the greatest institution in the world because it is the only institution that is destined to outlast the world.

The Sunday school is the greatest institution in the church. It is greatest because it is the most inclusive. Other church institutions choose for members from a certain age group, or are otherwise limited. The Sunday school appeals to all from the time the baby is born and is put on the cradle roll until the old person is unable to leave his home, and becomes a member of the home department. The Sunday school is the greatest institution in the church because its task is that of teaching the Word of God. In the fulfillment of this task it aims to instruct boys and girls, men and women in the definite and intricate ways of the Lord, and to point to more godly living. It is the greatest institution in the church because it is the most productive. Ninety per cent of the American churches between the Appalachian and the Rocky mountains grew out of mission Sunday schools. More than three fourths of all the members that enter the church on profession of faith in Christ do so as a result of the training and inspiration they have received in the Sunday schools.

If these things are clearly understood, there is no need for argument as to why we should attend Sunday school. We need the information and inspiration given in the Sunday school for ourselves. We need to go to set an example in the community before other men. There is a place for each of you, and a welcome too, in the splendidly equipped, well organized Sunday schools. We are fighting a gigantic battle on every continent today against irreligion and non-religion, and attendance and support of your Sunday school aids in winning that battle for God. Plan now to be at your church for Sunday school next Sunday morning. Make it a date.

*We thank Thee, O Lord that we can gather in Sunday schools in the United States for the study of the Bible, without government regulation and supervision, that no spies are sitting in every class to see and to hear, and to direct the teaching. Help us to prize this privilege which many great areas of the world have recently lost, and give us the courage to take advantage, full and eager, of it today, that we may not lose it ourselves. Heal the sick today, and comfort the sorrowing, and advance Thy word and work, for Jesus' sake, Amen.*

## Who Should Go to Sunday School?

★ ★

A long time ago we used to answer the question, "Who should go to Sunday school?" with the clearcut statement, "Everybody," and give this explanation of such an answer:

Everybody who does not have a fully comprehensive knowledge of the word of God as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments should attend the Sunday school each Sunday morning, for it is in these schools that the Bible is taught. The interdenominational committee which compiles the lessons, known as the International Lessons, arranges it so that in each seven years a survey of the whole Bible is made. If you don't know the Bible, be at the Sunday school, for the teaching of the Bible is the primary duty and privilege of the Sunday school.

But who else needs to go? Those who do know the Bible are needed in the Sunday school as officers and teachers, to direct the study of the Scriptures. There is hardly a church in the nation but could effectively use one or more well prepared teachers. The teaching of the Word of God to boys and girls, to men and women, is one of the most wonderful privileges that can come to any person. It is planting spiritual seed in the most fruitful soil on earth, the soil of human hearts, and of divinely created souls. The teacher has a mission that stands as high as that of any other person on earth; and if you know the Bible, you should be in the school to lead others into that knowledge.

Go to Sunday school, if you do not know the word of God, to receive instruction from others.

Go to Sunday school, if you do know the word of God, to give instruction to others.

Everybody then needs to attend the Sunday school. If you have become careless in regard to your attendance due to absence from the city during the summer months, or for other causes, this is the time to rally to the support of the Sunday school. You need the Sunday school, and the Sunday school needs you. Every absentee from the Sunday school next Sunday cripples the work of the school, and lessens the enthusiasm of the great army of noble volunteer workers enlisted to help your children learn how to be good men and women.

*Dear Lord, Thou Master Teacher, who furnishes the inspiration for all who teach, bless Thou the educational work of Thy church at all times, and especially in the Rally Day programs for the coming Sunday. Send into the Sunday schools of our community, and throughout all the land, every man and every woman, every boy and every girl, who needs to be there. May they come to teach, and to be taught, that Thy church may advance, and Thy kingdom grow extensively and intensively. Help us to be loyal to Thy work, and forbid that we should add to the already heavy burdens of Christian workers by our thoughtlessness, indifference, unkindness or carelessness. Through Jesus Christ, we pray, Amen.*

## Why Attend Church

★ ★

At least a score of times the New Testament says either directly or indirectly that Jesus went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. That it was the habit of the Son of God, who was likewise the Son of God, to attend church regularly. Jesus is not only your Savior, but your example, and is an example to be followed in this respect as in all others.

Why go to church?

Not to hear a sermon merely, for the sermon may be very good, in which case it is well worth hearing, or it may be very bad, in which case it is not worth hearing; but there is an obligation to attend church regardless of the character of the sermon which the minister will preach.

Not to get the social or business prestige which church attendance gives in some localities. It is good to be with the group which attends the sanctuary regularly on the Sabbath, but it is not good to go, merely to be named among this group.

We go to church to worship God. We go to church to listen to the voice of heaven amid the problems, questions, distractions and trials and worries of the world; we go to church to open a window that points upward that God may speak a word to us in our days of great need. We go to church to orient our daily lives by the principles and instructions of Scriptures, that we may learn the word of God in order to keep it.

We go to church to enjoy fellowship with like-minded men and women who in their devotion to the kingdom of God as expressed through the organized church are marching upward to Zion, and who as they march, are rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord, and in the mercies already received, and in mercies promised, and sure to come all the days of our life, and then in the next life.

We go to church to grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God; we go to church to be an example to those about us; we go to church to testify to our faith in God, and to our love for his work.

We go to church because Jesus set us an example, and because all things that He did are right and proper and necessary for his people.

*Dear Lord and Master of mankind, we thank Thee for Thy Church, the house of thine abode, the pillar and ground of the truth, the bride of Jesus. . . . We would love it more and serve Thee through the church more faithfully. Lead us by thy right hand into the holy sanctuary on the Sabbath, and lead our thoughts to Thy work all the days that intervene from one sabbath to the next. In the name of the Lord who said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," Amen.*



## You Break Easily When You Get Out of Place

★ ★

The men who know all about seashells—inside, outside and every side—told me this in reply to my question as to why there are always so many broken shells on the beaches. You see something in front of you that looks so attractive that you want to take it up and keep it, but when you reach it, it is but a broken fragment of what would have been, if unbroken, a very beautiful shell. That experience is repeated again and again as you daily take a four mile walk up the beach and down again. A hundred, two hundred, maybe five hundred broken shells to one unbroken.

Here is what the master of shell lore said: "The shells are broken because they are on the shore. The place of these shells is not on land, but in the sea. Shells are like a lot of other things—they break easily when they get out of place."

I am sure this must be true, but it suggests so many allied truths. We get smashed easily and quickly when we get out of our proper place. What applies to seashells applies to man.

The proper place of the little shell is in the sea. When it leaves the sea, it gets into trouble. What is the proper place of man? Man, created in the image of God belongs with God. He belongs with the people of God. His place is in doing the work of God. When he is in his place, and these things suggest his place, he gets along right. But when he leaves his place, he breaks like the shell on the shore.

There is an analogy, too, in the way both shell and man leave their proper place. The shell is swept out of the sea by the power of some wave which he does not have the strength, the willingness, nor the power to resist. A man is swept out of his proper place by some wave of influence which he does not have the strength or the willingness to resist.

Sometimes it is the strength. He could have the strength if he sought it in earnestness from God who always bestows his strength upon those who earnestly seek it.

Sometimes it is the willingness. That may be the lack of knowledge, for with knowledge comes wisdom, and wisdom leads to that wisdom that gives the willingness to be where we ought to be, and do what we ought to do. Better read the Bible better; better go to Church more often; better pray more regularly.

Many men are out of place, and therefore out of repair; out of place, and therefore out of use.

*Send us back to Thee, O Lord, for the strength and the inclination to be Thy servants. For Jesus' sake. Amen.*

## The Palatka Pup Got Lonesome

★ ★

When the couple from Palatka drove into the Inn yard at Ponte Vedra for a week, they could hardly leave their car because of the vigorous and vociferous protests of Tim, the fox terrier, who insisted upon going into the hotel to register when his owners did. He was in a strange place, and he just wasn't going to be left out in the car alone, particularly when the waters of the Atlantic ocean with which he was altogether unfamiliar were making such a roar over on the other side of the car, and not very far away. Anyway, he was at the beach on a vacation, and no one, not even a fox terrier, expected to spend a vacation in a sedan with all windows up. You can't even get a decent breeze from the sea.

His protest went unheeded, and he began to behave so well that they let him out of the car to range over the hotel gardens. But Tim, the pup from Palatka, was not so silly as he seemed, just a sly little schemer. He let his folks go into the dining room, apparently paying them no heed whatever. But as soon as they were safely out of sight he perched beside the dining room door, and the next person who opened this door found that he entered, not before, but after Tim. The earliest intimation of the owners of Tim knew that he was anywhere he should not be was to see him in the center of the well filled dining room, gazing around with a calm and undisturbed eye, to find the folks to whom he belonged. It did not take them long to lock him in the car until the meal was over.

But Tim is no longer lonesome. He has met a cocker spaniel with whom he patrols the beach in a manner altogether his own. He has become acquainted with a semi-Boston bull with whom he chases any cars which dare to drive along the sandy beaches. He is now having about as delightful a time on the coast at the exclusive hotel as are the couple to whom he belongs.

What lesson might we draw from this lonesome pup from Palatka?

Several things. None of us are obliged to keep dogs or other pets, but when we do keep them, we ought to care for their welfare whether we are at home or on vacation. There used to be a saying that no man is a hero to his valet. The real hero is a hero to his valet, and the real man is a real man to his dog or his cat.

Another thing: The so-called dumb animals, not so dumb after all, are in the thought of the Lord who declared that not a single sparrow can fall to the ground without being noticed by the Almighty. The final words in the prophecy of Jonah for the sparing of Niveveh was in the words of the Lord that the city contained many babies "and much cattle." All the creatures made by the Lord are in the thought of God, and should therefore be in our thought. We show ourselves either possessed of mercy or possessed of brutality by the way we treat the horse, the dog, the cat, or the canary.

Yet another thing: we should be grateful for the fellowship and service we receive, often so undeservedly, from the animals about us. It is a type of loyalty that many of us would do well to copy.

*We are grateful for the dog with a friendly wag of a tail when we come home in the evening, for the welcoming purr of the cat against our shoe as we sit on the porch, and for the musical notes of the bird in the abandon of sheer joy. For all the creatures put about us to add to our joy in life, we are grateful, and we thank Thee, O Christ our Lord, who loveth all things well. Amen.*

[27]

## Too Big to Comprehend

★ ★

The Panama Canal, like many other things, is easily talked about, but it is entirely too big for a person to comprehend. Spend a day along its banks; see the slowly rotting forest of trees lifting their gaunt trunks above the waters on Gatun Lake; watch the intermittent parade of boats from one ocean to another; see the gigantic locks that lift and drop with each and precision every sort of craft; see the jungle, with its green, interlaced forests, creep close to the canal; see the thousands of soldiers guarding the sides of the big ditch; be amazed at the amount of new construction in progress; stand dumbfounded at the removal of dirt, rock and muck for the new locks and the alternate route; see the entirely new system of life and society which a far away nation has superimposed upon a ten-mile belt across the continent down in the tropics;—see it all, with the army mules marching beside the railway, carrying knocked down machine guns strapped to their backs; with the formation of heavy bombing planes roaring overhead; a hundred automobiles with “V for Victory” plastered upon their windshields; hear Spanish and English mixed, and a thin street marking the division between the Zone and the Republic,—and the canal is too gigantic to be summarized in a single word, or explained in a single sentence, or comprehended in a few hours.

The cost of it is an item, but it doesn't tell much. The time saved in the world's shipping time and money is another item, but it doesn't explain; we are stunned by the greatness of it, and stilled by the many angles from which it can be studied.

So are all the great things of earth; and even more so are the great things of God. Take the life and personality of Jesus. To explain this life, more books have been written than upon anything else, more addresses have been made; and yet the bigness of this Personality baffles human comprehension, for the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, nor can humanity fully understand divinity.

But the Canal can be used; and so can the salvation that Jesus brings men. It is only necessary to lay hold upon it, and walk in its glorious light, and men are freed from sin, and lifted to sonship with God.

*Dear Lord, lead us to love and follow the Christ, so great in His mercy, so deep in His love, and so high in His gifts to us that we may never know the all; but we are grateful that we can come to Thee by faith, and we do come. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## Give Him a Broken Bit, and He Pictures the Whole

★ ★

When you meet a person who has spent a long period of time studying life beneath the sea, and is therefore perfectly familiar with all sorts of shells, you learn that if you give him a broken bit of a shell picked up along the beach, he can tell you what the entire shell looked like. From that little broken piece, he can draw you a picture of the shell as it lived deep in the waters and bore within it a strange living creature.

I used to think such knowledge marvelous beyond comprehension until I realized that you can do that, if you make it your life study. I can usually do the same thing with postage stamps, for during my boyhood days I studied stamps much more than my family thought I should study them, particularly when there were high school books and other things for study, and I am able to tell from even a tiny portion of a stamp which of more than half a hundred countries issued it, and the date of its issue, and the denomination. I cannot draw the completed stamp, but I can take the little bit and fit it on a perfect specimen, if I find one in a convenient collection.

Well, this is rather interesting: to know something so well that any little bit of it enables you to complete the picture of the whole. Sea-shells and postage stamps are rather silly and trivial beside other things in this world, the most important being man himself. And there is One who has such perfect knowledge of man,—our Lord; for the New Testament Gospel affirms that He knew what was in man. He ought to know,—He made him. He ought to know,—He has watched over him in sunshine and storm for all the ages since he began his life on the outer edges of this planet. And He, our Lord, not only sees man unbroken, and unshattered, but desires to have him become like the ideal in the heart of God when He created man in His own image. —“In the image of God created He him, male and female, created He them.”

And the practical purpose of what the theologians call the Incarnation and the Atonement, the coming of Christ, and the death on the Cross, is not only to make a blue print of the whole, but to restore the broken man unto the fullness and the bigness and the goodness of which He, by the presence and power of God, is capable of possessing.

Give the scientist a broken bit of a shell, and he pictures the whole for you. Give our God the wreckage of a man, and He makes him whole again, and puts His own glory into the masterpiece. And the process begins the moment the bit of human wreckage makes an unconditional surrender of himself unto God, and the Almighty then gets the signal to go ahead with the restoration.

I like this glimpse of God brought to us in the New Testament. It is so much higher than any of us could imagine a God should be as is the farthest fixed star above the level of the house where you rested last night. Such a conception of God brings glory to the men who He has made, and about whom He cares.

*We thank Thee for Thy redemptive love and Thy redemptive power, used in our behalf, we who are wrecked in the wilderness of sin. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*

[29]

## Influencing When We Know It Not

★ ★

The lights of the Malecon drive at Havana were gleaming bright in the evening as the Kungsholm was steaming slowly into the harbor past Moro Castle. The towers of the National Hotel were ablaze with welcoming lights, and the outlines of the capitol dome stood above the skyline. Along the drive were hundreds of Cuban cars slowly being driven to and fro. I leaned over the rail on promenade deck, and a gentle push at the elbow came. A physician in the cruise party said, "What plans for the evening?" "None at all," I replied. "Then will you go over with me as my guest and run around an hour or so?" "Delighted!" And so we spend the evening.

A taxi-cab from the docks to the Plaza. A tour of the hotels down town. A walk all around the capital. A stop at a world-famous restaurant for the equally world-famous cocoanut ice cream. A talk to some Cubans about things Cuban, and things not Cuban. A glance into famous stopping places where Americans are accustomed to go. A walk into the shops, and a bit of bargaining. An artist who wanted to paint our pictures for a consideration, and we stopped and let him paint. And the evening passed. The watch said it was a bit beyond midnight. "What next?" said the doctor. "What would you like?" "Well, I'm satisfied if you are. What about our beds on the boat?" "Suits me right." So back to the boat in the taxi, and the tender over the waters of the bay. Nobody else on the tender. All others making a whole night of it. Therefore, this remark from the doctor: "You did me a big favor in coming over here with me tonight. You may not have noticed it, but I have been sticking close to you, and I needed to. The last time I was here I slipped badly, and if you hadn't been along, the story would have been the same tonight. I feel a lot better now than I did the last night I was in Havana, and I'm going to feel a lot better tomorrow morning, too." With a seriousness that was foreign to everything he had said or done in the ten days of our acquaintance, he said, "Thank you more than I can tell."

Well, that was all. Next morning he left the cruise and flew back to his busy work in New England. The boat was not so pleasant after his departure. But how often we are unconsciously influencing our fellows, sometimes for the worse, sometimes, let us hope and pray and try, for the better. And so often we never know at the time. There, in this as in a thousand other things, we need to watch and pray that we bring not others to temptation.

*Lord, we thank Thee for the sweet and beautiful lives which bring us influence for good, for the way in which human personalities can lift us nearer Thee, and keep us from evil. Keep us in the straight and narrow, and use us to keep others in the straight and narrow, both when we know it, and when we don't know it. Bless those who have helped us, and whom we have forgotten to thank. Forgive us when we have failed to help others, and keep us from doing it again. Guide us and guard others through us from all harm, and altho the storm clouds hang low at the beginning of this New Year, we put our faith in Thee. For Jesus' sake, Amen.*

## The Saint of Colombia

★ ★

Cartegena, the walled city on the Atlantic coast of Colombia, in South America, makes its biggest bid for fame through the personality of the Jesuit Priest, Peter Clever, who arrived in the new world from Spain in 1610, and lived and died in the monastery now attached to the church which bears his name.

Peter Clever called himself the "slave of slaves," and he spent his life administering to the thousands of blacks who arrived at Cartegena from Africa, crowded like animals in the dark holds of crowded ships. He used to watch from a high hill for the arrival of slave ships, and he began preaching the Gospel to these poor Africans even while they were being unloaded from the ship. During his ministry in Cartegena he baptized 300,000 of these negro slaves, giving many of them the name Jesus, a name borne by many of their descendants today. For forty years he devoted his life to the welfare of these poor negroes, and in 1650 he was a victim of a great plague which slew thousands throughout the West Indies. He lies buried in a gilded chest under the main altar of the church called by his name, and when the electric lights are turned on for visitors, a portion of his body can easily be seen today. He was one of the many workers for God who came to the new world and despite innumerable hardships and strange customs, gave his life to let men know about the love of God revealed in Christ Jesus. Such a man never dies. The canonization which his church bestowed upon him late in the nineteenth century was a tardy but real recognition of his walk with Christ, and his loyalty to the task of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, for every child of Thine who goes about doing good in the name of Jesus our Master, and for the work which men like Peter Clever have done for those down at the bottom of the ladder. We praise Thy name for the influence that has gone forth from such lives, and which bears fruit in ten thousand ways and in unnumbered places every new year. Help us to follow in their train, and to love Thee, thy work, and thy people, even the humblest, even as Thou dost love us. For Christ's sake, Amen.*

## A Storm is a Revealing Event

★ ★

Every storm is a revealing event. It matters not whether the storm be on land or at sea, it is a revealer of things long hidden, and of things which otherwise might never have become known. The truth of this statement can be demonstrated clearest when a storm forms at sea, and lashes forth with strange and unfathomed fury at the shore line of great waters.

Such a storm is a revealer of that which is weak, and a revealer of that which is strong. When a storm strikes, one is always amazed at the places which are wrecked, as well as the places which escape serious injury. Those pretty new houses, fresh from the hand of a contractor, and resplendent in gaudy decoration and gay paint, would not be expected to fall, but they sometimes disappear with the first violent blast of wind. Those weatherbeaten old houses which seem so weak that a child might almost push them over, could not be supposed to withstand a heavy gale, but they sometimes smile after the hurricane with the same seedy smile they bore when the sun was shining.

So often have I seen this occur that I began to wonder why, and the reason was not far to seek. Those old weatherbeaten houses are there today because they are inherently strong, because they were put together in a substantial manner by men who know how to fit timbers for a century. The strength was in the building and in the timber. The new house collapsed because it was weak in its material and weak in its construction. Of course, we would never have known good material and good building if the storm had not been its revealer. And you have to build for the storm, for no one knows when the storm comes. I do not think that the storm changes weakness to strength, or strength to weakness, but it shows us plainly what is weak, and what is strong.

As with buildings, so with that structure we are taught to call man. Two men look alike when the pressure of life is easy, and when the roads of life are smooth and level. We never know the stronger or the weaker. But pressures become intense, roads get rough and steep. Then we see who is weak and who is strong. It is too late to change the sort of house on the beach when the hurricane wind begins to blow in from the Carribean. It is likewise too late to make much of a change in the quality of living when the pressures get too difficult. The thing to do is to have the right sort of house there in sunny days and in balmy nights. The thing to do is to have a life buttressed with the infinite resources of the Great God before the violent winds of destiny begin to blow. It is too late to take out a fire insurance policy on your home after you have seen the flames shoot out of the roof, and you have already telephoned for the fire engines to come. The agent says: "I have been trying to get you to do what you needed to do for a long, long time, but you wouldn't listen." And to many of you the Christian minister can say with equal truth the same thing: "I have been trying to get you to give yourself to Christ for a long, long time, but you wouldn't listen." And when the soul storm comes, we stand if we are strong with the strength of God; we fail if we have been trying to go it alone.

*Dear Master: We need Thee every hour. Help us to see our need of Thee in days when life is simple and every aspect pleases; and then have Thee close at hand and within in any great hour of need. Amen.*

## Old Panama and Henry Morgan

★ ★

Eight miles from the present site of Panama City at the Pacific end of the Canal is the ruined city, Old Panama, originally a fishing village for the Indians, but founded in 1519 as the capital city of Panama by the Spanish Governor Pedrarias for two reasons: He liked the climate, and it was opposite the narrowest part of the isthmus. For a century and a half it was one of the most magnificent cities of the New World. But along came Henry Morgan, the pirate and his gang in 1671. He destroyed the monasteries, he tore down two stately churches, and he razed the hospital, two thousand fine houses and five thousand more modest dwellings in true blitz-krieg style, after first torturing the people to make them tell where the gold he sought to find was hidden.

Today, there are ruins scattered over a wide stretch of territory, bits of the old cathedral tower being held up by scaffolding to keep it in place, and beautiful trees moving back in to capture again for the jungle the site of a once stately city. On one side the waters of the Pacific slowly move in and out, and cover the rocks from among which many ancient boats began strange trips. The only modern monuments are a statue of Henry Morgan, the destroyer, and a drink stand on the wall of which was a placard of the former President Arias of the Republic whose face had been successfully disfigured by some passerby. And the only break in the stillness is the inane remarks of tourists who wander out for a moment, see the site of the old city, and hurry back to the bar rooms in the new town. The guide stands at the foot of the cathedral tower, and says: "If you will come here, I'll give you a history of the city." A lady says, "How long will you take?" He says, "Ten or fifteen minutes." She answers, "I cannot take that much time, driver, take me back to town." So life moves on, and in the sky gigantic bombers roar on their circular flights over the Canal Zone.

*We recognize the truth that one man soweth, and another reapeth. Help us to sow well so that when others come to the harvest time, the grain will be good, and the gathering will be plentiful. Bring out of the experience of the past treasures that will add beauty and strength to our lives, and produce in us that which will bring beauty and strength to those who come after us. As we think of the tragedies of other lives, grant that we may be kept from tragedy. As we muse upon the shallowness so blatantly manifest, teach us to launch out into the deep, for Thee and with Thee, in Jesus' name, Amen.*



## Akhenaton's Symbols for God

★ ★

In the fourteenth century before Christ a religious revolution took place in Egypt. The ruler, Amenhotep IV, turned from the worship of many gods to one God. Violent opposition by the Theban priests so as to eliminate all suggestion of Ammon worship. Although the worship of the old gods was re-established by Akhenaton's son-in-law, Tutankhamen, the revolution was complete for a lifetime, and James H. Breasted calls Akhenaton the first individualist in human history, and declares that his idea of God was more than a thousand years in advance of his age.

His symbol of God was a Sun, all around which were rays indicative of light. These rays ended with open hands.

Akhenaton's mother was born of Semetic parents, and I am sure that this idea of God came from the Hebrews, at this time captives in Egypt. At any rate, it is in line with our conception of God.

Our Lord is infinitely above man, infinitely higher than humanity, as the familiar hymn puts it, "Sun of my soul."

And our God is a Lord whose hands of love reach to earth from heaven to lift up man. This is the familiar teaching of the Incarnation. God in Christ walked the earth to raise man from sin.

Akhenaton was groping for the truth which every Christian boy and girl knows so well. God is above us, directing the affairs of the world. "Jehovah, Our Lord." God is with us, helping, and healing and inspiring and strengthening. "Jesus, our Savior."

But he misses what is very precious: "God is within us, our Leader and Comforter and Guide. "The Holy Sprit."

*We thank Thee, O Lord, for all Thy attributes made known unto men. We thank Thee that Thou art a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, in Thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, good, and truth, that Thou art closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet, that all Thy power is for the aid of men, and that Thine is a love that wilt not let us go. Grant that our vision of God may daily grow clearer, our love of God daily grow deeper, and our loyalty to God daily become more pronounced. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## It Is Well to Do One's Best Always

★ ★

On the unpaved, cord-wooded road that runs out from the end of the Carolina beach pavement to the little point, Cape Fear, North Carolina, is little but sand and pigmied brush. These stunted brush have growth out of soil that seems almost wholly yellow sand. They have had to brace themselves against the strong winds that blow in from the Atlantic, and life has been hard. The environment has been unfavorable.

But—in and around these common bushes are courageous plants blossoming with bunches of red flowers, daring to produce blooms of winsome beauty in the most unanticipated places.

I can imagine that little flower saying: “ It isn't any use trying to bloom here. The soil is too poor to make a decent blossom. The wind is so fierce that the blooms will be blown off before they can really open. And anyway, here I am all alone, and nobody ever comes out here anyhow, and blooms will never be noticed. But it did its best, and the blossoms give surprising beauty to a desolate corner of the land. They are even more wonderful because of the difficulties they had to overcome, and because they surprise so startlingly the visitors who drive ou the narrow winding road.

Fine to discover goodness and beauty and truth in lives and homes and localities favorable to its growth. But much, much finer to discover goodness and beauty and truth in lives and homes and localities where the prevailing winds discourage the growth of such qualities. How we love it in places! How we love it far more in people!

*We thank Thee for the blossoms of rare beauty blooming in the lives that have been serenely sheltered from the fiercest gales of the world; we can never be too grateful for such lives. But dear Lord, we thank Thee even more for the blossoms of unexpected beauty which bloom for us in lives that have dared to witness for Thee and to herald Thy kingdom in places that are hard, and among truly perilous. Steady thy children against the gales of adversity, give them sustenance from the water of life as their roots dip down deep into the soil, and increase their influence for good among many men. In Jesus' name, Amen. . . . .*

## "Evasi"

★ ★

Upon the present site of ancient Carthage there is not a great deal to see with the plain eye, but much with the eye of historical prospective.

Two great cities once stood here—the original Carthage, the Empress of the Sea, a Phoenician city. Gone, captured and ploughed up by Rome. Why should we weep over the death of a civilization which cared only for wealth and for fashion? It was destined to destruction by the quality of its ideals.

The other city was built by Romans.

The Roman Carthage was famed for bitter opposition to Christianity in its early days. In the ruined Amphitheater where many Christians perished you can still see the dens for the wild beasts, the dungeons which held the Christians condemned to fight them, and a portion of the arena where these conflicts were held. Naked men fought starved, savage beasts. Despite the unevenness of the conflict a Christian sometimes emerged alive, some might call it Chance. Others of us call it God!

Upon the marble column of a subterranean chamber there is scratched with a sharp instrument a single word: "Evasi!" "I have escaped!"

Unexpectedly life came back to one condemned to die. A great deliverance! It is a parable of spiritual conflicts. Through the mercy of God in Christ, set forth upon the Cross, we too escape death. Unlike the fighters in Carthage we deserve death, and therefore deliverance by faith in Christ is the more wonderful.

The Carthaginian Christian could not forbear from making his testimony. Upon the first column he reached, he wrote, "Evasi!" The modern man saved by faith in Christ must be as eager and prompt to give his testimony.

*Dear Father and Deliverer of Men, we thank Thee for all those who have been saved from physical pain and death by Thy grace and power; but we thank Thee even more for the salvation from spiritual death provided for us through the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ our Lord. We thank Thee that any of us can look at the burden of sin from which we have been delivered by faith in Jesus, and shout with joy, "I have escaped." Help us to tell the glad story to others still groaning beneath the burden which deprives them of life and hope, and be Thy messengers of love and mercy to all men. In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen.*

## “He is a Fish Out of Water, Yet He Keeps Swimming”

★ ★

Harry spent most of the early years of his life preparing to spend his life in a very definite way. He grew up in one of the most spiritual homes that America has ever known, for his father was one of the most consecrated ministers any church has ever had on its rolls. If there is a modern St. Francis of Assisi, Harry's father is that St. Francis. Therefore, it is not surprising that Harry early determined to devote his life to Christian service. He did. Nor is it surprising that Harry determined to carry the Gospel to lands beyond our land, and be the sort of missionary abroad that his father was at home. He did. Nor is it surprising that Harry picked out the nation that seemed to offer the hardest job, for he was hunting no easy snap. He would not have been a true son of his father and mother's home to look for anything save the hardest. He did. That nation was Japan, and Harry went there with all the joy and enthusiasm and zeal of youth to preach the Gospel to the men and women of Nippon.

He learned the language. He began the work for which he had eagerly prepared for many years. Then came the change in international conditions which made the continuance of that work impossible. In obedience to the blunt command of our state department, he came home, leaving behind a part of his heart, and many of the things upon which he had given time and attention.

In this nation he was restless for some weeks until a call came from a church which had been torn into half a dozen unwholesome and unsavory fragments by its former leader. Believing that such a call furnished an opportunity for service and that God had assuredly been the reason for the call, he accepted, moved into that southern city, and began a work which has knitted the torn pieces of the church firmly together, and after a few years, there is hardly visible the places where the garment of the Lord was rent. A part of the heart of Harry remains far across the Pacific, and he continues to pray that conditions may come on earth so that he can again preach the Gospel of the Christ there, but in the meanwhile he is doing great work for the Lord here. Into the task of today is being put all the preparation of yesterday, and tomorrow will see a great harvest. He is a fish out of water, but he keeps swimming. When God closed one door, he opened another; and in whatever part of God's field he is led, he finds God's work to do.

*Dear Lord and Father of Mankind, forgive our feverish ways. Pardon our presumption of mind, and our assertion of spirit. Give us the grace to follow the leading of the Spirit of Jesus in the early morning, in the middle of the day, and even during the hours of the late afternoon when the shadows are long, and the purple twilight is hastening toward us. Whether the task is big or little, whether it is near or far, whatever thou dost give us to do, help us to do heartily unto Thee, Our Lord and Savior. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## Father and Son—A Team for Mutual Confidence

★ ★

For eleven years Dr. Joseph Ruggles Wilson was pastor of the First Presbyterian in Wilmington, North Carolina. During this period his son, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, who was afterwards president of the United States was in college for the greater part of the time. At one of the session meetings of the First church, the pastor said to the elders: "Men, keep your eye on my son, Tommie, he's going to amount to something." A laugh went up around the session, and one of the elders said: "Dr. Wilson, you are just like the rest of us fathers, prejudiced towards your own." Dr. Wilson grew serious, and said: "No, I have another son. He is good and fine, but there is nothing very unusual about him. He is going to make a splendid citizen, but Tommie is different. I mean it; keep your eye on him; he is worth watching." It grew to be a saying around the church; keep your eye on Tommie, for that was the name by which Thomas Woodrow Wilson was then known. Not only did the lad amount to something—the president of Princeton, the governor of New Jersey, the president of the United States, the builder of the League of Nations—but he owed his ability to the training of his distinguished father more than to any other one thing. His skill in expressing himself in chaste, clear, strong English with never a word out of place was both taught and caught in the home, taught by his father and caught from his father's example. And the faith of the father was no mean factor in the making of the son. And the religion of the father was a fundamental trait of the son. It is worth much when a father can straighten himself, and say to his comrades with pride: "Keep your eye on my son; he's going to amount to something."

*Help fathers and mothers, O God of our fathers and of our mothers, to place a proper example in word and conduct before the sons and daughters now growing to maturity in our homes. Help fathers and mothers to take the time necessary for fellowship with sons and daughters so that the two generations may be firmly tied together to the benefit and glory of each. Help fathers and mothers to have faith in the ability and the strength and the character of sons and daughters, and dare to assert that faith openly so that this faith may lead towards truth and honor. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## “Praying Always With All Prayer and Supplication”

★ ★

This matter of prayer has caused many good people much concern. Ralph Waldo Emerson said that he quit the Christian ministry because in the conduct of services every Sabbath, he had to pray at eleven twenty-five every Sunday, and on some Sundays at eleven twenty-five he just could not pray. When the pastor says in the regular routine of Christian worship, “Let us pray,” he is hoping to lead a congregation of wistful souls in thanksgiving, petition, and intercession at the throne of God; but sometimes it is not evident at all that he has done so.

Prayer is not lightly rubbing an Aladdin’s lantern, and having a genii appear to bring us immediately just what we want, as quickly as we make known these wants. Prayer is not arbitrarily setting our will and personal need ahead of the will and need of another, and demanding that even the will of God be pushed aside for ours to be satisfied. Prayer is not the opportunity of getting a selfish wish gratified, or of having comforts and joys bestowed upon us ahead of those for whom we do not particularly care.

But Christian prayer is spreading our needs before the throne of God, expressing our gratitude for the gifts that are ours through divine goodness, and asking that we be made more in harmony with the will of the Lord that we may know what we need, and what the work of God needs. Through Christian prayer, we have our horizon pushed back so that we become sympathetic with more, more situations, and have the cool breezes from the everlasting hills on high blowing through our minds and hearts to sweep away all the cobwebs of littleness, all the trash piles of hatreds, all the weeds of envy, and all other attributes of heart and mind that are definitely out of harmony with Christian thinking. Through Christian prayer, we gain that attitude that will make us wait with patience and sweetness at the station for the train that has not come, maybe it is not yet due: through Christian prayer we are taken to the place where we find the person or the situation for which we have eagerly sought.

Prayer changes things. Prayer changes us. Prayer changes our attitude towards God. Prayer changes our attitude towards God’s work. Prayer changes our attitude towards God’s people. Prayer harmonies us with the divine will.

*Lord, teach us to pray. Teach us to be used by prayer. Teach us to be found of Thee through prayer. Teach us to find thy work, and our place in it through prayer. Teach us to discover the excellencies in other people through prayer, and to be sympathetic with all thy children, and all the plans of people, even though we think them as foolish as they may be thinking ours to be. Help us to love Thee so much that we can love all the people for whom our Lord and Master died. In His name, we pray, Amen.*

## The Hidden Hurt

★ ★

Within a few minutes we were going to have dinner in his home, but he called me aside before the invitation came to enter the dining room. Quietly he said: "We want a prayer of comfort at the table, if you please." Noticing my look of inquiry, he continued, "Eight years ago our oldest boy was killed as he was taking the plane off at the station where he was on duty. What happened, nobody knows certainly, but the hurt is still there; and we need the comfort of the Lord; pray for us to have it." I had known the young man when he was a high school lad; and only one other boy of that age that I have ever known had either the personality or the talents to compare with those he possessed. He had been away eight years. The middle son was now on duty for the United States army at an undisclosed post. The youngest was an honor graduate of a great school, and had a scholarship for the three years in the Theological Seminary for Bible excellence, and was entering that seminary soon. But neither the splendid record of the second boy nor the pride in the youngest filled the niche reserved for the first born. We asked the Lord for that comfort which He alone can give, and which is alone sufficient for all the hurts which the strangeness of this world may bring to fathers and mothers, and to all others. As I looked about the table, I remembered how many men and women have hidden hurts, and how all of us need that comfort which God can bestow, and the peace which is born in fellowship with the Almighty.

We do get it through prayer. We do obtain it through trusting God. We do find comfort when we bow in submission to the will of the Lord, and walk steadfastly forward in faith. And I looked at this fine father and this great mother, thought how they each were pouring out their lives in the service of others, and knew that through such service they were entering into the fellowship of the sufferings of their Christ. They kept the door open towards heaven, and they did obtain comfort. They knew what it was to say:

"What a friend we have in Jesus  
All our sins and griefs to bear  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer."

Every man and woman with a hurt down deep in heart and mind can have the comfort and peace of God when you seek it earnestly, and fling yourselves upon His mercy, trust His promises, and let Him guide your thinking and your living. Our God is able and eager to help. He does help all those who come to Him by faith.

*O Thou Who art a man of sorrows and accustomed to grief, dry the eyes of those who mourn, comfort the hearts that are sad, and heal the hidden hurts in the minds of those who are strangely lonely because of the strange blows which life has dealt them in these strange days. Drive back the clouds which may hide thy face of life and love, and lead us to give ourselves to Thee and to others and to Thy work for Thee. In Christ's name, who died for us, Amen.*

## The Blessing of the Raindrops

★ ★

For many days the sun has been shining down upon the earth with all the concentrated power that it can summon in those months of the calendar which are June, and when the locality for this concentration of power is in the deep South. The dainty flowers which began to blossom in gardens of which the owners and tenders were so justly proud have withered and died. The roses have tried to send forth the blossoms bravely, but the bud was blistered before it opened, and even its stem was limp under the rays of the sun. The corn in the fields was more coppery than green, and the grass became so brown as to be brittle under one's footstep.

Then cometh the rain. A cloud passed over the surface of the sun one afternoon. A bit of a breeze blew it towards the earth. A flash of lightning, a low rumble of half-angry thunder, and a few drops began to spatter on the roofs until the housewife hurried to pull down windows. The big splotches of water on the walks dried as soon as they fell, but they came faster and faster until the sidewalk was cooled, and the surface became wet. Then these few drops, which were but the prelude for a real downpour, became master of the situation, and the earth found her surface gladdened by the water from the cloud which literally poured its life giving waters upon the thirsty soil in garden and in field.

When the rain was over, the grass stirred into new life. The flowers lifted their heads boldly towards the sky. The wilted fields and the withered gardens were refreshed, and listless men and tired animals felt themselves refreshed and invigorated with a refreshment and invigoration that comes only from the hand of the Lord who doeth all things well. How wonderful is this new life! How eager nature is to receive it! What benediction it brings to everything and to everybody!

God has spiritual showers for the souls of men as well as material showers for the soils of earth. Without these spiritual showers, souls parch, and wither and die. With these spiritual showers, souls are refreshed and invigorated with divine life. These showers come through Bible study, through group worship, and through prayer. We can have them whenever we want them enough to seek them in the ways which God makes clear to all who are really interested.

Dear Lord, Showers of blessing,  
Showers of blessing we need;  
Mercy drops round us are falling,  
But for the showers we plead.

*Keep our minds open to the truth of the Lord as given in the Holy Scriptures which are able to make them wise who apply themselves thereunto; and keep our hearts turned to thee in gratitude, intercession and supplication; and send us unto thy House whenever thy people gather for the worship of the Christ through whose death we attain unto life, and through whose resurrection we achieve immortality. Refresh us with thy bountiful spiritual showers today. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



## It is a Big Risk to Go Back

★ ★

You take a big risk to go back to a place where you have not been for twenty years. During those twenty years of absence, you have been building an ideal for the places and the peoples in that now ancient spot, and one afternoon can successfully shatter these carefully constructed ideals with all the fury of a German blitz, and give them no possible chance of any further life. There is a spot where delightful evenings were spent and where a congenial party of friends whose lives were tied together by many, many ropes of common interest. There is the comradeship in community work during a great emergency, and of spiritual kinship when all were laboring under the strain, stress and suffering of great moments when littleness was forgotten, if not forever forsaken. That emergency has been past for many years, and although another even greater lives today, this one does not join the same hands and the same hearts together in the same effort to master the problems, and to come forth victorious in arms and likewise in moral and spiritual might.

But you do go back. You see places that cause the drums of memory to beat in a low and lulling note, look into the faces of some whose countenances show that the battles they began so bravely years ago are still being fought, and that the victory is being won, despite great tribulation. You listen to little sentences that bridge the flight of years—one sentence for a decade. Two sentences for a life tragedy. A little bit of a sentence that modestly admits a gigantic victory. Eyes brightly sparkle, as they are focused upon events that bring lives into common land. Sometimes it is good to take the risk and go back. I think I know how David felt when out in some strange, hard place, surrounded by mountains, geographical and taller mountains of mind and soul, he cried for a drink of water from the spring at Bethlehem where he used to kneel and sip when the years had not piled their great burden about his feet. Going back brings orientation, adjustments, truer senses of value, sweeps away so many things that we think of value, and which we know, when we see them in larger prospective, mean nothing at all either to us or to anybody else.

But above all, it is good to go back to God, to the values which God alone places within the heart, and to the comradeship which lives this year, and every year, the comradeship which ties the life of the man who loves Jesus and lives for Jesus to the program and power of the Eternal God.

And after all, the risk in going back lies most in the fact that we are most likely going to find present ideals challenged and shamed by the ideals and hopes of yesterday. Maybe God uses the divine gift of memory to bring that challenge and that shame to turn us about that we may die unto sin, and live unto His righteousness.

*Turn us back, O Lord, to supreme realities, to the salvation which the Divine Son of God was wrought for us on the Cross at Calvary, to the understanding of immortal values as we hear Our Master speak through the words of the New Testament, and have these words interpreted and applied to our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Turn us back to the heights if our feet are content to roam the valleys. Turn us back to Thy hopes, Thy goal, Thy work, and do it completely, and speedily, even for Christ's sake, Amen.*

## Islands Slip By!

★ ★

I spent an entire afternoon watching a procession of islands pass by the ocean liner on whose spacious deck I was basking beneath the direct rays of a fierce tropical sun. Lots of islands, far more islands in the West Indies than I had been led to believe in that far distant day when I was made to mess with the geography of that region. I think Richard Harding Davis was more than right when he wrote that the only way to really learn about geography was to travel to the region you needed to learn about, and see its geography for yourself, and not to take some others traveller's work for it. A good and most delightful way to study the West Indies, and there are so many of them. All the afternoon they passed us—some of them so near that we could half accurately count the palm trees that stood like welcoming sentinels waving from the higher hills. Some of the islands so small and bare that they possessed no beauty to lure a ship to their shores. Some of them with attractive green bays where little fishing smacks danced at anchor, and where little villages nestled in sequestered coves. Some of them so huge that we were more than an hour in watching them come, and in watching them go.

Like unto the islands of the Indies are the people we meet in the highways of earth as well as in the lanes of the mighty waters. Some are so attractive as to make us want to stay in their company for a long, long time, an entire lifetime, and then more. Some are like tiny islands, and have only one contribution to make, and when that is made they are gone, gone forever. Some are rather forbidding, and definitely unattractive, and we feel that life would be no better and no deeper and no higher for having come in close touch with them.

And as other folks are to us—*islands that pass us, islands that we pass*—so are we to other folks. We need so to live as to provide for others shaded nooks where the weary may rest, where the burden can be laid aside, and where refreshment of mind and soul can be given.

*Jesus once said: "As the Father hath sent me, even so I sent you." And we are sent to be islands of rest, islands of peace, islands of peace to those who sail on the seas of life. And Jesus gives us the spirit and inclination and courage to build a life that will be a great island for men in any sort of need. In His name, Amen.*

## Orange Juice at the Captain's Cocktail Party

★ ★

I gathered what had happened at the cocktail party given by the ship's captain from conversation in the dining salon that evening. Two young ladies had come in rather early for dinner, and were working their way through the elaborate line of tempting courses that are gathered together into a single meal on the luxurious steamer. A blase man about town, whose residence was in New York, the big town, paused at the table, and interrupted the meal with the slur, as he leaned down and said to both the ladies: "Of all things—calling for orange juice at the captain's cocktail party. I thought I would pass out!" and then he looked at the dinner table, "and drinking milk, too. You'll never have a good time on milk."

They took it like they had met the same sort of slur almost daily. One of them said with a sweet smile, "We did have a good time at the party, and the orange juice made it a good time. And we do like milk, and because we like milk we drink milk, and it happens, too, to keep us rather healthy and fit for the work we have to do when we get back home."

It was sophistication versus sincerity. It was a false, foolish sort of life contrasted with the normal well ordered life that is both wholesome and attractive. I watched all the parties involved in this incident for the following week, and discovered, as one knows he will discover, that orange juice and milk make for the finest fun and produce the least headaches, and the lowest percentage of hangovers.

A nation that trains its youth to answer the offer of cocktails with a request for orange juice, and to reply to all slurs upon milk with a smile, is going to produce strong men and good women, which is our need today. And religion alone brings that spirit to human personalities.

*Speak unto us, dear Lord, as thou didst speak unto Abram in the ancient land of the Chaldees: "Get thee out, and I will bless thee, and make thee a blessing unto others." Get us out of sin, get us out of seeking first our own, and of making our sport out of the customs of others of which we do not approve. Then, O Lord, make us a blessing unto others, that we may be Thy spokesman and Thy agents in luring others up to higher, diviner places of Christian thought and approved living. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## The Sea Declares the Glory of God

★ ★

The sea declares the glory of God, and the mighty waters show for the divine handiwork. The most restful seat I have ever found is on the promenade deck of an ocean liner as it sails over waters fairly smooth. Around the ship are the seas of deepest indigo. The gentle winds give the low waves a lacy fringe of fleecy foam, which casts up beads of white spray as we cut our way forward. In the direction of the sun is a straight silver pathway making diamonds to sparkle upon the water. Above us the blue sky is adorned with clouds of clear white, tapering to every degree of thickness and every shade of turquoise. Off the starboard side of the ship a dense, grey cloud hovers over the eastern tip of Cuba, to release a heavy shower of rain on the great bay which sometimes holds the American battle fleet. Far in the distance, as we lounge on the deck, we watch nondescript freighters slowly carrying cargo from some forgotten city to some unknown port, the names of these vessels being painted in gigantic letters on the rocking sides of these small one and two thousand tonners. Close about our ship the flying fish are at play, and a curiosity-filled gull flies out from his home harbor to investigate us. Thus we move onward, with an ever-changing, ever-beautiful panorama of sky and sea.

How great is God; how puny is man. How wonderful is the beauty of the world on whose surface we are permitted by divine grace to live!

*We thank Thee, Lord of the majestic waters, and God of the infinite sky, that though our boats are small, the sea is great, and Thou art with us all the time. We thank Thee for the knowledge we have that the sea declares Thy Glory, and the ocean shows forth Thy handiwork. We thank Thee for all the brave men who risked the uncharted lanes of the great oceans to discover new lands where men might found homes, and worship the God whom they love according to the leadings of their own conscience. We thank Thee for the watery highways of the world binding the continents together, making us know that we are a part one of another, and leading us to see that we are all a part of Thee, and in Thee alone do men live, move and have their being, according to the plan and purpose of the Almighty Lord of us all. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## “Please Do Not Disturb”



On our hotel dresser in a great city hotel was a little card with a red string attached to it. On the front of the card were these four words: “Please Do Not Disturb.” On the back of the card was this statement: “Notice—Guests not wishing to be disturbed by employees knocking at the door to deliver mail, telegrams, etc., will please hang this card outside the door.” Along the halls we could see several such cards hanging from doors every morning as we walked towards the elevator which would take us to breakfast. When guests put “please do not disturb” outside the doors they were not disturbed.

It is a good thing, and it is also a bad thing. It is a good thing to be able to shut out the world, and all the distractions of the day, and the multitudinous calls and noises in order that one may find repose and in that repose find something more than repose—find God, and in finding God find one’s self, and after finding one’s self find duty, and other people and a host of kindred and concordant obligations, privileges and responsibilities. There come times when we die unless we can have such a moment. We can understand how Jesus went away into the mountains apart from His disciples and spent the whole time in prayer and fellowship with the Father. There come periods, and they ought to come frequently, regularly, when this must be done, or we are not fit to do anything at all. Hang out the sign over the house of your soul: “Please do not disturb” and in the quiet time that ensues walk with God humbly, so as to learn how to do justly, and to love mercy.

But it is a bad thing if to any of us the slogan: “Please do not disturb” means that we are not going to concern ourselves with the troubles, pains, sacrifices and evils rampant about us. There is an isolationism of the human soul that is far more deadening than any national isolationism could be in a period of world turmoil. One cannot shut his eyes, ears and heart to the needs of other people. When the people who were our forefathers in western Europe were living as savage pagans I am glad that the Christians down in Italy did not have for their motto: “Please do not disturb.” I am infinitely gladder when mankind was dead in trespasses and in sin, and the sorrows of all the earth were wafted to the hills of heaven, that the Divine Son of God did not have for His motto: “Please do not disturb.” Evil always disturbs the men of God; suffering always concerns those in tune with the Infinite. One cannot shut one’s self away from duty and from service by hanging a card outside the door of our souls, and feigning ignorance and acting indifference. If the world is to be made into the world of God’s new order through Christ Jesus in love and truth, we shall all be disturbed when anything is wrong. It is not a slogan for covering up our laziness nor our sin.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, that Jesus is concerned with all that we are, all that we say, and with all that we do. We thank Thee that He is concerned so much that He journeyed from earth to heaven to take our place, and to suffer in our behalf, and that the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all because He was willing to be disturbed by our sins, and loved us so much that He gave himself in our behalf. Help us to share his interest, and his burden and his concern for all things and people out of place. In Christ’s name, Amen.*

## "I Like the Sea"

★ ★

I like the sea. I like to feel the sharp touch of the sand driven by the wind against my cheeks and forehead as I walk along the beach. I like to taste the salty spray that breaks into snowy bubbles as the tall wave curls and breaks in graceful curves upon the sands. I like to smell the unforgettable but wholly indescribable color of the sea that brings up memories of ships and wharfs and trips and whales and porpoises and sharks. I like to see the lines of gawky pelicans flying low with a formation so perfect as to mortify every skillful aviator, and to see the sand pipers study whatever can be found in the way of food along the sands with the same perfection that the pelicans watch beneath the waters. I like to hear the low musical murmur of the waves as they meet the sands with the regular, irregular procession of waters, never exactly the same in height, volume or speed. I like the sea.

I like the sea because of the use made of the sea in the Word of God. The Bible tells me that the ways of the Lord are seen in the ways of the sea. Some of the tragedies of the Bible centered about the sea. It took a storm at sea to convince an Old Testament prophet that a man could not safely and successfully run away from God. It took a storm at sea to bring Paul to the island of Malta to preach the Gospel, an island which has braved many storms, some in very recent days. To the Hebrews, the sea was symbolical of danger, of mystery and of separation. And when all of these things were to be ended, it was natural that the seer on Patmos, a little island set within a deep blue sea should include in his vision of the blessed hereafter: "And there shall be no more sea."

I like the sea because of the use made of it by modern man. Instead of being an area by which men and nations are separated, it is a highway by which men travel quickly and directly to each other. Instead of being a mystery, it is a treasure house from which man gets much that is valuable to him for food, for clothing, and for many other needs. It is still a place where dangers lurk, and the dangers inherent in the deep have been conquered only to be supplanted by other subtler and more deadly dangers created by the hand of man. When we think of that aspect of the sea, on whose surface belching warships steam, over whose waters bombers hover, and in whose depths submarines lurk, we are eager to offer the prayer that the day may soon arrive when there shall be no more sea, of this sort.

I like the sea because on its lacy edges are woven some of the fairest portions of the world. Athens sat only two miles from the sea, and no part of Greece was farther than sixty miles from the salt waters. Constantinople commands the gates to two seas, and Paul walked into Rome from the sea.

The Creator of the World must have liked the sea, for two thirds of the surface of our globe is the abode of great waters. It makes up all the seas.

It is the greatest of the three immensities of this world, the other two being the mountains and the desert. For all the great things made by God, we need be humble and grateful. We thank God for the sea. "The sea is His, and He made it."

*Whatever Thou hast made, we know it to be good, for it is for Thy glory and for our good. And when we fail to use it for our good, it is not because Thou hast failed, but because we have failed to discern the wise use of Thy gracious gifts. Teach us the way of the Lord in all things be they big or be they small, and help us to use all aright. For Jesus' sake, Amen.*

[47]

## The Hill at Carthage

★ ★

I spent one unforgettable day on that portion of north Africa where proud Carthage once stood, the city founded by Queen Dido that challenged the supremacy of the Mediterranean with Rome for a period. I walked over the hill where Hannibal had bowed before the altar of Baal and vowed eternal hatred to the city on the Tiber. I purchased old Phoenician coins in the deserted harbor where Hannibal had set sail with his army and elephants that ravaged the plains of Italy for a dozen years. I sat on the slope where Saint Louis died during the Crusades with his face turned towards the Holy Land, and whispering: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem." I walked into the amphitheater where during the Roman days two Christian martyrs had perished before the wild beasts for the amusement of those who bought tickets for the show. I lounged in the ruins of the theater where Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, had preached the riches of the Gospel of Jesus, and where he revealed to eager listeners the beauties of the city of God. Above it all, I saw the gleaming minaret of a Moslem shrine from whose penciled summit devotees of the Arabian prophet are called five times every day to prayers.

Here was a civilization that utterly disappeared from earth. Here was a land of beauty almost like unto Eden wasted and ruined; and one's mind cried, "Why, oh, why?"

The answer was not long in coming. Carthage made money her God. The wealthy man was the saint of the Phoenician city. God was the supreme good, and that life cannot possess immortality. When Rome rebuilt the city, pride and power took the place of wealth, but decay was as rapid and as certain, for pride and power have their day, and cease to be.

God reigns; and all nations whose plans and ideals are contrary to the divine will will reach the stage to which proud and mighty Carthage came.

*Deliver our nation, O God, from trust in the things which send its peoples to death. Deliver our people from loving the lesser gifts of the Lord. Put spiritual qualities above material desires; enthrone the fruits of the spirit in the lives of national leaders and in the souls of the common people, and help us all to abhor with increasing zeal that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good with ever-growing enthusiasm and zest. Write thy laws upon our statute books, and in our hearts. May holiness unto the Lord be inscribed upon the foreheads of our leaders, and in the souls of every citizen. Deliver us from national decay and national destruction by delivering us from those evils which lead to national decay and national destruction. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## The Glory of Old Age

★ ★

Professor Thorndyke of Columbia University calls seventy the masterpiece of age, and adds that only forty per cent of the world's greatest work has been done at the age of forty.

Between the ages of seventy and eighty-three Commodore Vanderbilt added a hundred million dollars to his fortune. Handel wrote the Messiah when he was fifty-six. Leonardo da Vinci painted the Mona Lisa at fifty-six. Wagner composed Parsifal at sixty-nine. Titian between the years of seventy and ninety painted his greatest canvasses. Michael Angelo did his best work after he was past sixty. At the age of seventy-four Kant wrote his epoch-making Anthropology. At seventy-four Tintoretta painted the vast Paradise. Verdi produced Othello at seventy-four; Falstaff at eighty and Ave Maria at eighty-five. DeLamck at seventy-eight completed his vast zoological works. At seventy-nine Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote *Over The Tea Cups*. Cato at eighty began the study of Greek; Tennyson at eighty-three wrote "Crossing The Bar;" Sophocles wrote his greatest Greek tragedy at eighty-nine, and Voltaire was writing plays when he died at eighty-nine. Caleb was eighty-five when he undertook the conquest of Southern Palestine. Noah Webster learned seventeen different languages after he was fifty, and Goethe wrote Faust when he was past eighty.

Old age is a time of continued usefulness. Old age is a period of sublime inspiration for younger people. Old age is a period of sweet remembrance. All of this is true whenever the heart is found in the way of righteousness, for indeed then is it a crown of glory, placed by the Lord on the head of man.

*We thank Thee, O Father above for all the hoary heads that are crowns of glory found in the way of righteousness. We thank Thee for the mature counsel which comes from men and women of deep devotion and true experience. We thank Thee for the inspiration which these lives give to others plodding far behind upward on the slopes that lead to heaven; we thank Thee for the privilege of bringing gladness and joy to those whose labors have extended over so many years, and who are called upon to rest a little while before God is calling them home. We thank Thee that they are able to say:*

*"Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark,  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark;  
For though from out this borne of time and place  
The floods may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crossed the bar." In Jesus' name, Amen.*



## “Hold On!”

★ ★

In the business office of a friend hangs a picture of a great, ugly bull dog, clinging to a negro climbing a fence with a couple of chickens. Under the picture was this inscription: “Consider well the bull dog, my son, for his usefulness consists in his ability to hold on.” Well said! Life calls on all of us to hold on. Many lives are sad today because they slipped when to slip meant ruin. There are several things to which we would do well to hold on.

Hold on your hand when you are about to do an unkind act. A lad was about to slap his playmate because he wanted her toys. The mother spoke; his hand was held back, and the unkind act was not committed. When your hand holding the pen is about to write something untrue or unkind, hold on. When your hand is about to damage property that is valuable either to you or to somebody else, hold on. When your hand is about to make improper gestures, hold on.

Hold on to your tongue when you are about to speak harshly. And old Greek fable said: “The tongue is the best thing in the world, and the tongue is the worst thing in the world.” It depends on our use. Many of us need to hold on to our tongues lest we become like the man whose tongue was always angry, or the woman whose tongue always held a grouch, or the child whose tongue was ever whine.

Hold on to your foot when tempted to forsake the path of right. It is easy to go places where we ought not to go. The community does not keep such places closed as it should keep them closed. More likely the churches are closed than such places. Keep away from them. Hold on to your foot. Better to fall down in the mud and soil your clothing than to let your foot carry you where you will soil your soul.

Hold on to your temper when you are angry, and when somebody is angry with you. Of course there is something lacking in a person who will not get angry; but there is something more seriously wrong with a person who is always getting angry. Around the cage of the lion at the zoo hangs a sign, “Dangerous; keep at a distance.” Such a sign should be hung around many people who cannot control their tempers.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, that when we find ourselves unable to control ourselves, that we can come to Thee for the strength necessary to keep holding. Guide us away from evil unto truth and goodness. Let the words of our mouths and the path of our feet, the touch of our hands and the conduct of our tempers be acceptable in Thy sight, our Strength and our Guide, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

## “And Also Much Cattle—”

★ ★

“Shall I not spare Nineveh, in which there are more than three score thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle?”—so closes the book of Jonah, the Old Testament book of prophecy which depicts so clearly and unmistakably the world-wide love of our God. Is it not remarkable that the thought of God for the cattle, for animals below the range of human understanding, is the final word of the book? God does think upon his whole creation; and God expects all of His children to partake of that consideration and thought. In one of the splendid devotionals given in the Young People’s conference of Atlanta Presbytery, one of the young ladies used this beautiful modern poem:

“I wonder if Christ had a little black dog,  
All curly and wooly like mine;  
With two long silky ears and a nose round and wet.  
And eyes brown and tender that shine;  
I’m sure if He had, that little black dog  
Knew right from the start He was God,  
That he needed no proof that Christ was divine,  
But just worshipped the ground where He trod,  
I’m afraid that He hadn’t because I have read  
How He prayed in the garden alone,  
When all His friends and disciples had fled.  
Even Peter—called a stone.  
And oh, I am sure that the little black dog  
With a true heart so tender and warm  
Would have licked those dear fingers in agony clasped,  
And counting all favors but loss,  
When they led Him away, would have trotted behind  
And followed Him quite to the Cross.”

In the summertime many people who are content to run away to the mountains and beach for their vacation are thoughtless enough to make no arrangements for their pets of which they are fairly considerate at other seasons. It is not the act of a Christian to bring suffering upon any creature, especially the animals which give us so much pleasure, which depend on us so completely, and which serve us so loyally. It ought not to be necessary to establish a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals in a Christian community. The kindness of mind and soul that Jesus teaches should automatically be extended by His followers to personalities and animals without a question. A great British philosopher said that when a person becomes a Christian, the first two to realize it will be his servant and his dog. Unless the teaching of Christ is manifest in every direction, it is not fully understood or sanely adopted.

*We are glad, O God, that the animals in ancient Nineveh were in the thought of God. We are glad, O Master, that not one sparrow drops from the sky to earth unnoticed by Thy all-seeing Eye. We are glad Thy mercy is over all, and we pray that Thou wilt teach us to be merciful and gracious and kind in all our relationships. Care through us for all the creatures unable to care for themselves, and help us to indicate our love for Thee in the kindness we show to all Thy creatures. In Christ’s name, Amen.*

## “Sacred Memories of the Sanctuary”

★ ★

Of all the lesser reasons for being among the number of people who attend the Sabbath services in the church to which they belong with an unflagging regularity, none appeals to me more powerful than this: The church is the focal point for the sweetest, the saddest, the most helpful, and the most enduring memories that enter our mind and heart.

It was into the church that we were taken by our fathers and mothers and consecrated to the Lord in the ordinance of baptism. There father and mother took the vows that they worked and prayed that we may take when we became older.

It was at the church that we sat beside, sometimes sleep a little bit too, the dearest personalities that we ever knew, worshipped the Lord with them, heard music and preaching with them; and then later we followed the casket that held them down the church aisle while the last service to them was held in that same church.

It was at the church that we came with the life comrade of our church. We entered the church to have the vows blessed by a representative of God, then walked joyously down the aisle arm in arm, heart with heart, to tread the long, long trail together until death do us part.

It was while sitting quietly in the church that the call came to us to give life into the keeping of Jesus Christ our Saviour, that we made this great decision, and then made it known openly, and it was in the church that many of the other decisions came which have led us higher towards the summits of the divine mountains that we would otherwise have dared to come.

In the sweetest and saddest, about the most helpful and the most enduring memories of life, the church is present; and for the sake of these memories which call and which keep calling, there is the urgency to be among the members who on each Lord's day are present in our own church to listen that the Lord may continue to speak unto our hearts. As Eddie Guest said of a place where a family lives: "It takes a heap of living to make a house a home," and it takes the sorrow and triumph, the laughter and the tears to make the church of the living God bring to bear upon our lives the power that God can and does send through its ministry. And we ought not to deprive ourselves of it. Therefore, go to your church next Sabbath. God and the people are looking for you there, and a benediction awaits your entrance.

*We thank you, Lord, for the church. Help us to receive from it all that the Lord intended should be ours through the regular worship of God in the appointed place at the appointed time. In the name of the Lord and builder of the church, Amen.*

## The Prayer With Which We Began to Pray

★ ★

We never think of prayer except in having our minds turned for a moment at least to the first prayer we ever heard. Around that precious prayer are clustered the sweetest and most lasting memories of our lives. We learned it when we were tucked in a little bed, with mother's face hovering near, or when her hands were upon our heads as we knelt at her knees. There were few if any things so long as that brief prayer that we learned before we learned that prayer; and even today its words make the birds sing, the sun to shine, and the troubles to leap far away. We used to say it in the twilight as bedtime came:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,  
And if I should die before I wake,  
I pray the Lord my soul to take,  
And this I ask for Jesus' sake, Amen."

Nothing sweeter, nothing we hold on to tighter; this prayer for the close of the day, but men and women need a prayer for the beginning of the day. Somebody, Jack London, maybe, paraphrased these lines of childhood to make them apply to the morning and to manhood. We can well use them too:

"Now I get me up to work,  
I pray the Lord I may not shirk,  
And if I should die before tonight,  
I pray the Lord my work's all right,  
And this I ask for Jesus' sake, Amen."

Whether in the dim twilight, on in the breaking morning, whether in the rosy, untutored and glorified days of childhood, or in the mud spattered middle years of careless and disillusioned living, we need the comradeship of the same Lord, even Jesus; and He is ready to help no matter when we come, and no matter who it is that comes.

When I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord; when I get me up to work, I pray the Lord.

When there is a line in the first reader that we cannot pronounce, it is good to turn to the Lord; when the flames are sweeping with apparent irresistible power over a planet, it is good to turn to the Lord; when the kindergarten lady is surprised by an invitation to a party, it is good to thank Jesus. When the statesman sees his nation coming out from under a great international burden that was threatening to sink its people, it is equally good to thank our Lord.

*We pray for help, O God, in all the hours we need help. We pray for strength, O Lord, all the days we are weak. We pray for gladness, O Lord, in all the times we are sad. We pray above all that thy goodness and thy mercy may follow us all the days of our lives, and that we may dwell in the house of our Lord forever. And this I ask for Jesus' sake, Amen.*

## The Challenge of Contradictions

★ ★

I met three contradictions in Panama over which I am still puzzling. One is the statue of Henry Morgan, pirate par excellence, on the site of the old city which his men effectively destroyed. Never before had I seen a vandal given a grand granite memorial at the scene of his vandalism.

Contradiction two and three are closely related to each other. They are as follows: The Atlantic end of the Panama canal is farther west than the Pacific side, and when a vessel sails from the Atlantic to the Pacific it travels from west to east. And this: At Panama the sun sets in the Atlantic, and rises out of the Pacific ocean.

When we are brought face to face with such contradictions, they constitute a challenge to reconstruct our entire system of thought, and to revise our entire habit of judgments. We are led to exclaim: "Since this thing happens that I did not believe could happen, since this is certainly true that I did not reckon as possible, then I had better examine anew many other things, for I may be wrong there too!"

And there are contradictions in people that even seem to be more challenging. One person has been guilty of a bad act, of an ugly word, of a disastrous bit of conduct. Shall we throw him or her aside, and say that they are wrong now because they were wrong yesterday, and they will be wrong tomorrow. In every personality created by God, there are bits of ugly clay, and there are pieces of most exquisite marble. Every personality holds contradictions which challenge us against snap judgments, especially when these judgments are harsh, and against wholesale condemnations. The person who fell to a low level yesterday may rise to lofty heights today. It remains for us to keep alive within us the sense of expectancy, and with our faith and interest try to help men to get away from the evil, and leap upwards towards the good. The impossible continues to happen, when our hearts are not closed to its message; and divine grace constantly recreates men when we assist this work by a sympathetic sense of expectancy. It is the result of God being in the hearts of men through the spirit of Christ.

*Give us sympathetic hearts and unprejudiced minds, and kind tongues that we may be co-workers with God in leading men from sin unto salvation, from being destructive forces to becoming builders of the kingdom of God in human hearts. Make every day with us a new day, and erase from within us all condemnations written thereon yesterday, and let us each morning give to our fellows the forgiveness that we crave from both God and man for ourselves. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

## The Clear Perspective of a Hospital Bed

★ ★

"Do you know," he smiled to me from the bed in the hospital room, "things in my business are looking differently to me since I got away from it for a few days, and came out here for treatment. When I go back next week, I am going to readjust the whole of my organization, and I am going to do more for the men who are working for me than I have done before." He continued by giving in detail some plans that had come to him from the clear perspective of his hospital bed, in these days when he was away from his business desk, and therefore able to view it better, since he was viewing it with a better perspective; and his face actually glowed as he told of the things that would be done when he returned to the desk in another few days.

I know him quite well; I like him; I therefore believe that he will do the things that he there on the bed determined to do; things which will mean betterment for all those who are under him, and therefore betterment for his peace of soul and calmness of mind. The vision that comes to a person when he is physically laid aside is often a truer vision than he can get when he is working hard day by day, and especially it is true of the fine and noble resolves that come when one feels that he has turned the corner, and health is coming back again.

But there is a danger, a very big danger, and a most common danger. It is this: to forget high resolves, and the great plans for the common good when we take up the reins daily of our work and toil, and slip back into the old groove of selfishness and sin. . . . I have been in the hospital many times, and heard confession of neglect from the lips of men and women lying there, and have listened to spiritual plans and Christlike resolves. They made my heart glad; but when health returned; they were easily and quickly forgotten in the press of lower things, and the determination to be loyal to Christ and faithful to the church was as though it had never been.

And when one fails with a resolve this time, it is harder to be moved again than it was this time; and when we slip backwards, we slip farther than before.

When resolves and purposes are born out of the clear vision that comes from the true perspective of a hospital bed, it is essential that we be like Paul who said, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

*We are grateful, O Father of truth and wisdom, for every inclination towards that which is good, which the Spirit of Christ sends into our minds and hearts. Help us to follow these divine gleams whithersoever it may lead. Let not the spark die within us. Give us the power from above as well as the Light, and lead us in the way of righteousness, loyalty, and truth, even for Thy name's sake. Amen.*

## Noel Coward's Calvacade

★ ★

Of all the movies that I have ever witnessed, none has been so impressive as Noel Coward's Calvacade. It mirrored the heartbreaks of war and the changing social conditions of the first thirty years of the twentieth century. Its action is grouped around the drawing room of a London house on New Year's Eve, while the people listen for Big Ben to strike the hour which will usher an old year out, and invite a new year in.

In 1900 Jane says: "What does it matter about the Boers—it can't matter really. Thank heaven for one thing. The boys are too young. They won't have to fight; Peace and Happiness for them. O please God, Peace and Happiness for them always."

In 1914 Jane says: "Drink to the war then, if you want to. I'm not going to. I can't Rule Britanica! Send us victorious, happy and glorious! Drink, Joey, you're only a baby, still you're old enough for war. Drink like the Germans are drinking, to Victory and Defeat, and stupid tragic sorrow. But leave me out of it, please!"

In 1918, November 11th, Jane says: "I think we had better leave it until Joe comes home." (Then a telegram is handed her). She continues . . . "You needn't worry about Joe any more. He won't be able to come back after all because he's dead."

In 1929, Jane, now old and gray, still sits with Robert at the same window, as the old year dies, and the new year is born. Says Jane: "What toast have you in mind for tonight—something gay and original, I hope?"

Robert replies: "Just our old friend—the future. The Future of England."

Jane continues: "First of all, my dear, I drink to you. Loyal and loving always. Now then, let's couple the Future of England with the past of England. The glories and the victories and the triumphs that are over, and the sorrows that are over too. Let's drink to our sons who made part of the pattern and to our hearts that died with them. Let's drink to the spirit of gallantry and courage that made a strange Heaven out of an unbelievable Hell, and let's drink to the hope that one day this country of ours, which we love so much, will find dignity and greatness and peace again." So ends the movie; the lights blaze once more, and we walk slowly away from the screen.

*Dear Lord of human history, grant that this country of ours, which we love so much will find dignity and greatness and peace; and the things we pray for ourselves, we likewise pray for others. Grant that the minds and hearts of men everywhere may be turned to love the Lord our God with all their mind and heart and strength and soul, and that the things which mean the growth of spiritual hopes and divine incentives may thrive within us, within the length and breadth of our nation, and in all the nations of the earth. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## Learning to Labor—And to Wait

★ ★

Until the last time I saw her, her heart was warm and gay. The sun was shining with a warmth that was just the exact temperature to ward off the chill, and to prevent the heat. Her home was beautiful; and she was happy with her family. That was four years ago.

Now her heart is heavy, and her spirit is sad. When the clouds of war blow with the terrible blackness over the land, it took from the home both husband and son; and she is left alone. The son is flying on the Atlantic patrol, perhaps, unless some change in his status has come since the last letter arrived, and she is to discover it later. The husband is in command of an airplane carrier doing duty somewhere in Pacific waters; and no news has come for a long long time. When battles are fought around the Solomon island, and when the brief, impersonal communique from official headquarters says that losses of our naval forces are comparatively light, it adds nothing to her lightness of heart.

She is having to wait—and waiting is the hardest labor a person can perform. It is easy to be busy. It is easier to be on the move. The most difficult lesson that God can teach us is how to wait. The ancient prophets found that people needed more grace and more faith for waiting than for all the other troubles and difficulties which the dreary days of life compelled them to face.

But in waiting, she is finding God more real than ever before. She is amazed to see how people around her are living without going to church, and without praying. Several years ago, this would have caused her no concern; it well might have been true, but she would not have noticed it. And in the waiting that inevitably comes to us all, we can abide in the Secret Place of the Almighty and find shelter beneath the wings—the protective covering—the shield—of the Most High. Maybe we have to wait, because there are some things we must learn if we are to live, that God can teach us only when we wait.

*Dear God, who loves us all with a love that is truly eternal, that is deeper than the unplumbed depths of the deepest ocean, that is higher than the dwelling place of the most distant star in the heavens, that is broader than all the measurements of men, send that love with all its power, its strength, its sweetness, and its comfort into the hearts of all mothers, all wives, and all sisters, and all sweethearts, who in these days of anger and of strife are called upon to wait. Show them Thy rainbow of promise; and let them know that beyond the storm again cometh the sunshine of thy presence and thy favor. In Jesus' name, Amen.*



## Bits of Beauty

★ ★

One of the most wonderful and gladdennig surprises that can come is the discovery of bits of beauty in places where we are not anticipating such bits.

Sometimes it is a compliment, when somebody speaks a gracious word that not only cheers the heart of the one to whom it is spoken, but is a welcome insight into a great heart for the moment opened wide. One night on the Kungsholm somebody had been acting rather unwisely during the dinner hour, somebody who should have been very careful to act with great wisdom. Nothing was said by any of the members of the dinner party during the meal. At the end, however, one said: "We are so glad that we do not have to be ashamed of the representative of our religion."

Bits of beauty sometimes come in little acts that disclose the inmost soul. Under my cabin door was pushed a note from a fellow-passenger that contained these few sentences: "Dear Reverend: Tomorrow is the anniversary of my mother's death, and since it is customary in our church at home to set up flowers in memorial, I feel that it would be only right to do so here, even though we are at sea. Would it be possible for me to purchase some flowers aboard and have them present at services Sunday? I shall be very grateful indeed if some arrangement can be made." The note was answered, and a way suggested. The reply came within an hour the same way: "I wish to thank you for your kind attention and excellent suggestion. I am certain the arrangement will be most excellent, and I am sincerely grateful."

As the lily grows in rare beauty out of the slime of the marshes, so bits of beauty push themselves upward into our lives from most unanticipated places and people. How lovely such flowers from the garden of one's heart.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, for the beauty of holiness, and for the fact that Thou dost likewise enable us to see a holiness in beauty. Dear Lover of all that is beautiful, maker of millions of things and desires that bring us untold beauty, help us to bring beauty to others, and to grow beautiful in mind, and in soul, according to the Divine Pattern of beauty revealed unto us through Jesus Christ our Lord, through whose sacrifice we are led into eternal and abundant life with Thee. In His name, Amen.*

## The Lads Who Do the Hardest Work

★ ★

Beside us at a New York restaurant one evening when the twilight was slowly fading, and the lights of the city were deeply dimmed, were two lads wearing insignia that told of their membership with the British Merchant Marine. Off duty for a few hours, they were trying to have fun in the big city for the night. Somebody had provided them tickets for a movie, and their light lunch was in preparation for spending two hours watching a new war picture on the screen of a Broadway theater.

The comment of the waitress was well put: "These are the lads who do all the hard work and get no credit for it." It was a true diagnosis. When I looked at the faces of the lads yet in their teens, and thought of the submarine menace they faced night after night and day after day when en route from New York to the British Isles, of the occasions when they had watched some members of their convoy blaze with a huge screen of smoke from the sudden impact of a torpedo on the valuable oil tanks, and scurry away while ship and crew went down to watery grave, and how they were keeping open the line through which supplies were going to men on the firing fronts,—well, it is more than "They are doing the hard work."

But as to the second: that is the law of life, the law of the highest quality and the finest measure of life. Bruce Barton long ago remarked: "A lot of goodwill can be done in the world if one is not too particular about who gets credit for doing it." Another great truth is in these words: "One of the surprises that eternity has in store for us will be the revelation of the heroism of obscurity." Christ Himself led us to the top of the mountain of thought and life when He said, "For the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And no one can minister unto others who thinks about himself. The soldier on dress parade conquers no enemy. It is by forgetting the credit, and seeking only the good of others that the real job of the years is done.

The boys on the Merchant Marine who by day and by night do the hardest work can keep on doing it by refusing to think of credit, and by refusing to let others think of credit for them.

*We pray, O Lord, for Thy spirit to lead us into realistic fellowship with the Master who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. What we have and what we are, let it go for others, and let our lives be so in Thy service to help others into the way of truth, love, righteousness and peace, even for Thy name's sake, and for the good of all men. Enlarge our vision of responsibility, deepen our sense of duty, and heighten our thought of brotherhood. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## The Dream of Bolivar

★ ★

Emil Ludwig closes his biography of Simon Bolivar, the liberator of South America from Spanish rule, with two astounding statements. One is to the effect that when death came to the man who began life with five millions and who left it with five republics, he was so poor that a clean shirt had to be borrowed in order that his body might be prepared properly for burial.

The other statement is to the effect that the dual passion of Bolivar's life was freedom and glory. We easily understand freedom, and he truly lived for freedom, but glory is not exactly what we mean by the ordinary English word. It is not exactly what we mean by fame either. What Ludwig is trying to say is that Bolivar took for his life passion the determination to fashion a life that would be in harmony with the ideal praised by the impartial and unbiased historian of the future, that what he wanted to do was to be in accord with the verdict of right in generations yet to come.

With this as a translation of glory, we hold that Bolivar demonstrated his passion by the surrender of all his earthly possessions in order to attain the ideals within his soul. The only criticism that can be earnestly made is that he lived too soon, that his purposes were too far ahead of his age. Take, for instance, his greatest dream—that of Pan America. Have you read the call that went forth from him to all the nations of the western world more than a century ago to meet in Panama to solidify the western hemisphere? The purpose of that gathering is notable,—more notable than any utterance of statement until the days of Woodrow Wilson, more than two generations later.

Here are some of the objects of that dream of Simon Bolivar: The unity of all nations against outside aggression; permanent peace among all nations in the western hemisphere, and a league army and navy to enforce peace; democratic government within every western hemisphere nation; alliance with Great Britain and against all greedy conquerors; the abolition of human slavery;—a program that failed because it came too far ahead of its time. Only four nations sent official representatives to the conference, and the United States was not one of these. A representative from the United States came six months too late, and was instructed to object to anything that might provoke the enmity of Spain, and to object to the abolition of human slavery.

How much brighter would have been the pages of American history for the past century if the ideals of Simon Bolivar had been realized! How much bloodshed, anguish and suffering would have been avoided, and how much happier we all would be today!

And in the old volume we call the Holy Bible, there are ideals for human living, both for individuals and for nations that need to be put into effect if men are to be saved from the destruction their own selfishness, their own cowardice, and their own sin are bringing upon the race and upon themselves.

*Dear Lord, lead us to see the vision which Jesus had when He came to earth to bring salvation to men. Lead us to grasp His dream of a world saved from sin and saved from itself. Help us to become co-workers with Him in making His dream now come true. In His name, we pray, Amen.*

[60]

## The Dead Sea

★ ★

The biggest thing in Palestine is not mentioned either in the New Testament or in the Old Testament after the book of Joshua. This is the Dead Sea, or the Sea of Salt. When the Israelites were being settled in the Promised Land the sea was used as a boundary to mark the limits of tribes and apparently was unnoticed by later historians. We know that Jesus was at the bank of the River Jordan only a few miles distant, and that He was often at Jericho, the city nearest the sea, but no assurance that Jesus ever visited the Dead Sea.

Strange place, this Sea. It is believed to cover the sites of the two cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed by the wrath of God in the days of Abraham. Its present Arabic name, "Bahr Lut," means the "Sea of Lot." It is the lowest inhabitable spot on earth. The River Jordan which feeds the Sea, flows nearly its whole length below sea level, and when it empties in the Dead Sea it does so 1,300 feet below the surface of the Mediterranean. The Sea, therefore, is 3,786 feet below the elevation of Jerusalem, and 4,012 feet below the summit of Olivet, a score of miles westward. It is forty-seven miles long and has an average width of five miles. Its greatest width is eight and a half miles.

How salty the water is! One taste is sufficient for a lifetime. Bitter, oh, how bitter! The water of the Sea is so strongly impregnated with salt that no fish live in it. Swimming is difficult because much of your body wants to remain on top of the water. Around the Sea is utter desolation, except where fresh water is brought in pipes from hills to the west.

Even the Dead Sea is changing. Formerly it was deserted save for wandering Bedouins who begged for alms and sold bits of salt to visitors. Not so today. On the shore are bath houses and restaurants. Even a dead sea is being capitalized.

But it is still a selfish sea. It gives nothing, and receives all. Jordan flows in, but nothing flows out. A selfish sea impoverishes the area about it. Nothing can grow in Dead Sea soil. In like manner, a selfish life impoverishes the area around it.

Christianity and selfishness are antithetical. The earnest Christian is not a Dead Sea, selfishly withholding possessions, but a Galilee, freely giving and gladly sharing.

*Dear Master, even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many, may we be delivered from the death of selfishness and led forth into the life of unselfishness. May our lives be seas of Galilee, bringing enrichment to the surroundings, and not dead seas to blight those in close contact with us. We pray in the name of the Jesus who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Amen.*

## Cartegena's Walls and America's Shrine

★ ★

"Ladies and gentlemen," said a guide in the shadow of the old wall at Cartegena, Colombia, South America, "I am now taking you inside the only really walled city in the Western hemisphere." We went inside; we saw walls that belted the town completely, so wide that four lines of cars could drive breast upon them, and they are still standing; and thereby hangs a tale, a curious tale, two of them. These walls cost \$59,000,000 not including the slave labor. When the amount was mentioned to the King of Spain, who did not have the present flair for spending, he went to the western window of his palace in Spain, pulled aside the curtain, and said: "Strange that I cannot see them from here. If they cost that much, I should be able to see them across the ocean." That they still stand, despite the passage of the years leads to the second tale: One of the great attacks which Cartegena suffered was in 1741 from the English force under Sir Edward Vernon who was trying to win the supremacy of the seas from Spain. He came with 190 warships and 27,000 men, the greatest fleet ever to land on the shores of the Caribbean. So sure was the Admiral of success before he left England that he had struck a medal showing the Spanish commander of Cartegena kneeling before Vernon, with the inscription: "Spanish pride pulled down by Admiral Vernon." But after a siege of 56 days the English had to give up and return home. Here is the story: In the men of the English forces was a contingent commanded by Lawrence Washington, older half-brother of George Washington, who had come to the West Indies to regain his health. When Admiral Vernon withdrew from Cartegena, Washington returned to Virginia, and died soon afterwards. Before his death, however, he built a home, and named it for the Admiral under whom he saw service at Cartegena. That home is still called by its original name, Mount Vernon, our national shrine, named because of a siege at Cartegena, Colombia. How the peoples of the world are knit closely together, in some unifying interest, and how we are all bound up in one big bundle of life.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, that thou hast made of one blood all the nations of the world, and that our interests lie with the interests of all people elsewhere, and that we lift up the level of the whole human family when we dwell with Thee, and cleave to that which is good. Interest us in the welfare of those far off, as well as those near at hand, and show us how dependent all of us are upon each other, and each upon Thee. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## Those Bits of Restful Green

★ ★

From the twelfth story window of a great hotel in the center of a city of three quarters of a million people, I look down upon the streets and buildings spread out below. On the side of dark brown walls are vivid colored words advertising the excellencies of biscuits, beer, boots, and even banks. Smoke has settled on roofs, and discolored bricks and stones, and the layers placed there winter after winter have weaned from the structures all of their original attractiveness, if any. Avenues along which trolleys creep like little bugs cross and recross the city, making gay spots along colorless thoroughfares. The only restful spots are patches of green, here and there, and yonder— open spaces where grass grows, and where trees dare to be beautifully verdant in their dreary grey settings. In the center of each of these restful bits of green rises a spire of a Christian church, and the grass and the trees are around about that church. From the vantage point of the high hotel window, this is the most refreshing portion of the entire view.

And I think that the Christian religion is meant to be like that in the life of a city, and in the lives of men who take the message of Jesus Christ at all seriously, and it is that—a restful bit of refreshing green or individual—to that city or nation which makes the Christian faith the chief end of life.

As these bits of green call weary folks from the rush of the trivial, so the church of God calls men from the rush and the bondage of mere things, for one greater than all, said to those who followed Him, "Come ye apart and rest awhile." These bits of green in the panorama of a city seem oases in a desert. The Message of Christ is an oasis in the great desert of earth, and the message of the Lord is as refreshing to the heart of a disciple as is the oasis in the heart of the Sahara to the eye of the begrimed traveller. But the rest the church gives is not cessation from toil, but just a moment for meditation, for orientation, and then back to the task with more strength, more acumen, more consecration, more understanding.

*Help us who love the Church of God to see that it more and more becomes a restful bit of green in the life of our community, and in the hearts of all men who come under the sphere of its beauty, power, and influence. Water it with Thy Spirit, plant about it these graces in the hearts of men that will cause mercy and truth to meet together in love and affection, and patience and trust to become friends who never separate. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## Little Sea Creatures Live Off Bigger Sea Creatures

★ ★

When the big curling wave from out of the ocean broke against me and splattered the whole area with bubbles and foam for the wind to whisk away, it left at my feet a shell the size of my hand. It was different from most other shells on the beach in that on its back there were clustered twenty or more little shells, and you could tell that down yonder in that part of the waters which was home for the whole life of these strange little creatures of God which dwell in cozy shell residences, that the tiny creatures dwelt on the big creature. Someone flippantly remarked that the fellow who lived in the big shell must have had a lot of poor relatives who lived off him, but that is probably not true in the way we see it among the human family sometimes.

With this shell in mind I asked the question: "What did each of these little creatures think of the situation?"

The big fellow, whose home was the size of a human hand, probably thought, "Well, I have a lot of company these days, but they seem to need me, and I am glad that I am big enough to take care of them all. Of course, they weigh quite a bit when they fasten themselves to me, and it keeps me from getting around so well as I used to get around, but maybe I got around too much anyhow, and I can still get about as much as is needed." Reckon this was in his mind? Sounds reasonable, doesn't it?

The tiny little scamp, whose precarious perch on the back is hardly broader than a quarter of an inch, probably thought: "I have that security now that I have been hearing about when the fellows talk about things that are hard to understand. If I just stay securely where I am, I shall find myself taken care of; and I must pay for my security by looking out the best I can in every way I can for the interest of this big fellow who is taking care of me down here so well." Reckon so? Rather reasonable, isn't it?

And if little folks down in the sea are dependent upon big folks, and if the big folks can in turn get help from little folks,—if all of them are in some strange way bound up together,—well, it is just like the folks not in the sea, like us. We have to help each other, or all of us perish. We have to be concerned for each other, or everybody begins to suffer. And we can't have any left-out groups, nor any forgotten folks, or we are all left out, and we all become forgotten. For in a world where the eye of God is upon every man, in a world where He causes it to rain upon the just and the unjust, and where there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same God is rich unto all who call upon Him, we are mutually dependent. We are all dependent upon the goodness of a loving God. And it is a dependence that clings to us like the little shells cling to the side of the big shell. We cannot put it on and take it off at pleasure like we do a Sunday suit of clothing. It is a part of us. Lose it and we die. And that is why this is truly "One World," and why we are truly, "One People," and we cannot ever forget this or we lose our fellowship with God whose smile gives fellowship, and whose fellowship sustains life.

Little sea creatures live off big sea creatures. We all live off the goodness and protection of God.

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## Who Wants to Be a Camel?

★ ★

Many years ago a supposedly funny post card bore the sentence: "A camel can go seven days without a drink; but who wants to be a camel?" I never cared much for that card, for the important matter completely left out is that the only sort of liquid that any camel has ever been known to drink after it is weaned is the liquid we call water, and no better drink can be found. But the card loses its humor if you begin to analyze this way, and I must quit, for it is not fair. The card, in fact, has been dead many years, and let this death remain permanent. But the last part of the motto I want to attach to the title of a magazine article that recently had good space in our most popular weekly. Tying that title and the old question together, I get a motto that I recommend without either reservation or hesitation to all of us. Here it is: "Camels hate everybody; but who wants to be a camel?"

Hating people is one of the most useless, nerve destroying and misery promoting forms of indoor amusement in which any member of the human family can indulge. It is a sport that takes up much time, requires hard labor, and yet a sport that gets you nowhere in the least possible time. Despite this fact, proven over and over again by every devotee of the sport, it is quit common. It is indulged in by both male and female, by old and young, by ignorant and learned, and by famous and unknown.

Camels hate everybody, but who wants to be a camel? What do you get out of hating? You create a barrier between you and many very delightful people, for if the person you hate is not at all delightful, you can never be sure but that he has some quite desirable friends. I have seen this so often that I am inclined to think it is always the case. You become unhappy; and when you become unhappy, you lose your digestion if not your appetite. And a recent writer who knows for more than I know, maintains that ulcers in the stomach are the direct result of hatred in the heart. Maybe so. At any rate, it is worth avoiding. Much better preventive of stomach ulcers than of not walking under a ladder a preventive of bad luck. But seriously, when you hate, you not only separate yourself from good people and make yourself and everybody near you unhappy, but you separate yourself from the quality of love, which is the supreme way by which God makes Himself known unto men.

Camels hate; who wants to be a camel? Hate envies. Hate seeketh her own. Hate is easily provoked. Hate always thinks evil.

God loves. God so loveth the world that he gave His only begotten son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and all thy strength, and all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. In the vocabulary of the Christian the word "hate" is deleted.

*Teach us the way of Thy commandments, O Lord, the way of love. Kindle within our hearts and minds such a great love for Thee that it will extend to all Thy people and reach unto every man for whom Christ died. Deliver us from hate in life, speech and thought. We pray in the name of Christ who died on the Cross because he loved us more than life itself. Amen.*



## Just Over Yonder Lies Europe

★ ★

One foot is on the sandy beach; the other foot is in the water of the Atlantic. There is no land between the place where these feet are standing and the next shore line until you reach the continent of Europe. It is so far away—more than three thousand long sea miles lie between us and its land. It is so far away—the people on its shores speak a language wholly different from ours, and have customs and habits altogether varied from those we know and possess.

And yet it is not so far away. If that bomber doing patrol work along the beach would turn directly eastward and continue its flight, it could glide down on an air field of Europe before the sun sets tomorrow. And in our hotel on the same hall with us is a couple of French refugees to whom Europe is never distant, for home, friends, and all of life is there.

Not so far away, despite more than three thousand long sea miles, for what happens over yonder affects lives over here. The voice that speaks into a microphone over there sounds clear and loud from my loudspeaker the same second, and when that voice is a bit excited, we can hear his hurried breathing come over every one of those long sea miles to us here.

Not so far away, that Europe out yonder at the farther end of this vast ocean, for we can't go walking on the beach here after sunset; for we can't drive along American shores except with dimmed lights; for we cannot keep any lights on in the rooms that face the sea, and every shade must be pulled down to the very bottom of every window.

Not so far away, that Europe out yonder at the farthest edge of this vast ocean, for the ideas that explode within the disordered brain of a mad man deep in the heart of Europe, cause fires to burn on the shorelines of all continents, make every island unsafe, take the ships off the seas, and disrupt the plan of living for every man, woman and child in every country on this whole globe.

Over yonder, Europe,—but Europe is over here—with its ideas, with its carnage, with the ruined sense of justice, with its blasted hopes, its ruined homes, its awful slaughter. Alfred Tennyson once put these words into the mouth of Ulysses: "I am a part of all that I have met",—and we've met Europe. We meet Europe in the glaring headlines of today, and in the headaches of tonight. One greater than either Tennyson or Ulysses said much earlier the summary of the whole theme of living in our modern world: "No man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself." When Europe dies, we lose a part of our life. We have a responsibility that flies over the vast Atlantic, and all other bodies of water faster than the newest plane, to give them of our best, and our best is God, and the Christian way of looking at life, and of living it to the fullest. One greater than Paul said even sooner the answer to it all: "The field is the world." That is a fact, a challenge, and a life task for a person or for a nation. Enter ye upon it. And the King's business requireth haste!

*O Lord, let responsibility and opportunity march breast to breast in the lives of every one of us, and may the call of need be a call which will always be heard and answered by all of us. Fit us for Thy service, and live Thy life through us for Thy glory, and Christ's sake. Amen.*

## The Live Oaks Brace Themselves Against the Winds

★ ★

Those who know not the ways of the sea, and understand but faintly the mystery of those beauty spots where land and sea kiss each other lightly in loving embrace, forming what we call coast lines or beaches, are always amazed at the marvellous manner in which the foliage of the land protrudes even to the advance bases where the waves touch at high tide. And the winds blow so strongly there that you fear you might find your outer clothing blown from you by the gales. You say to the man familiar to this country, "How do these trees live down here? Why aren't they blown away?" He replies, "Not every tree can stand it. If you will look carefully you will see that there are only a few variety of trees. Most of those along this coast line are the live oaks." We looked, and the only tree we did see was the live oak. He continued, "You see, the live oak can live better than any other tree because it seems to know that these winds are coming, and it always braces itself against the wind. And what causes other trees to die, causes this one to become stronger." We looked at the curving trunks and the gnarled limbs of these sturdy live oaks, and they seemed like men who had borne a great share of the battles of earth, and whose struggles have made them the stronger therefor. Our informant continued: "There is a funny thing they say about the live oak—that it grows best down by the sea where the violent gales blow the oftenest. And they say, too, that when you take it so far away from the coast that it gets no wind from the sea, it soon dies. They tell me that the live oak will not live more than fifty miles from the coast line."

I do not know whether this son of Florida is correct in all his information or not, but I do know men like unto the live oaks as he describes the live oaks. There are men who grow strong when difficulties arise, even as there are other men who are immediately slain by any adverse winds that blow. There are men who grow best by bracing themselves against the gales, and who pine away and die if the gales should cease blowing.

The live oak type of man is a man needed in all great eras of the world. The Christian religion puts that sort of spirit into the heart, mind and soul. Christ never promised to make life easy for any who accepted His way of life, but He did promise power to stand whatever came by way of persecution, turmoil, or other difficulty. The Holy Spirit within the man enables him to brace himself against all the hurricane gales that blow upon any unfriendly shore. Christ does promise to make men useful, and He gives them strength to be helpful to men and situations. And the nearer one lives to Christ, the more strength comes to brace against the winds of adversity.

Then I learned another thing from studying the live oaks. Rarely does a live oak stand alone. They live in clusters. They brace each other by intertwining limbs and branches. As a group they stand firm and successfully against the gales. So, too, with the men of God. In groups gathered for prayer and for praise, for worship and for work, they stand firm and successfully against the onslaughts of evil.

*Teach us to be strong when strength is needed. Show us how to gain strength from Thee, and from being in church fellowship with others of Thy children. Cleanse us from evil, and lead others to Thee through our service. For Christ's sake, Amen.*

## Some Brown, Some Blister; The Same Sun Shines On Them All

★ ★

It is interesting to watch the people on the beach for many reasons, but this is one of the most fascinating; to note the effect of the sun upon their skins. And when you do watch the folks, you immediately see this to be true: some of them brown beneath the sun; some of them blister rather painfully, and I am one of that number; and yet it is the same sun shining down upon each of them.

It is not a sufficient explanation to say that some have been out in the sun too long, and others have been more sensible about it. This enters into the question to some extent, but even when two a whine.

people come the same hour and leave the same hour, one may be browned, and the other may be blistered, and each of them may have walked up the beach the same way, or lay on the sand the same length of time.

The fact is that when you have made all the allowance possible for every possible outside cause, there is a remnant left that defies all outside explanation or disentanglement. Some do brown; some do blister; and it's the same sun shining upon both.

Part is within. Part is the texture and hue and thickness of the skin. Part is the habit of the person at home long before the vacation time at the beach. What is within and what happens sometime ago is responsible in no minor way for the effect of the sun upon the body.

And as I watch the way that the bodies of people react to the rays of the sun, so I think of the way that the hearts of people react unto the goodness of the Lord coming directly into their lives. Some see God, recognize His goodness, and rejoice in His love. They are glad with a gladness so contagious that it adds to the happiness of all men about them. Others do not recognize God at all, and are not mindful of His goodness, nor conscious of His love.

With each of these groups, it is the same God; it is the same goodness. Some brown, and some blister; and the sun is the same.

And as the explanation of the beach must be sought in a large measure from within, so must likewise the explanation for the different reactions to the goodness of God be sought. You see that for which you are in the habit of looking, and when you have long been looking at and appreciating the goodness of God, you discover it constantly in the morning sunshine, the afternoon shower, the smile of a friend, and the word of cheer that shines from the page of a letter. But if you are not in the habit of finding the goodness of God in your life, if you cannot see His touch, you simply have not possessed the happy and true habit of looking for it amid the stress and strain of the daily toil. And when you acquire such a habit, life is larger, days are happier, and the task is easier because One Divine helps you perform it.

*Unto the Eternal God of Heaven who is ever present in the hearts and lives of His children, we bow in gratitude for the goodness shown us today, and all on earth that is good, beautiful and true. Lead us to see Thy gracious hand, and let all worthy lift our hearts to Jesus Christ our Saviour in humble gratitude. In His name, Amen.*

## The Road Runs Through the Jungle

★ ★

They cut a highway through the tropical jungle deep in the state which lies farthest South in our nation. On either side, just plain jungle. Jungle means trees which grow so closely together that the sun cannot penetrate to the ground, if it had no more difficulty than the trees whose intertwining branches, thick with leaves, barred the way, and formed a perfect umbrella to ward off the rays. But huge ferns and tall grasses grew thick about the trunks of the trees, and made the portion of the jungle nearest the ground almost as tightly crowded as though it has been carefully packed by a skillful packer. And above the ferns and grasses were vines which took up where they left off, and carried on successfully until the top of the tallest trees was reached. You couldn't walk through this jungle. You couldn't push your way through this jungle; you could hardly cut your way through.

But they cut a road through it. What's the use? They simply made two jungles where before there was only one? Not exactly! The road defeated the jungle. The concrete path formed a barrier to tree, to grass, to fern, to vine, and to jungle animal and jungle reptile. To each of them it said: "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther!" Where the road ran, the jungle stopped running. Over the highway each day came cars, and trucks, and men. Every one of them an enemy to the jungle. Presently a man decides to build a home on the side of the highway. He pushes back the jungle for a house, and a yard, and a garden. Another bit of jungle dies. And that little story can be dittoed and told again and again, for it happens a hundred times. When you cut the road, you cut the heart of the jungle; and soon the jungle dies.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is a broad, straight highway that has been cut, and is still being cut through the tangled jungles of the world. That highway runs by the homes of the missionaries who have planted a bit of this highway in places where no man or woman could want to live except that the grace of God has done something that is divine to a human heart. And as the missionary family abides in that land for many years, the jungle is being defeated. Little by little the influence of the Christian highway is felt and seen, and the old gives way to the new, the false surrenders to the true, and the jungle begins to die.

And the Gospel of Christ is a highway that runs through the jungle land of the individual life. When that road is made into the jungle of our beastly thinking and gnarled, dwarfed, twisted planning, this sort of jungle living is defeated; for as we come out on the highway of the Lord, the jungle within us begins to die.

But they tell us this. It is not enough to cut the road. Unless the road is used and used regularly, it is worth little and does no good. It will revert to jungle. To have a highway, we must travel it.

*Thy Gospel, O Lord, reveals Thy greatness and Thy goodness unto us, and makes us glad. Thy Gospel reveals ourselves to us, and makes us humble and penitent. Thy Gospel reveals duty unto us, and makes us eager to work while the day lasteth, for the night soon cometh when no man can work. Cleanse us, inspire us, use us, for Jesus' sake, Amen.*

## Those Good Old Days We Used to Know

★ ★

The year 2,000 B. C. in the land of Sumer was an age similar to that in which we are living. In this land of Sumer there were wars; there was want; there was tyranny. Those troublous times inspired a native poet to seek a better world. His method was to look back to a mystical land, to the good old days the people used to know, instead of to the future. That poem, hidden for about four thousand years in the difficult writing of that ancient people, has just been translated by the archaeologists of the University of Pennsylvania who have been doing a lot of digging in the Near East during the past twenty-five years. That translation is worth our knowing, for in it this unknown poet of an unknown era of an unknown nation mentions two of the four freedoms about which we hear so much these days: Freedom from fear, and freedom from want:

"In those days there was no snake, there was no scorpion,  
there was no fox,  
There was no lion, there was no dog, no wolf,  
There was no fear, no terror.  
Men had no rival.  
In those days the land Shubar, the place of plenty, of  
righteous decrees;  
Harmony-tongued Sumer, the great land of the decrees of  
princship,  
Uri, the land possessing all that is needful,  
The land, Martu, resting in security,  
The whole universe, the people in union  
To Enlil in one tongue give praise."

Shubar, Uri and Martu were nations which bordered on Sumer, and together formed all the world known to the people of these ancient times. Enlil was the chief cosmic god worshipped by these nations. The poem pictures a happy but never-existent Utopia. The good old days about which he dreamed never seemed to be very good to the people who lived through them, and so with the good old days about which political and even religious speakers tell today.

The best lies ahead. The best comes not by chance but by the gift of God through the active co-operation of man. For the making of a better world (and common sense seems to dictate that the hour has come to create a better world) takes toil and sweat and tears and sacrifice, and above it all, consecration to the cause of the Lord Christ in order that we may chart the highway along which that better world can and must be built. And in the building we are co-workers with God whose plans for the betterment of men are always being hindered by insanity, sin, selfishness and laziness. Let us no longer delay the coming of God's kingdom by our own sin or inertia.

*Give us the courage and the insight, O Thou Divine Builder of Lives, nations and worlds, to labor with Thee for the coming of an era when mercy and truth shall travel triumphant together, when injustice and brutality shall flee away, when vice and debauchery will be outlawed by the regenerated minds of men, and when the laws of Christ shall be known, loved, and obeyed from the rivers unto the ends of the earth.. In His name, we pray, Amen. . . . .*

## Sambo's Slow Approval

★ ★

Sambo, that Boston Bull whose main job was to patrol the front porch of the house where he lived—the rear portion of the yard being under the care of a canine from Louisiana who was properly named Huey Long—watched me for four whole days before he made up his mind that I was a suitable person to be numbered among his acquaintances. He was so slow about it that I was uncertain as to whether or not he would make the grade. For these four days we simply had nothing to do with each other. This was at his suggestion, not mine; and it was plainly made. He went his way, tended to his duties, and I went mine, and tending to my duties. We carefully and deliberately ignored each other completely. But during these four days I attended to my work, and I saw that he was seeing how well I was doing it. Ditto: I saw how well he was doing the job given to him to do. Strange to say, he did not gradually make friends. Almost at the end of the four days, we were as much strangers as we were when I first walked upon his porch, much to his disgust. We were both there, but we lived in a world apart from each other. Then, after I had passed whatever tests that canine mind had been applying, the barriers were down, and he admitted me into the inner circle of his friendship. Well, I am glad I made it. For four days I was not sure that I would make it.

But since I have made it, I can moralize a bit about it. If people, and particularly younger people, would be more careful in the choice of friends, a lot of the pain which enters life so soon, and hurts so keenly would be avoided. If the human animal would apply some tests, and see first of all whether a man or a maid measured up to them with a pass mark of over 70, before opening our lives for them to enter, it would be the means of preventing some aches which come sometimes and go away hardly ever. We make our friends, says an old saying whose truth is unshaken by modern events, and then the friends we make can either make us or unmake us. If we would withhold intimacy until we see whether a person is true in word and attitude, unselfish in spirit and plan, big in thought and loyal to purposes he sets, we would be helped thereby. The word friend, is a great word, and it ought not to be thought of lightly, for its greatness is born at the time Jesus used it for those who were his intimates: "I have called you friends." The qualities which Jesus exemplifies, and those traits which flow out of a life that is loyal to Christ, are the essentials of a friendship that can stay fixed, and staying fixed, carry us to heights of achievement for man and God.

Let us not be more careless than a Boston Bull on porch patrol in choosing our friends, nor more lenient in laying down the test by which one may be admitted into our inner circle.

*We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou dost call thy disciples "Friends". Give that name a marked place in the sanctuary of our souls. We thank Thee for the friendships of David and Jonathan, of Barnabas and John Mark, and we thank Thee for the friends whose touch upon our lives has been like unto a touch of God. We ask thy blessing to rest upon all who would be friends in the name of Christ, and pray that Thou will teach us to live so as to be among those whom men would like to hold as friends. In Jesus name, we pray, Amen.*

## One Never Knows

★ ★

The old lines about shooting an arrow in the air, and knowing not where the arrow fell until long afterwards are lines which demonstrate their truth constantly, as one continues to travel along the high-way of life.

I spent a week preaching in a little Alabama county from which I had moved more than 22 years before. Why the invitation to be there after these score of years? I did not know when I accepted it, but found out afterwards. Something like this. One Sabbath this year in the pulpit of my church, I preached on "There Is A Road Beyond The Ruins." A member of a church of another denomination from that Alabama town is present, hears the message, talks about it upon returning home, and makes a talk about it to a missionary society, and the attention of a member of the session of the Presbyterian church is called to the message, and thereby to the speaker. The man's name is mentioned at a session meeting, one member of the session recalls a commencement sermon heard over twenty years ago as I preached to the High School, talks of the text, "Remove not the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set," while another recalls another sermon on the text, "If A Man die, Shall He live again?" preached even earlier, and still a third remembers the first sermon I ever preached in Alabama, and gives the text. Therefore the invitation. Therefore the visit.

One never knows when one plants a tiny package of seed which seed will spring up, and when the plant shall reach maturity. The only way by which one can demonstrate this perfectly is from one's own experience, and yours is as clear no doubt on this truth as is mine. Years ago when a call to a church was received from a city where I had known not one member of the church I was curious as to the reason for the call. The clerk of the session smiled as he said: "You will be surprised, I am sure when I tell you. Several years ago the superintendent of the Sunday School here heard you lead in prayer one night in the auditorium at Montreat, and said upon returning home, "If our church ever becomes vacant, this is the man I want for a pastor." He continued: "The church became vacant, and you have the call from our congregation."

One never knows—Therefore it is essential, as essential as the proper co-ordination of the war efforts of the United Nations, it is essential that we sow for the Lord all the time, and just as essential that when we have done the best the Lord can lead us to do, that we with patience and faith leave the results to God.

One never knows—but God knows.

One man soweth, but another reapeth. One day soweth, and another later day sees the harvest. But one must sow. One must not sow sparingly; one must not sow sadly. One must sow gladly, generously, continually.

*Dear Lord, Thou Master of the harvest, lead us to sow in the morning, sow in the noontime, and sow in the quiet hours of the late afternoon, sow seeds of kindness, of mercy, of unselfishness, and of the love built on loyalty to Thee and to the word and person of our Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour of our souls, and builder of our lives. In His name, we pray, Amen.*

## He Kept the Place from Being Impossible

★ ★

We wandered into a restaurant in the mid section of Broadway fully an hour after the hour for dinner had passed. The delay was caused by the necessity of viewing a great broadcast from the studios in Radio City. Food for the body had to be forgotten until food for the mind and heart had been provided. This restaurant had been serving so many customers that some main articles on the menu cards had been scratched out as being no longer available. When we gave an order from the items which remained, the waiter, an Irishman whose years on The Great White Way had made him quick in mastering any emergency, proceeded to get it started. But he soon came back with the report that even some of these items were definitely ended for the day, and with rare skill, a bit of masterly salesmanship, and a slice or two of delicious humor, he kept us there, and soon had us eating food that he had found available.

And while we ate, we watched him in and out among the customers, doing the same thing, and doing it well, so well that we almost forgot the disappointment we had with the failure to get the seafood for which we had entered that particular restaurant. His skill at keeping folks comfortable, and in talking over a bad situation until the badness seemed not so bad, and his quickness in being at every place where something needed to be done were so splendid that they seemed wasted in a Broadway restaurant. His personality kept the place from being wholly impossible that night.

Some personalities delight in doing things like that. It is the business of the Christian in the world to be like that among situations that are hard, and with conditions that are unpleasant. When Paul was in a Roman prison, he came in touch with a personality of this delightful type, and he mentions him in a letter to a distant church, saying, "The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me." He was as welcome to Paul in Paul's difficulties as is the shower of summer rain to a field which is parching under the hot rays of the sun. It is great to have a friend who refreshes: it is even greater to be a friend who refreshes, and who might be remembered in a prayer of gratitude to God for such refreshment. Such men and women keep places and situations from being unbearable.

*We thank Thee for friends whose smiles and gladness of soul stand as divine sentinels along the highway of life, and whose warmth of greeting, and whose mastery of situations make it possible for us to share these gifts and to be brought towards the divine power. We thank Thee for those whose gladness and joy is born of comradeship with Thee, and who love and in their mercy bring Thy spirit and Thy message into other lives. We pray for every one of them. We pray even that Thou will help us in some measure to be like them, and therefore we pray for Thee to live in Us and Through Us, in Christ's name, Amen.*



## The Bible Battered and Bruised

★ ★

He was not particularly religious when he volunteered for service in World War I, but his mother had presented him with a large Bible for him to take to camp. It was too large to handle with any convenience, but she gave it to him, and with some misgivings, but he took it with no comment. But all the sisters, and cousins, and aunts thought he ought to have the benefit of Scripture when he was away from home, and with no conference with each other, every one of them bought him a New Testament, and by the time he had reached the port of embarkation, at least a dozen of them had caught up with him, along with notes telling him of the importance of the word of God, and of the necessity of taking a Testament along, and reading it every night.

Well, he blew up. He returned them, one by one, and with each a note whose phraseology and spirit were wholly apart from the Scriptures which accompanied it, but which contained some words which are found occasionally in the New Testament, although in no desired connection. The relatives were properly shocked, and those whose Testaments reached him after he had landed in Brest, had theirs returned with even more emphatic words, all to the effect that he had his mother's Bible, and that was enough, and so on.

They were sure that he would return with bitterness against the Bible and against the Christian religion. They were certain that the Big Bible, seven by nine inches, and filled with pictures as well as other so-called helps, had fallen by the wayside long ago. But strange as it may seem, he returned home after a full eighteen months on the other side with it. When his baggage was unpacked by the loved ones, they were amazed to find the big Bible numbered among the things present. Not only so, but its condition revealed that it had been severely used while in the A.E.F., both on the outside and on the inside. The outside was bruised and battered, and there was mud and mildew; the inside was thumbed frequently, and well worn at places where a man will find those helps which the great crises of life demand. One never can be sure when the heart of love sows a seed but that harvest will be far more bountiful than even the heart of faith dared hope. You know, God has much, if not everything to do with it, and He blesses the gifts sent forth with a prayer.

*We are so glad, O Father, that the Bible is Thy Book, a guide unto our feet, and a light unto our path. We thank Thee that in the quietness of the evening, and when we feel ourselves utterly apart from all human ties we can find Thee, and receive Thy help from its blessed pages, and apply to ourselves its teachings, and appropriate for our needs its promises, and receive by faith the Savior it reveals. In Christ's name, Amen.*

## The Martyred Geronimo

★ ★

In the Museum at Algiers on the Barbary Coast is one of the most horrible casts found on public exhibition. It is a gruesome plaster cast of a Christian martyr, Geronimo, writhing in death. Geronimo was killed in 1569 by being put alive in a block of concrete, afterwards built into the wall of a fort.

According to a story by a Spanish monk, Haedo, in Algiers in 1612, a young Arab captured by the Spaniards embraced Christianity, and in baptism was given the name of Geronimo. Geronimo was recaptured by Pirates and taken to Algiers where he was tortured to make him give up Christianity. Nothing moved him, and he was condemned to death as an apostate.

Bound head and foot he was thrown alive into a mold in which a block of concrete was made. Liquid concrete was poured over him. He died for his faith. Haedo wrote the story soon after the incident, but it was so horrible that it was not believed. But he described the exact spot where this particular block was placed. When the wall was torn down in 1853, the block was removed, and at the place specified by Haedo, the remains of Geronimo were found. The strange tale was not fiction, but fact. By filling the cavity in the block with plaster of Paris a perfect model was obtained, showing the agonized features of the youth, the cords which bound him, and the texture of his garment.

The block containing the actual remains is in the Cathedral where Geronimo was canonized a Christian martyr.

The story of Christianity contains many stirring chapters like that of this loyal follower of Christ. The grace of God makes men strong in time of persecution. When men are loyal unto death, the church of the Lord advances. We need Christians today who flinch not from danger, whose loyalty to Christ will stand any test.

“That martyr first, whose eagle eye  
Could pierce beyond the grave;  
Who saw his master in the sky,  
And called on Him to save;  
Like Him with pardon on His tongue,  
In midst of mortal pain;  
He prayed for them that did the wrong:  
Who follows in His train.”

*For men who suffered death rather than deny the Christ, for those who endured persecution rather than be false to the truth which God had revealed to their awakened minds and sanctified souls, we thank Thee, O merciful Lord of heaven and earth. Hold all thy children steady today in the midst of all the persecution that comes from pagan rulers, from ridicule, from indifference to the highest, and from those evil inclinations within the mind that lead weak men to take the road of least resistance. Stand Thou by every Christian walking on a difficult road. Amen.*

## If I Were Going to College Again

★ ★

It is great to be young. It is great to have the privilege of preparing oneself for doing well one's work in a world as badly in need as is the world about us now. It is great to see the colleges and universities open, and the streams of young men and young women pouring into their doors to study. It is great to see the campus with its groups of young people whose merry eyes are yet serious, with strength of mind, body and soul.

If I were going to college again—in the light of that which I have learned since I went to college, I think I would make five resolutions:

First, I would listen to the advice of the older folks whose words I used to ignore because I believed them wholly out of date. In later years I have learned that experience is the best teacher, and people have learned by what they have themselves experienced.

Second, I would budget my time much better than I did when I was running hither and thither with no very definite plans for the day, for the week, or for the month. I would remember that John R. Mott says that 95 per cent of life's habits are fixed before the end of college years.

Third, I would try to build friendships. I would know that the college campus is the greatest place we shall ever see for the making of friends that last through all the years of life.

Fourth, I would pay more attention to the courses of study that are laid down for me in the catalogue. I would know they were in the college curriculum because they have vindicated their necessity through the years.

Fifth, I would try to put most important things first, and I would emphasize religion, and religion to me is the Lordship of my Savior Jesus Christ in my life. He is the Pearl of Great Price. He is the treasure hid in the field.

It is great to be young!

Every youth has a quest to make,  
For life is the King's highway;  
And a joyous heart is the scrip we take,  
On the road of every day.

Every youth has gifts to guard,  
As he fares to a far-off goal;  
A body pure, and a mind unmarred,  
And the light of a lovely soul.

Every youth has a task of his own,  
For the Father has willed it so,  
Youth seeks the way, and God alone  
Can show him the path to go.

Every youth has a lovely Guide  
From the vale to the mountain crest;  
For the Unseen Friend who walks beside  
Is the Way and the End of the Quest.

*Lord of every young life, consecrate the strength of youth to Christ, that Jesus may be Master, Savior, Friend, Guide and Inspiration today. In His name, Amen.*

## When A Year Dies

★ ★

The year dies. Dying years cause men to give thanks unto God for two great blessings. One is the blessing of being able to forget that which is unpleasant, hard, and painful in the days on the leaves of the calendar dropped into the waste basket as new days dawn. One of the most effective remedies which Dr. Time carries in his satchel is the use of forgetting when a failure to forget would add to one's unhappiness.

But the other blessing is more wonderful: it is the blessing of being able to remember that which has marched before our eyes, and what made the smile so deep, the laughter so hearty, and the joy so real. The death of the year brings back flowers that wafted their fragrance along the paths, and which are now blossoming anew in our garden of memories:

“Beat the drums of memory  
In a low and lulling key,  
Till my feet go marching on  
Through the twilight and the dawn;  
Backward through the paths of time  
Into that enchanted clime  
Where the blossoms never fade.  
Where the sunshine and the shade  
Dance in dapples on the grass  
Of the orchards that I pass.

“Beat the drums of memory  
Till the old songs return to me,  
Till I murmur faded tunes  
Hum contented olden croones,  
And the boy days all are mine;  
Till my veins pulse with the wine  
Of the days that were made new  
As I find my pathway through  
All the evercalling ways  
Of the living yesterdays.”

There is joy in forgetting; there is happiness in remembering.

*O Thou God Who maketh me to forget; and the king Lord who causeth me to remember, for these two blessings, we thank Thee today. For injuries received, for slights suffered, for carelessness on the part of others, for all things said and done that marred the merriment of life, on all these things throw a mantle of forgetfulness that they may be lost from our lives forever. The pile of kind deeds received, gracious and gentle words spoken, and every act, word and person who made hours pleasant, days joyous and life inspiring, bring today and all days to our remembrance, and grant that we may never forget. We thank Thee in the name of Jesus who forgets our sins and remembers our faith, Amen.*

## The Sea of Memories

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We sailed one night in late November into the sea of memories. I watched the gang plank being put down as the sun sank in golden splendor behind a curiously cut bit of cloud sticking up out of the western sky, and as the streamer of gold spread forth like a great Spanish fan towards the high heavens, the new moon smiled down on those waters where Columbus sailed on his third voyage, near the little band of land where Balboa climbed a tree and caught a glimpse of the Pacific, where the ships of Drake attacked the convoys of Spain bearing back to the east the gold that had been taken from Inca palaces, and where Henry Morgan sacked towns, where Ferdinand de Lesseps lost the reputation won at Suez, where General Gorgas conquered the Yellow Fever, and where pirates innumerable had gained and lost treasure upon the Spanish Main.

The years have passed, and history remembers only the finer and bigger things since the lives of those men who stepped so high above the common herd as to make their names stand out clearly on the records of the ages. The little blots have been erased by the whirling sands of time as the storms have blown about the base of gigantic statues, and only the significant remains.

How about our own memories? What come clearly and sharply in focus when the decades have slipped away? Men are made of memories; and memories are made by men. In the pages of the New Testament, John had a memory that I recommend to all of us. When he sat down to write his story of the life of Jesus, he did so almost fifty years after the events in that life had receded into the past, when he alone was alive of the group that walked and talked with Jesus in Galilee and Judea. But the memory of the day when he met Jesus was so vivid to John that he remembers the very hour. He writes: "And it was about the tenth hour." Back half a century, and the turning point of his life came, the tenth hour. It was four o'clock, in the afternoon. He could never forget, for it was the most significant moment his life was ever to know—to meet Jesus.

*Dear Lord, let us live today so as to hold golden memories tomorrow. As we sail over the sea of memory, hold within us the recollection of that which is vital and significant; let our memories grow sweeter, as our thought of others grows kinder, and our love for Thee grows stronger. We pray in the name of the Master of all worthy memories, Jesus our Lord, Amen.*

## We Disclose Ourselves When We Play

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What we do, when we do not have to say anything, tells much about what we are. Where we go, when we don't have to go anywhere, says a great deal about our inner lives. What we do, when we don't have to do anything, furnishes an accurate picture of our characters. Such facts are given salient emphasis on holiday excursions. It is not only interesting, but distinctly revealing to watch the conduct of people aboard a steamer going south for a two weeks' release from the cares of their regular job, and of vacation from the daily routine.

Some spend these days in dissipation. Some do so because they are in these habits at home, and some others do because the restraint of the home town and the demands of the regular job prevent the exercise of this desire at home, but the desire is there, and when the restraints are removed, the bars are down.

Some spend the time in resting, in trying to get the lines of weariness erased from a worn body, in trying to brush the cobwebs from a stodgy mind, and in letting the rest be a true recreation for the work that lies in wait for the end of the voyage.

Some spend the time in keeping in touch with the places and people left behind. By radiograms, by air mail letters, by cards, the touch of life here with life yonder is kept, and the string between the life and its home base is not broken, but gets stronger daily.

Some spend the time in seeking improvement of mind, by study. Some spend the time in having a good time by making others have a good time, by contributing their smiles, their fund of information, and their good fellowship to lonely persons on board ship. Some remain apart from all organized sport; some put themselves whole-heartedly into everybody else's efforts to make people happy, and so the vacation continues. If we give ourselves out just for self, we find ourselves rather critical, and beastly and miserable. If we go about spreading gladness, the joy we give to others comes back to us with generous interest daily compounded.

We disclose our real selves very plainly when at play.

*Help us, O Lord of our leisure hours as of our hours of labor, to give Thee first place in vacation days, hours and minutes; and become so interested in the things which really count large in Thy sight as to make them count in our lives, and in the lives of all men and women about us. Whether at work or at play, O Lord, lead us to love that which is lovely, honest, pure, true and of good report; and to cleave unto such things with all the strength of mind, and powers of power that we possess. In Christ's Name, Amen.*