

A FRESH, INVIGORATING STUDY

# EVANGELISM TODAY:

MESSAGE NOT METHOD

by Samuel M. Zwemer



"THE MESSAGE IS OF FAR MORE IMPORTANCE THAN THE METHOD OF THE MESSENGER. This is not a book on the technique of evangelism but on the essential character of its message. . . .

"THE CROSS OF CHRIST IS THE SEARCHLIGHT OF MAN'S SIN AND THE REVELATION OF HIS LOVE FOR SINNERS; in carrying this good news we need the power of Christ's Resurrection, we need faith not only in the seed but in the soil, and we may use every possible method to drive the one message to the conscience of the hearer. . . .

"In the above words we have summarized the chapters that follow. The first six deal with the message; then follow six others on motive and approach, with two concluding chapters on the messenger's resources and power."

—FOREWORD

**THIRD EDITION**

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# EVANGELISM TODAY

by

by **SAMUEL M. ZWEMER**

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# Evangelism Today

*Message not Method*

*By*

SAMUEL MARINUS ZWEMER



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“THAT there is a great split today in Christendom nobody would deny; but the line of cleavage does not run between Catholic and Protestant or between Conformist and Non-conformist. It runs, as it ran sixteen centuries ago, between Arius and Athanasius—between those who believe that salvation is of God and those who believe that salvation is of man. Those who uphold ‘Christian principles,’ but assert at the same time that Christ was not God, are asserting (however much they may deny it) that in the last resort their faith and ethics rely only on a human sanction. The indiscriminate use of the word ‘Christian’ for those who follow Christ, as a Marxian follows Marx, and for those who believe that Jesus was incarnate God, ‘consubstantial with the Father,’ is responsible, more than anything else, for the popular impression that there is no agreement among the churches. It is not an easy thing to force the issue, since many of the Arians occupy Protestant pulpits; but the matter is as vital now as in the days of Constantine or of Christ.”

—DOROTHY L. SAYERS in *The International Review of Missions*, January, 1942. p. 118.

## FOREWORD

THE Evangel is a message of salvation. It is of God and not of man. The message is of far more importance than the method or the messenger. In presenting these chapters, therefore, we write from that angle. This is not a book on the technique of evangelism but on the essential character of its message. Others have written from their own experience well and wisely regarding the subjects of evangelism, the preparations for evangelistic meetings, the conduct of such gatherings and how to follow up the task. There are many books on evangelism and on evangelistic work. This deals primarily not with technique but with dynamic. The words of Dorothy L. Sayers facing the Foreword and those of Dr. Emil Brunner in his book *The Word and the World* (p. 107) express the background of our thinking in the chapters which follow. If it is old-fashioned we are in good company. Dr. Brunner says:

“The Word of God which was given in Jesus Christ is a unique, historical fact, and everything Christian is dependent on it; hence every one who receives this Word, and by it salvation, receives along with it the duty of passing this Word on; just as a man who might have discovered a remedy for cancer which saved himself would be in duty bound to make this remedy accessible to all. Mission work does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church; mission is its cause and its life. The Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith. It is a secondary question whether we mean Foreign Missions or simply the preaching of the Gospel in the home Church. Missions, Gospel-preaching, is the spreading out of the fire which Christ has thrown upon the earth. He who does not propagate this fire shows that he is not burning. He who burns, propagates the fire. This ‘must’ is both things—an urge and a command.”



The word "evangel" occurs as root or derivative one hundred and three times in the New Testament. Matthew uses it five times, Mark eight times, Luke four times, and John uses the *word* not at all (but he gives the fact). It is used in the Acts six times, in Peter's Epistle twice and in the book of the Revelation only once. All the other instances are in Paul's epistles. He was pre-eminently the missionary evangelist. He calls his message "the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of Jesus Christ, of Christ, of God, the glorious gospel of Christ, the gospel of peace, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious gospel of the blessed God." Three times he refers to it as "my gospel." It is the significance of this word as used by the Apostle, his interpretation of it and the evangel as incarnate in his life, that form the subject of our thought. For the true nature of the evangel is displayed nowhere else so clearly as in the life and epistles of the great Apostle to the Gentiles.

The Cross of Christ is the searchlight of man's sin and the revelation of His love for sinners; in carrying this good news we need the power of Christ's Resurrection, we need faith not only in the seed but in the soil, and we may use every possible method to drive the one message to the conscience of the hearer. He that would be thoroughly furnished for this good word and work needs to "possess his possessions" and be a minister like unto "a flame of fire."

In the above words we have summarized the chapters that follow. The first six deal with the message; then follow six others on motive and approach, with two concluding chapters on the messenger's resources and power.

S. M. Z.

*New York City.*

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# I

## WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

IN ALL the churches of our land there seems to be a new sense of the need for evangelism. The various denominations appoint commissions on evangelism. The Madras Missionary Conference in 1938 summoned all the churches with urgency and insistence.

"The Church [says its Report (pp. 28-29)] must either make its impact upon the secular world of today and win it for Christ, or the secular world will increasingly encroach upon the spiritual life of the Church, blunting its witness and dimming its vision.

"We live in perilous days and the Church cannot stand still; it dare not retreat, yet advance is only possible as the whole Church unites in a new fellowship. Eras of enthusiastic devotion to the cause of Christ have been eras of unashamed and vigorous public propaganda."

Equally distinct and plain-spoken was the memorial sent by the Presbytery of New York to the General Assembly in 1943:

"Our hearts are troubled and our consciences are uneasy as we think of the many thousands of our countrymen whose lives are untouched except indirectly by the Gospel of Christ. We cannot forget that our Lord Jesus when He looked upon the multitude was moved with compassion. All that we are doing is insufficient. It is not enough that we are endeavoring to improve the processes of Christian nurture in our system of education. These things indeed we must do, but the other must not be left undone.

"The other—that is the process of a deliberately and not accidentally undertaken appeal to those who are without the Church to become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ."

One rejoices in such a clear statement of the duty of making disciples. Across the seas there are other voices that sound the same clarion-call.

The Rev. J. Warren of Dublin, Ireland, writes in the *Evangelical Quarterly* for April, 1943, on "The Plain Christian's Duty of Gospel Witness" as set forth in the New Testament.

"Nothing can be clearer [he says] on the New Testament page than that vocal or verbal Gospel witness was recognized to be each individual Christian's privileged duty, so far as opportunity offered, whatever specialized forms of it might devolve on those who would be specially commissioned to render such. A man cannot possibly be a true Christian without being also a witness to Christianity. 'Whosoever shall confess me before men' is our Lord's word (Matt. 10:32)."

All, according to the New Testament, are indiscriminately capable of endowment for "prophesying" (Acts 2:18; I Cor. 14:5, 24, 31) in the sense of telling the story of Christ's mission. Prophesying is no synonym of predicting, in Scripture. Women are expressly included in I Cor. 11:5. All Christians are to exhort one another urgently to place unreserved trust in their Lord (Heb. 3:13; 10:35). They are each to be ready with an answer for every inquirer or objector (Col. 4:6; I Pet. 3:15). Any one of them may "convert" an erring brother (James 5:19). And each believing and hearing one is to re-echo among his fellow men the Spirit's and the Bride's call of "Come" (Rev. 22:17).

Dr. Hugh Thomas Kerr of Pittsburgh reminds us that the older evangelism was not born of emotional excitement. "It laid hold upon the best minds of the time. The first presidents of Princeton, Drs. Dickinson, Burr, Edwards, Davies, Finley, were all ardent supporters of the new evangelism. The movement spread to New England, and Jonathan Edwards, theologian, philosopher and preacher, was largely instrumental in inaugurating what has been called the Great Awakening. Religion became the chief interest in life. Although accompanied by emotional excitement and even physical disturbances, the awakening was a genuine revival

and issued in the transformation of personal and social life." \*

We all long for such a revival. But how will it come? Will it need and use the old message? There is demand here for clear definition because of the present-day confusion of tongues. There are too many who have lost the sense of Christ's supremacy, of Christ's sufficiency and of the urgency of our message. Voices declare that the Gospel message of the apostles and of the early missionaries who laid the foundations of the national churches in Asia and Africa needs modification by way of addition, subtraction, compromise, or syncretism. Professor Hocking of Harvard advocates a New World Faith with elements of value taken from all the living religions of humanity. Others plead for an entire change of missionary method and program. This newer form of "evangelism" wishes to spare the convert any violent break from his old environment. It speaks of "Christianizing Hinduism" and of "evangelizing Islam." A missionary in the Near East puts it this way: "This approach would not require the Moslem inquirer to forsake his Moslem communal relations, but rather would urge that, continuing to live in the Moslem community, this young convert follow the Jesus-way in that world."

The editor of the *Indian Social Reformer* states that "among educated Hindus the actual operative religion of today is an indistinguishable blend of Hinduism and Christ's teaching." To some extent a similar statement could be made regarding the educated Moslems of Egypt and Turkey. But are we to rejoice at this process of blending or is it due to lack of clarity in our message or of compromise in our method?

It is our conviction that such theories of evangelism would prove even less efficient than a mere social gospel. Christ calls us to be fishers of men. We will not progress far by forsaking all hooks and nets to feed the hungry fish in their own environment. Peter on Lake Galilee and Isaac Walton in his *Compleat Angler* laugh such fishermen to scorn.

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\* *Christendom*, Spring issue, 1943.

The late Dr. Duncan B. Macdonald of Hartford put the present-day issue very clearly.

“Are the missionaries of the future to be missionaries of Christ or missionaries of the Christian civilization of the West? This is the alternative which we face at present, although it is often disguised behind forms of words which conceal its real nature and essential importance. Do the missionaries of our Christian churches go out to proclaim to the world the unique and divine fact of the Incarnation or to carry to the non-Christian world the benefits—educational, medical, generally humanitarian—which have grown up in our civilization under the stimulus and guidance of the Christian faith?”

An effort was made in connection with the Madras Conference of 1938 by Dr. John R. Mott to secure a definition of evangelism from outstanding missionaries and national leaders across the world. Some of the replies were unusual, others startling in their lack of clarity. But Samuel Boon-Itt of Siam wrote: “Evangelism means living, doing, and talking for Christ. The spread of the Gospel is done more by living than by the other two.”

No one could find fault with the definition given by Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa: “Evangelism means the conversion of people from worldliness to Christlike godliness. Conversion is absolutely fundamental, for without the awakening of a spiritual hunger, there is no hope for an individual, a society, a race or a nation.”

Even more clear is that of a Canadian missionary in China, now President of Victoria University:

“My conception of evangelism is the presentation of God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ in such a way that His grace may win men to complete trust in Him and commitment of life to Him. Its aim is to effect a change of life so that a man becomes actually a new creature, living a life of such character that he may truly be said to have passed from death into life and to have already entered upon eternal life in this world.”

Dr. E. Stanley Jones defines evangelism in a somewhat confused way, but full of emotional reality:

"Evangelism is the good news of the Kingdom of God on earth, that Kingdom personalized and embodied in Christ, through whom this gracious offer comes in nail-pierced hands, signs of what it cost Him to make this offer to us in spite of our sins, and who ever lives to make that Kingdom effective in the individual and the social will, and who offers us now an individual and social new birth as first steps toward the realization of that Kingdom."

He seems to confuse what the New Testament distinguishes clearly namely the threefold Kingdoms of grace, and power and glory.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has the grace of brevity and says: "Evangelism is the winning of men to acknowledge Christ as their Saviour and King, so that they give themselves to His service in the fellowship of His Church."

While an old colleague of mine, Mr. S. A. Morrison of Cairo, also an Anglican, touches the question of motive: "Evangelism is the proclamation of God's good news, the making known of God's revelation of Himself, more particularly in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. As God is love, no evangelism is truly Christian whose decisive motive, method or objective is other than love. Love for God and love for one's neighbor must determine the form and content of true evangelism."

All of these writers seem agreed that evangelism stands primarily for a message—the word of life.

Paul said, "For me to live is Christ," but even such a life is not in itself evangelism. It is its fruit.

Professor C. H. Dodd of Cambridge has done the whole church service by pointing out that only *one* kind of preaching is evangelism. There were teachers, catechists and evangelists in the first century.

"For the Early Church, then, to preach [he says] was by no means the same thing as to deliver moral instruction or exhortation. While the Church was concerned to hand on the teaching of the Lord, it was not by this that it made converts. It was by *kerygma*, says Paul (not by *didache*), that it pleased God to save men. . . . Much of our preaching in church at the present day



would not have been recognized by the early Christians as *kerygma*. It is teaching, or exhortation (*paraklesis*), or it is what they called *homilia*, that is, the more or less informal discussion of various aspects of Christian life and thought, addressed to a congregation already established in the faith.\*

Now this primary message of evangelism was confined to a few basic facts. Paul calls it the word of the Cross. It was Christ and Him Crucified. Not the wide periphery but the very heart of the Gospel message.

*And what is the message of the evangel?* It could not be stated more forcibly than by a writer in the latest edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Vol. XIX p. 240): "Evangelism stands for a certain interpretation of Christianity emphasizing the objective atonement of Christ, the necessity of new birth or conversion and salvation through faith" (W. W. Sweet, of the University of Chicago. Art. *Revivals*).

This is a fair statement of the essentials of the evangel. Paul made this very message central and primary. "Now, brothers, I would have you know the gospel I once preached to you, the gospel you received, the gospel in which you have your footing, the gospel by which you are saved—provided you adhere to my statement of it—unless indeed your faith was all haphazard" (I Cor. 15:1-2, Moffat's translation). And what then is this message of good news, *this gospel*, so emphatically introduced by a fivefold repetition? "That Christ died for our sins as the scriptures had said, that he was buried and that he rose on the third day." There is no other evangel than these historic facts and their tremendous implications. Any kind of evangelism that is silent in this respect is no evangelism at all. If Christ died for our sins, His death was a reality and His resurrection confirms its necessity and validity as the only atonement for sin. The Cross is the one central message and method and power of Christianity.

"We are sent," in the pregnant words of Hugh Thomson Kerr, "not to preach sociology but salvation; not economics

\* *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments*, p. 6.

but evangelism; not reform but redemption; not culture but conversion; not progress but pardon; not the new social order but the new birth; not revolution but regeneration; not renovation but revival; not resuscitation but resurrection; not a new organization but a new creation; not democracy but the Gospel; not civilization but Christ. We are ambassadors not diplomats.”

It is time that a protest be made against the misuse of the word evangelism. It has only one etymological, New Testament, historical and theological connotation, namely, to tell the good news of One who came to earth to die on the Cross for us: who rose again and who ever lives to intercede for those who repent and believe the Gospel. To evangelize is to win disciples, to become fishers of men, to carry the Gospel message directly to all the nations.

Even prayer, private and public, is not evangelism and should not be its substitute. We all pray for our children and grandchildren. But do we ever evangelize them? It is so much easier to talk *about them to Christ* than to talk *to them about Christ*. This may be the reason why it is proverbial that many sons of ministers are outside of the Church!

This is also a reason why so many conventions for the deepening of spiritual life stop short of direct evangelism. Luther said, “The proper and principal work of those who believe is the confessing of our faith” (*Commentary on Galatians 4:6*).

And Charles Finney, the great evangelist, in deprecating both prayerless evangelism and non-evangelistic praying, cried out: “Prayer might be offered for ever by itself and nothing would be done, because sinners are not converted by direct contact with the Holy Ghost, but by the Truth employed as a means, and to expect the contrary is to tempt God.”

To ask what is evangelism is to ask what is the Evangel. In the earliest of the four gospels we have brief but pregnant statements of its *origin* (Mark 1:1) “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.” Of its *char-*

*acter*, "Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:14, 15). Of its *priority* above all else in future history: "And the gospel must first be published among all nations" (Mark 13:10). Of its *universal triumph*: "Wherever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her" (Mark 14:9). And its *dynamic* in the first century: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. . . . And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mark 16:15, 20).

## II

### PAUL'S GOSPEL FOR OUR DAY

PAUL in the first century faced a world much like that of our day. It was smaller in area, but, like our world, strangely unified by Greek culture and Roman rule as is ours by modern civilization. We see, as he did, grasping totalitarianism, subject races, vile slavery, emperor-worship, race hatreds, and abject poverty under the shadow of selfish luxury. The totalitarian state of Nero, with its ruthless power and nameless cruelty, was not so evil as that of Adolf Hitler. Two empires were in conflict—the sword against the Cross—Cæsar against Christ. The same issue is now facing Christians in Japan, Korea, and other lands.

In *such* a world, black with sin and shame, Paul the dauntless preached his Gospel, not asking for mild approval, timid allegiance or passing patronage, but entire surrender, absolute loyalty and utter sacrifice. He puts it in three short phrases: "I am debtor—I am ready—I am not ashamed." He boasts, he glories in, he is proud of, the one message that had transformed and transfigured his own life.

Paul's epistles are the impassioned words of a Christ-intoxicated man, a roving tent-maker of the first century, a Jew by birth, a Greek in culture, a follower of Jesus Christ, the greatest of all the apostles, who exerted more influence on the history of the world than any of his contemporaries. His letters have been translated into nearly a thousand languages.

One of his thirteen letters, however, stands alone and supreme as Paul's gospel for the world. It is Paul's masterpiece. It was written earlier than the earliest gospel. Chrysostom read it once a week. Melancthon copied it by

hand in Greek twice. Luther called it the greatest book of the New Testament. The philosopher Coleridge said it is "the profoundest piece of literature." And Godet terms it "the Cathedral of the Christian faith."

In our own day it was this epistle that stirred the heart of Karl Barth to a revival of theological thought almost as great as that of Luther in the fifteenth century.

One of the finest tributes to the Epistle of Paul to the Romans comes from an unexpected quarter. In his book, *Twelve Decisive Battles of the Mind*, Gorham Munson writes:

"The sixth book of the New Testament is probably the greatest letter in all literature and reveals the heights to which propaganda in the noble sense can attain. . . .

"What Paul does is to write a letter which, considered as a thought-form, is spherical and three dimensional. The letter has even been described as a radio-active organism. The treatment of the central experience is cyclic. The letter's parts are not so much related to each other in logical succession as they are all simultaneously related to the central experience. One writer, striving to picture the simultaneity of this relationship, has gone to the length of disgramming the letter according to the current conception of the atom, showing all the parts of the letter as electrons revolving in orbits around the central sun or proton, the double statement: 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this death? . . . I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

"Thus the first battle of the mind which we take up is also the greatest in scope. It was not on behalf of an earthly potentate or to win merely a terrestrial victory. It was missionary work for God and included the cosmos in its propaganda-strategy. For it the total truth was unfettered and the total man, his instincts, emotions, mind and latent psychology, was played upon by a master of persuasion and evocation. Paul's literary powers were of the highest and were all mobilized for the task" (p. 30).\*

What a tribute we have here! And it is to this epistle which "smashes the atom" and reveals the very heart of the Evangel in the heart of Paul the missionary that we turn

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\* Abingdon. Cokesbury Press.

our attention. Especially to his statement in the first chapter: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." These opening verses are the very heart of the epistle, as Martyn Lloyd-Jones states in his book *The Plight of Man and the Power of God*. Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel because of its content—it was good news—and because of its dynamic—it worked. In this and other epistles Paul uses short phrases that are pregnant with significance of what the gospel meant for him. Each of them could be the subject of a sermon and in every case the context paints a picture in lively colors of Paul's own experience of Christ.

"Separated unto the gospel. . . . Not ashamed of the gospel. . . . Fully preached the gospel. . . . I have begotten you through the gospel. . . . Lest we should hinder the gospel. . . . Should live of the gospel. . . . Not abuse my power in the gospel. . . . This I do for the gospel's sake. . . . If our gospel be hid. . . . They would pervert the gospel of Christ. . . . Preparation of the gospel of peace. . . . Your fellowship in the gospel. . . . Confirmation of the gospel. . . . Furtherance of the gospel. . . . Defense of the gospel. . . . The hope of the gospel. . . . Partaker of the afflictions of the gospel. . . . The bond of the gospel. . . . Woe is me if I preach not the gospel."

And note also how affectionately and repeatedly he calls it "*My gospel*." Moreover, he thought it was the *only* Gospel: "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Yet this uncompromising strong loyalty did not hinder his compassion nor quench his ardent love. The same hand that wrote Galatians also wrote the hymn of love in I Corinthians. Paul loved all men for the sake of Christ's Gospel.

His Gospel burst through all *race and class* barriers and put humanity on a common level. "In Christ Jesus neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free." As Frederick W. H. Meyers makes Paul say:

"Only like souls I see the folk thereunder  
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings,

Hearing their one hope, with an empty wonder,  
Sadly contented in a show of things;  
Then with a rush the intolerable craving  
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet-call.  
Oh to save these! to perish for their saving,  
Die for their life, be offered for them all."

Why was Paul so eager to preach the evangel? Why was he proud of it? He was ashamed of the civilization of Rome (Rom. 1:18-31). He was ashamed of his countrymen the Jews (Rom. 2:21-27). He was ashamed of himself (Rom. 7:15-24). *But he was not ashamed of the Gospel*, and that for three reasons:

1. "For it is the power of God unto salvation"  
(to everyone that believeth,  
(to the Jew first,  
(to the Greek also).
2. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed"  
(from faith as God's gift,  
(to faith in the heart,  
(by faith in the life).
3. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven" (to those who reject the Gospel).

The love of God is revealed in the life and death of Jesus Christ "born of the seed of David after the flesh and declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead." Incarnation for Redemption. The wrath of God against man's sin and His love for sinners are revealed most of all on Calvary, where "he who knew no sin was made sin for us." "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). These historic facts gave Paul his evangel and also his hallelujah chorus, "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." Paul experienced the Gospel before he preached it. It is one thing to know the content of our message. It is quite another to experience its power.

An Afghan Moslem friend, whom I met in London a few years ago, wrote a book entitled *Lights of Asia*. It describes five great religions and one cannot put the heart of the

Gospel message in better words than Iqbal Ali Shah does in his chapter, "Christianity" (p. 76):

"The Cross is the center of all revelation. Have you ever thought what the Bible would be like without the Cross? Take the Cross out of this book and you won't be able to recognize it. If there be no promise of the Cross in the Old Testament then its Laws distress me. It is a book of fatalism. If there is no Cross in the New Testament, then it blazes with pitiless splendour. But put the Cross back, and at once the book becomes a Gospel. Its Law becomes Love, its shadows flee away, its destiny is the Father's House.

"To reveal my sin merely would load me with despair; to forgive my sin merely would make me afraid of tomorrow. I want my sin conquered; I want to get it beneath my feet. The Cross is the place of victory. Christ did it upon the Cross. I say it reverently, He could not do it but for the Cross. It was expedient for one man to die for the people. He hath put away sin—all sin—original sin and actual sin, by the sacrifice of Himself. 'There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin; He only could unlock the gate of Heaven and let us in.' Education could not do it. Social reform cannot do it. Our beautiful essays and ethical sermons cannot do it. It is Christ upon the Cross who discovers sin, who forgives sin, who conquers sin." \*

I have wondered how anyone could write like that and still, so far as I know, make no clear surrender to Christ.

Paul knew the power of the Gospel to change individuals "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." After mentioning the nameless and abominable sins of pagan Corinth, he writes: "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 6:11).

That process of transformation is witnessed on every mission field. The story of Robert Moffat in South Africa sitting at the Lord's table with Afrikander, who as pagan used to drink blood from a human skull, is only an example. Every Sunday in India today, we are told, more than three thousand of the outcastes—the degraded untouchables—are received by baptism into the church, a Pentecost every week

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\* Arthur Parker, Publisher, London, 1934.



and that in the most hostile and Brahmin-ridden part of India! In 1928, in Hyderabad, I saw the beautiful stone cathedral at Medak, built entirely by the labor and sacrifice of these outcastes. It took ten years to complete, and its noble spire is visible for many miles.

Once, on a journey to inland Arabia, I witnessed what the dynamic of the Gospel did in the heart of a Turkish officer who took part in the Armenian massacres and as loot seized a beautiful Turkish New Testament. He had read it for years and that night called for me to pray with him, as he was desperately ill. I was able to show him the way Home. The next morning he was buried by Moslems.

And the Gospel not only converts the individual, it changes society. On every mission field, from the days of William Carey, the missionaries have carried a real, social gospel. They promoted temperance, opposed the opium traffic, checked gambling, established standards of hygiene and purity, promoted industry, elevated womanhood, restrained antisocial customs, abolished cannibalism, human sacrifice and cruelty, organized famine relief, checked tribal wars, and changed the social structure of society. Paul's gospel did the same in the first century for those who became the Early Church.

Let me give one instance from personal observation. In 1922, I landed at Sibolga in West Sumatra, where seventy years before two American missionaries Lyman and Munson were killed and eaten by the cannibals shortly after their arrival. The tragic event was long afterwards recorded on a monument that now marks the spot. After the martyrs came the pioneers of the Rhenish Mission Nommensen and Warneck, and preached the love of Christ. Today there are over 350,000 Christians on the island, and self-supporting churches dot the landscape.

Again, the Gospel has intellectual power. It liberates the mind as well as the soul. It teaches men to read the best of all books and everywhere produces a new literature.

This epistle to the Romans is a silent witness to the intellectual grasp of the Early Church. This very letter, which

some think very dull reading today, was read to a small company of believers—poor and despised of men—but beloved of God and called to be saints. They listened; they must have understood, and believed. From Rome, the eternal city, the Church spread through the early converts to the confines of the Empire.

*That* was Paul's ambition in this very epistle. "To preach the gospel not where Christ was named . . ." (15:20).

Paul stretched himself over the vast Roman Empire, as Elisha did over the dead child of the Shunnamite—until new life came! Personal evangelism is a collision of souls!

The soul that is alive through Christ in contact with the soul dead in sin. And even as the law of physics so is the law of evangelism. The impact depends on mass  $\times$  velocity.

For personal religion must always be the spring of Christian life. Lord Eustace Percy put the position well when he wrote: "He who sets out to change individual lives may be an optimist; but he who sets out to change society without first changing the individual is a lunatic."

Paul's gospel is the only gospel for our day. The only hope for our chaotic society. The only sure blue-print for a better post-war world. The great continental Christian and theologian, Adolf Keller, tells us that the churches under the Cross in Europe are well aware of this:

"The central theme of present-day preaching is the Cross, the unfathomable depth of the world's sin and the unfathomable depth of God's love as revealed in Christ, who died for us that we might live. God's kingdom coming not in a victory but in the paradoxical defeat of the Cross which is the prelude of victory in the Resurrection. Preaching today has no use for those shallow moralistic recipes and that Utopian idealism. It has rediscovered the old transcendent truths about God—what He does, what Christ means, what His Cross signified for sinful men, how His Resurrection and His kingdom are revealing their divine redemptive power in this world which is coming to an end so that God's reign may begin."\*

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\* *Christian Europe Today*, p. 142. Harper & Bros., publishers.

### III

## GOD'S ANVIL AND HIS GOSPEL

WHAT was before the mind's eye of Eliphaz the Temanite when he addressed Job in his sore distress, using the metaphor of sparks flying upward? He doubtless felt with the other comforters that the problem of suffering must be traced to its source. "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust," said he, "neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." The Hebrew text is very picturesque. Eliphaz saw "the sons of the burning coal lift up to fly." Here was a company of desert sheikhs living with their flocks and herds and camels as Arab tribesmen do today. The whole book of Job is redolent with nomad life and the life of the Arabian oasis. Where did these sons of Uz ever see sparks fly upward to remind them of man's misery? They had watched the desert blacksmith, whose booth is close to every village, and Doughty, in *Arabia Deserta*,\* paints the picture to perfection for us in his prose classic:

"These nomad smiths and artificers are found in every tribe. They ply their trade in the open air. Zeyd had brought his hands full of old horseshoes and bade him beat them into nails against his mare should be shod. Zeyd went to pull dry sticks, kindled a bonfire and when it had burned a while he quenched all with sand; and taking up the weak charcoal in his mantle, he went to lay it upon the forge fire (a hearth pit in the sand). Then this great sheykh sat down himself to the pair of goat-skin bellows and blew the *sany* (smith) a blast."

Again he described their task: "One forges, another handles the pair of bellows-skins to mend the copper vessels and

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\* Cambridge University Press.

the old swords from the armory of the *Kella*. And as they smite the heated metal with their crude hammers the sparks fly upward" (Vol. I, 137, 310).

We have a similar reference in the book of Samuel. "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel. . . . But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, and his coultter and his axe and his mattock" (I Sam. 13:19-21).

Eliphaz was a keen observer and a wise interpreter. Job was tried as by fire. His soul was in God's furnace of affliction. He justified himself and strove with his Maker. No, said Eliphaz, your afflictions come not from the dust, your troubles are not from beneath. God is dealing with you and with us all. He shapes character and destiny on his anvil. Every blow brings sparks that fly from the metal, but they help to shape or sharpen instruments for the Master's use.

When we search the commentaries we find only lame or absurd interpretations of this metaphor in Job. Some tell us that the sons of flame are demons referred to in the Targum! Others have the banal interpretation that as all bonfires have sparks, so all human life has trouble. Richter says: "The meaning is man is doomed to travail by conditions of his earthly life, but the angels escape (5:7b) since they soar high above the earth." None of these wise men had seen the deserts of Teman or the tents of Kedar.

Reading Doughty and remembering the smith-bazaars of Eastern Arabia, I prefer the interpretation given above, to which Longfellow also, perchance, referred in his "Village Blacksmith":

"Thus at the flaming forge of life  
Our fortunes must be wrought,  
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped  
Each burning deed and thought."

And it was a delight to learn from a professor of English literature that Christopher Smart, in his *Jubilate Agno* (1722-1771), gave the same beautiful interpretation:

"For man is born to trouble in the body  
As the sparks fly upward in the spirit;  
For man is between the pinchers  
While his soul is shaping and purifying."

Yes, we are all between the pinchers on God's great anvil. His sovereign will and wise providence are omnipresent. He shapes human destiny, He rules the nations, overturns dynasties, sends fire and sword, earthquake and pestilence. His wrath, says Paul "is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold down the truth in unrighteousness." God's wrath is the background for the Gospel. If there were no judgment against sin there would be no need for a Saviour from sin.

There are those who hesitate to speak of the wrath of God and who fancy that this is only a bit of Old Testament theology made obsolete by Jesus Christ. They are mistaken. As Edwyn Bevan has shown in his Bampton Lectures on *Symbolism and Belief*, wrath is a universal attribute of deity, not only in primitive polytheism but in all the ethnic religions, in the Old Testament revelation and especially in the New Testament, and in the teaching of Jesus Christ (pp. 206-251). This righteous indignation of God has not only a corrective and reformatory purpose, it is also punitive and retributive. "The idea of God's anger stands for something in the Supreme Reality which in truth belongs to it, something which was asserted by means of anthropomorphic imagery in the Old Testament religion and in the religion of Jesus, and which was wrongly left out in the Greek philosophic view of God."

One cannot believe in God's holiness and God's justice without believing what the Bible says about their relation to man's sin. From the rectitude of His nature He must and will punish sinners. The terrible sermon of the great theologian and great evangelist Jonathan Edwards on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" must be read carefully and prayerfully to see how relevant it is to our own day and our own world. Whatever we may think ourselves, there is no doubt what Jesus Christ thought and taught regarding

everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46). Justice and judgment are the habitation of Christ's throne, although mercy and truth go before His face (Ps. 89:14). The punitive justice of God is seen in the terrific language of Scripture. "Wrath of God" and "the fierceness of his wrath" (John 3:36; Rev. 16:19). It is felt in the pricking of conscience and the horrors of remorse when a soul apprehends its own guilt. Sin is an infinite wrong because it is committed against infinite right. The whole world rests under condemnation and is guilty before God.

In a day of global war, when the four horsemen of the apocalypse are riding athwart all our smug isolationism and cheap pacifism, we must face realities. The seven trumpets, the seven seals, and the seven vials, all deal with God's day of doom, and that is why the preaching of the Gospel is such an urgent matter. The havoc wrought by sin calls for instant attention and radical treatment before it is forever too late.

The manifestation of God's judgment on the nations should drive us all to penitence. If *we* are angry or indignant with the wicked every day, although ourselves sinners, who shall measure the wrath of God against the sin of the whole world and His righteous indignation?

Why are we now at war? A Christian philosophy of history and a realistic view of our world cannot leave out this factor. Neither individuals nor nations can escape the punitive justice of God. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins," and yet only when His "judgments are abroad in the earth do men learn righteousness."

The Gospel is the word of the Cross. And the Cross spells sin as well as salvation. "Is not my word as a hammer and as a fire that breaketh the rock in pieces." So spake Jeremiah. And Ezekiel describes Israel in God's furnace: "As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you." This is a harsh word but a true word. The New Testament says, "Our God is a consuming fire."

It may be doubted there has ever been a period when the

Jews and the Christian Church have been beset by so many and such powerful foes or had to face attack in such different forms and in so many directions. Persecution, imprisonment, the closing of doors, bitter opposition, the flaming sword of fear, mistrust, revenge, and martyrdom. "The Church today," writes A. M. Chirgwin, "is under fire in a hostile world. It is beset behind and before. Rarely if ever has it been attacked by so many and such powerful foes. Can it survive, or will it be driven again to the catacombs?"

The answer is the word of Christ in the night in which He also was betrayed: "That in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer I have overcome the world."

Who but the Prince of Peace can ever beat our swords into pruning-hooks on His anvil? The Christian Church is under fire in a hostile world but we can trust God's hammer and God's anvil. "The wrath of men shall yet praise him," as the Psalmist tells us.

God's wrath against human sin is the background for the revelation of His boundless love for sinners. "*Should not perish*" is the blackness of darkness for the glory and light in "*God so loved the world.*" Rembrandt's art understood the power of this contrast between night and light. It is the glorious paradox of the Gospel for such a day as ours. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In the overflowing wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment [Christ in his agony on the Cross]; but with everlasting lovingkindness will I have mercy on thee, saith Jehovah thy Redeemer" (Isaiah 54:7, 8, R.V.).

The Cross is a demonstration and manifestation of the love of God. But it is more than this. It is where God's holiness, God's mercy, and man's sin met in the heart of the Redeemer.

"There was no other good enough  
To pay the price of sin,  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of heaven and let us in."

That is the Gospel—the whole Gospel—in words of one syllable. And the response to the preaching of such a Gospel is repentance, not self-justification. When we are on God's anvil of conviction and the sparks fly upward we cry with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." We must heartily repent before we can truly believe the Gospel. As D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones puts it:

"It is only in the light of God's hatred and abhorrence of sin that we can really see his love and appreciate the wonder and glory of the Gospel. The measure of His anger against sin is the measure of the love that is prepared to forgive the sinner and to love him in spite of his sin." \*

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\* *The Plight of Man and the Power of God*, p. 92. Abingdon. Cokesbury Press.



## IV

### THE CROSS, REVEALER OF SIN

MEN are constantly using the word *gospel* in a sense that is foreign to the New Testament. The gospel of good will and human kindness, the gospel of the golden rule, the gospel of the brotherhood of man, the gospel of building a new world, the gospel of racial understanding—all these are *not* the Gospel of God's grace, the glorious everlasting Gospel of God's love for sinners. "Moralistic preaching," writes Reinhold Niebuhr, "is the thinnest kind of preaching. Occasionally it may achieve something of a body; occasionally life is astutely analyzed to prove that self-love is self-defeating and that true love contains the key to self-realization. But usually this preaching is thin. . . . What is missing first of all in moralistic preaching is a proper sense of contrition, a realization of the fact of sin." \*

Until we grapple with the fact of sin we do not preach the gospel of "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." When John the Baptist gave our Saviour that name he preached the Gospel of atoning sacrifice. He also summed up in one short phrase the types and prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the Messiah—the story of the substitute for Isaac on Mount Moriah, the story of Israel's redemption from Egypt on the passover night and the blood on the doorposts, the sacrifices for sin according to the ritual of the Tabernacle, and, most of all, the glorious vision of Isaiah in his fifty-third chapter. And, likewise, John the Baptist anticipates the full Gospel message of Peter and Paul and John: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not

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\* *The Christian Century*, July 15, 1936.

redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18). "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rom. 4:24). And then in the Revelation by John there are *twenty* references to the Lamb of God, "as it had been slain," worthy to receive all glory and honor from those who are washed white in His blood and who overcame by its power (Rev. 3:6; 5:12; 7:14, etc.).

We need a sense of sin before we feel the need of a Saviour. And there is no searchlight that penetrates deeper into the heart, reveals self more clearly, and convicts of sin more startlingly than the Cross. The word of the Cross is as a hammer and a fire to men's consciences. To borrow the words of the Psalmist, the Cross sets all our iniquities before Christ and "our secret sins in the light of his countenance" (Ps. 90:8.).

For the Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world by first revealing it. Jesus, in the Gospel record, reveals sin, condemns sin, convicts of sin, and forgives sin. The friend of sinners was never the friend of sin but shed his own life blood for its remission. On the Cross these three met, never to meet again—God's holiness, God's love, and man's sin. As George Herbert puts it:

"Though I fail, I weep;  
Though I halt in pace,  
Yet I creep  
To the throne of grace.

"Then, let wrath remove;  
Love will do the deed:  
For with love  
Stony hearts will bleed.

"Love is swift of foot,  
Love's a man of warre  
And can shoot  
And can hit from farre."

True evangelism preaches the Cross to convict of secret sins. Not secret because hidden from God or hidden from men. "If we say we have no sin we deceive [only] ourselves." And we can convict men of sin only when we ourselves are first convicted. A seventeenth-century divine lamented:

"I cannot pray but I sin, I cannot preach but I sin, I cannot administer or receive the holy sacrament but I sin. My every repentance needs to be repented of, and the tears I shed need washing in the blood of Christ."

And Jonathan Edwards, a century later, solemnly testified:

"When I look into my heart and take a view of its wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell. And it appears to me that, were it not for free grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite height of all the fulness and glory of the great Jehovah, I should appear sunk down in my sins below hell itself; far below the sight of everything but the eye of sovereign grace, that alone can pierce down to such a depth. And it is affecting to think how ignorant I was, when a young Christian, of the bottomless depths of wickedness, pride, hypocrisy, and deceit left in my heart."

Preaching moral ideals without a sense of contrition for sin produces Pharisees in pulpit and pew. Crime relates to law and courts of justice; vice relates to society and standards of conduct; but sin relates to God. "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." All the great writers have grappled with that great reality, sin, in a fashion which the pulpit might well emulate. Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe deal with sin in the soul and before God. They know how to portray its guilt, pollution, and bondage as well as the remorse of conscience. Victor Hugo, Tolstoi, and Dostoievsky describe the deep roots and the bitter fruit of sin. One could well illustrate from these writers the theologian's definition of sin: "a specific evil, moral not natural, which has its seat in the soul and consists in transgression of or want of conformity to the law of God." And "the wages of sin is death."

When Dante describes his entrance into paradise he speaks of himself, after he met the guardian angel, as follows: "Seven times the letter that denotes the inward stain, he on my forehead, with the truthful point of his drawn sword inscribed. And, 'Look, he cried, when entered, that thou wash these scars away.'"

Pride, envy, anger, intemperance, lasciviousness, covetousness, spiritual sloth—these seven were Dante's seven scars on his sanctified forehead. These seven sins of the medieval category are with us today. Two may belong specifically to the worldling and those without; but five cling to God's people and are found on the sanctuary steps. Pride, envy, anger, covetousness and sloth are "the respectable sins" that only the Cross reveals. The fact is that our generation, as Dr. J. S. Whale remarks, "is rediscovering the abysmal depths of evil in the heart of man and realizing that Public Enemy Number One is neither ignorance nor stupidity nor defective social environment but SIN," which is the root of all other evils.

Now the light that radiates from the face of Jesus on Calvary is the X-ray of God's holiness and love and mercy. It penetrates to the depth of the human heart. It pours contempt on all our pride. It reveals our rebellion in the light of unrequited love.

To preach the evangel with effect we must point to Calvary and the *atonement*. That is the great cardinal doctrine of the Catholic Church as taught by the Apostles and the Church fathers, accepted and illuminated in its purely Biblical form by Anselm, reaffirmed by Wyckliffe, Luther and Calvin. All these heralds of the Evangel spoke of the atonement as "the satisfaction rendered to the divine justice for the sin of man by the substituted penal sufferings of the Son of God."\*

Such theological thinking and preaching produced the great revivals and gave us our evangelical and evangelistic hymnody. When Cowper saw Christ looking at him from

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\* Shedd's *History of Doctrine*, pp. 204 ff. and Summary, p. 317.

the Cross he wrote, "There is a fountain filled with blood." When Wesley saw Christ gazing into his heart he sang, "Jesus, lover of my soul." When Toplady was face to face with the reality of the atonement he cried, "Rock of ages, cleft for me."

The greatest saints have always felt themselves the greatest sinners because they lived and prayed under the searchlight of Calvary. Those to whom much was forgiven, loved much. How can any one preach the love of God who has not experienced its power in his own soul?

The personal conviction, contrition and a sense of utter moral bankruptcy to which meditation on Christ's life and death compels us, destroys forever the superficial teaching of perfectionism. Judgment always begins at the house of God. The refiner of silver must purify the sons of Levi in his furnace. Paul's sense of sin grew with his fight for character. The seventh chapter of Romans is not a theological debate between the higher and lower self but a page torn from Paul's diary and wet with his tears. Charles Haddon Spurgeon in his sermon on "The Fainting Warrior" (Jan. 23, 1859) reveals the secret of his own power as an evangelist:

"I know it is my duty to be perfect, but I am conscious I cannot be. I know that every time I commit sin, I am guilty, and yet I am quite certain that I must sin—that my nature is such that I cannot help it. I feel that I am unable to get rid of this body of sin and death, and yet I know I ought to get rid of it. . . . It is my agonizing death struggle with my corruption that proves me to be a living child of God. These two natures will never cease to struggle so long as we are in this world. The old nature will never give up; it will never cry truce; it will never ask for a treaty to be made between the two. . . . What a fight is that! It were worth an angel's while to come from the remotest fields of ether to behold such a conflict."

To preach the gospel of repentance in *such* fashion, humbles man and exalts God. When we really feel with Isaiah that all human "righteousness is filthy rags" or with Paul that "every mouth is stopped and the whole world guilty

before God," then we are ready to proclaim "the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." But not till then.

Moreover the *Evangel* that is based on the doctrine of the atonement gives us compassion for "those who are ignorant and out of the way." We are touched with the feeling of their infirmity because we too are tempted and have sinned. We remember that, but for the grace of God, we too would have stumbled and fallen into the pit.

The infinite pity of the man Christ Jesus is due to the fact that (although He knew no sin) He saw reflected in His own heart, on the tree, the sin of the whole race. "He was made sin for us." In that mirror He saw at once all God's justice, all man's sin, and all God's love—then burst His mighty heart and there flowed forth blood and water.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, hear our prayer!

"Be of sin the double cure, . .  
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

. . . . .  
Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy Cross I cling."

The Indian Christian, Sadhu Sunder Singh, put it all in one sentence for us:

"Those who think that salvation from SIN will come easily, have no strength to abandon sin, but those who realize that God became incarnate, and shed His precious blood to save us from our sin, will not do that which gives suffering to God or to a brother in Christ."

To take the condemnation of sin and the wrath of God against sin out of the Gospel message is to cut its very nerve.

The radical realism of the Biblical view of man and of sin is in perfect accord with that of great thinkers in modern times, Montaigne, Pascal, Kierkegaard, Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, and others. This central idea of the Christian faith is described in Browning's well-known lines,

“ 'Tis the faith that launched point-blank its dart  
At the head of a lie; taught Original Sin,  
The corruption of man's heart.”

And the Good News is that, because of the death and resurrection of Christ, “though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool.”

When men speak today of redeeming the old order of society or transforming life from sordidness into sainthood, without the Cross, they follow a forlorn hope. When John came preaching repentance, the fullness of time was also at hand. Revolutionary changes were taking place in the whole Roman Empire and in the Jewish Church. There had been much preparation. There was great expectancy. There was deep despair of the old order. *But John ushered in the new epoch by proclaiming a new Redemption:* “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

It is a redemption of the old order that we desire, but it must be redemption by the Blood. The Cross of Christ is the only hope of the world.

## V

### THE CROSS VIVIDLY PORTRAYED

No ONE doubts the genuineness of Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, written less than twenty years after the Crucifixion. Its rugged and broken sentences show that it was dictated under great stress of feeling. He marveled that those who were called by the grace of Christ had so soon turned away to another Gospel, preached by those who sought "to distort the Good News concerning Christ" (Weymouth). So, after vindicating his apostolic authority and divine call, he appeals to his early visit in Galatia and his own preaching as a rebuke to their consciences. Here are three translations of his pregnant words:

"O senseless Galatians who has bewitched you—you who had Jesus Christ, the crucified, placarded before your very eyes?" (Moffatt).

"What senseless folly is it for you, Galatians, who had the crucifixion of Christ set plainly before your eyes, to resort now to circumcision" (Expositor's Greek Testament, paraphrase).

"You foolish Galatians! whose sophistry has bewitched you—you to whom Jesus Christ has been vividly portrayed, as on the Cross?" (Weymouth). What startling words! Here we have a window into Paul's method of evangelism. That method was a *vivid portrayal of Calvary* and all its implications to him personally. Some writers think that Saul of Tarsus may have been present at the Crucifixion (Joseph Klausner's *From Jesus to Paul*, p. 316). Whether present in body or not, he was ever present in spirit at the Cross. The verses that precede read: "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live but Christ that



liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the body I live through faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up to death on my behalf" (Gal. 2:20). And at the end of this personal letter: "God forbid that I should glory in anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ upon which the world is crucified to me and I am crucified to the world" (Weymouth's version, Gal. 6:14).

Evangelism at its deepest and best is to tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love, so slowly and vividly "that men may take it in, that wonderful redemption, God's remedy for sin." There is no substitute for the story of the passion and death of our Saviour. It is a colossal mistake to relegate preaching on the death of Christ solely to Holy Week and Good Friday. There would be roses of revival in December and showers of blessing in August in all our churches if we were determined to preach Christ crucified every Sunday. All scripture converges upon the Atonement. To a dying Saviour and a risen Lord the prophets bear witness. The very heart of the New Testament, as Dr. Denney has shown, is "*the Death of Christ.*" Apart from that, there is no Good News. We quote his words: "If the Atonement is *anything* to the mind it is *everything*. It is the most profound of all truths and the most creative. The Atonement is a reality of such a sort that it can make no compromise."

The whole scene on Calvary as described in the Gospels is forever symbolic of the cruciality of the death of our Saviour. This is one reason why the four Gospels tell the story at such length, in such detail and so vividly. Christian art and Christian poetry have again and again found their highest inspiration, in gazing at the three crosses on the lonely hill of Calvary.

The Cross of Christ is central and is the great divide of history and of humanity. Before Christ, after Christ; in Christ, out of Christ. When we preach the message of the Cross it demands decision and commitment, or rejection, because the Cross itself is crucial and divisive. To the right and to the left; to glory or to gloom; to eternal life or to

eternal death. And the very arms of the Cross point this out in the Gospel story. We read in Isaiah, "He was numbered with the transgressors, he bare the sins of many and made intercession for the transgressors." And then, five hundred years later, "They crucified Him and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst" (John 19:18). Prophecy and history meet on Calvary. Against a lurid sky we see not one but three crosses; we hear three voices, we witness twice three hours of agony. It was the Roman way of execution, and each of the four Gospels points out that Jesus was not crucified alone.

The friend of publicans and sinners was numbered with transgressors (one on either side) and Jesus in the midst.

From His boyhood days Jesus had seen crucifixions. The most important incident in Jesus' boyhood passes unnoticed in the Gospels. In A.D. 7 the Romans burnt the town of Sepphoris to the ground; it was the largest city in Galilee, only a few miles from Nazareth. The revolt was led by Galileans. Hundreds of young men were crucified outside the city gates; this must have left an ineffaceable mark upon the soul of our Saviour. For He spoke of the Cross very early in His ministry. "If any man will come after me let him take up his cross." Roman executions were commonplace. Today the tortures and scourgings and cruelties of Adolf Hitler's state have made the picture far too real for many of us.

But this was no ordinary crucifixion. "Well might the sun in darkness hide and shut his glory in when Christ the mighty maker died for man, the creature's, sin." "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities." And here we are not spectators but participants. The Negro spiritual asks the right question: "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?"

Dr. Moldenhawer wrote a paper on Negro spirituals in which he pays high tribute to the deep evangelical value of many of these songs.

"But when we come to *the* great song on the death of Christ we are clear away and in an atmosphere which is

like that of the Gospel in the chapters of the passion. There are great hymns on this theme. But I truly believe that no other ejaculation in song has the power to summon such images and to stir such emotion as these words which have caused, whenever we have heard them, our hearts to thump against our ribs and quite unexpected tears to fill our eyes.

‘Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh! sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble;  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?’”

Yes, we were all there. If Christ died for all, then were all dead. He laid down His life for us.

Listen to Paul: “I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life that I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Plato may have read Isaiah or heard of the words, “He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; by his stripes we are healed.” For those words were written only a little earlier than the time of Plato, 429 B.C. In his *Politia* (Book II, p. 74) he tells us of such a sacrificial redeemer as the world needs to restore righteousness: “The perfectly righteous man, who, without doing any wrong, may assume the appearance of the grossest injustice; yea, who shall be scourged, fettered, tortured, deprived of his eyesight, and after having endured all possible sufferings, fastened to a post, must restore again the beginning and prototype of righteousness.” It is immaterial to ask whence Plato got his idea of a just man suffering for the unjust to bring them back to God. The idea is there, almost as distinct as in Isaiah’s divine message. No one could live a perfectly righteous life without being a man of sorrows, despised, rejected, crucified.

Crucifixion was the most hideous torture devised by the old world and the extreme penalty of Roman criminal justice. It included physical agony and also moral disgrace. The former was due to the unnatural posture of the body,

the throbbing pain of nail-pierced hands and feet, feverish thirst, and gradual exhaustion and death. The disgrace was doubly so to one of the Jewish race, for the cross was an object of horror and typical of God's curse (Gal. 3:13; Deut. 21:23). Add to all this the awful contrast between Christ's holiness, innocence and divine dignity and the brutal jeers, mockery and contempt hurled at the helpless victim by those who stood beneath the Cross, and even by those who hung at His side.

Who were they? Two malefactors, two murderers—and the Saviour between! Tradition says the one on Christ's right hand was called Dysmas and the one on the left hand, the impenitent thief, Gestas. Three crosses and each a revelation of self and character, sin and destiny.

*The Cross reveals the inner self.* Self-love in the case of Gestas—cursing—reviling—struggling. Self-surrender in the case of Dysmas—first submission and then contrition and prayer. Self-sacrifice in the case of Jesus—"I lay down my life that I may take it again."

Each of us when in suffering reveals his inner self—in war, in famine, in danger, in hospital pain, in shipwreck. On which cross are you?

Again the crosses show the world three characters: the criminal and sinner—Gestas, the penitent believer—Desmas, the Redeemer and Saviour—Jesus.

Stop—look—and listen! What did John and Mary the mother of Jesus see? What do you see?

Look at Gestas in his agony. He blasphemes, mocking Jesus: "Let him come down . . . if he be the King of Israel. . . . He saved others; himself he cannot save!"

So near and yet so far from Christ.

*Listen to the penitent thief.* Was he a Jew? Was he a Greek? "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." He asks himself: "Is He only a man? Did we not hear Him pray, 'Father forgive them?' Look what is written, 'King of Jews!'" O Lord remember me when. . . .

*Now turn your eyes to Jesus the world's Redeemer on this throne of bodily agony!* "Verily I say unto thee, Dysmas, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise!" For the Son of man hath power, even on the Cross to forgive sins and to open the doors of heaven. Look once again at the three crosses. Look again and see sin revealed in all its power.

*The Cross and sin.* It is a threefold revelation: One is dead in sin—Gestas on the left. One is dead to sin—Dysmas on the right. One is the death of sin—Jesus in the center.

Sin was the executioner in each case. The wages of sin was death. The sting of death in each case sin. Yet how different the revelation.

The impenitent is dead in sin—dies in his sin—wrapped up—eternal death.

The penitent dies to sin; he receives pardon and Paradise. One step from agony to eternal bliss!

The Saviour is the death of sin. He met sin and death on the Cross and remained Victor Immanuel. "Behold the Lamb of God" and "the sin of the world. . . ."

There are places in the ocean too deep to fathom. East of Japan, where the Pacific Ocean is deepest, H.M.S. *Challenger* found it 4600 fathoms (5¼ miles) deep! Abysmal depth, like the depth of the love of Christ.

There are stellar spaces beyond the reach of the largest telescope. Higher than the highest heavens is the Redeemer's love on Calvary. It is fathomless—abysmal and infinite. Yet here we see the wisdom of God and the grace of God.

O the depth of the riches of the love of Calvary!

"He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all"—the guilt, the stain, the hurt, the remorse. All our failings, shortcomings, falls, offences, trespasses, transgressions, debts, sins, faults, ignorances, pollutions, unrighteousnesses. We must not shrink from the awful implications of this fact. We shall never "pour contempt on all our pride" until we realize that we can only be reconciled to God because "him

who knew no sin he made to be sin, on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." It was not for our sins only but for the sins of the whole world that He was forsaken of God. All the sin and shame of the ages in some sense passed over Him. All its waves and its billows, deep calling unto deep. The crude lusts and darkness of ancient races back to primeval time, the long waywardness of Israel, the pride of Nineveh and Tyre, the cruelty of Egypt and Babylon, the injustice of society, the crimes of the market, the brothel and the battlefield, the betrayals of Judas and the denials of Peter and all who ever forsook Jesus; of Pilate, of Herod and of Caiaphas; the sins of humanity past, present and future. Then burst His mighty heart. "It is finished." "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

Lastly, look at the three crosses in relation to life. On which cross are you? "Were you there when they nailed him to the tree? Were you there?"

*The Cross reveals Life and Destiny.* One died losing life, Gestas. One died receiving life, Dysmas. And one died giving life eternal, Jesus.

For Gestas the three hours of darkness were but the prelude of eternal darkness and eternal night—He entered eternity without Christ—without hope—without God!

Dysmas looked into the Saviour's face. That was enough. He looked into his own heart. That was enough. One prayer of faith and then eternal Paradise. Without even a pocket Testament or baptism. For Christ is able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by Him.

And from the central cross out of the darkness there comes a voice that dispels all darkness and brings life and immortality to light in the Gospel. "It is finished. . . . Father into thy hands. . . ." "For God so loved the world that he gave up His only begotten Son."

"And when the centurion [who had watched the three

crosses for six long hours] saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man."

The three crosses on Calvary are eternally symbolic:

"Three men shared death upon a hill,  
But only one man died;  
The other two—  
A thief and God Himself—  
Made rendezvous.

"Three crosses still  
Are borne up Calvary's hill,  
Where Sin still lifts them high:  
Upon the one, sag broken men  
Who, cursing, die;

"Another holds the praying thief,  
Or those who penitent as he,  
Still find the Christ  
Beside them on the tree."\*

At the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Christ speaks to us so lovingly because the symbols of His death are so vivid. The Cross, as symbol of Christianity on church spire or on church altar, proclaims to the eye what the ear has often heard. The types and shadows of the Old Testament are God's ancient picture book to point to Calvary. The story of the Lamb of God is found not only in Isaiah but in Exodus and Leviticus. The Gospel is in Ezekiel for those whose eyes are opened.

Dora Greenwell meditated on the story of Israel's thirst at the bitter waters of Marah. The waters were made sweet when "*God showed Moses a Tree*" (Ex. 15:25). She saw in it the Tree of Calvary:

"Beneath Thy Cross I stand,  
Jesus, my Saviour, turn and look on me!  
Oh, who are these that, one on either hand,  
Are crucified with Thee?

"The one that turns away  
With sullen, scoffing lip, and one whose eyes

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\* Miriam LeFevre Crouse, in *The Master of Men*. Harper Bros.

Close o'er the words, 'Yet shalt thou be this day  
With me in Paradise.'

"Here would I fain behold  
This twofold mystery, love's battle won,  
Its warfare ended, and its ransom told,  
Its conquest but begun!

I say not to Thee now,  
Come from the Cross and then will I believe;  
Oh, lift me up to Thee, and teach me how  
To love and how to grieve.

"I tracked Thy footsteps long;  
For where Thou wert, there would Thy servant be;  
But now, methought the silence, now the throng,  
Would part me still from Thee.

"I sought Thee 'mid the leaves;  
I found Thee on the dry and blasted tree;  
I saw Thee not until I saw the thieves  
There crucified with Thee!" \*

The true evangelist, like the true artist, uses his imagination when he desires to depict vividly what he sees. Spurgeon, for example, found the message of the Cross in every book of the Bible. Rendel Harris found the whole gospel in his remarkable devotional book, *Aaron's Breastplate*, while Ruskin's meditation on the death of Aaron in *Modern Painters* (Volume IV chapter XX) is a perfect example of Ruskin as evangelist. If we could preach like that!

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\* Jane Stoddart, *The Old Testament in Life and Literature*, p. 101. Hodder & Stoughton, London.



## VI

### THE GOSPEL OF THE RESURRECTION

SUCH a gospel is needed for the un-Christian world of our day and where men still hearken to prophets of neo-paganism. Algernon C. Swinburne, for example, wrote:

“From too much hope of living,  
From hope and fear set free,  
We thank with brief thanksgiving  
Whatever gods may be  
That no life lives for ever,  
That dead men rise up never,  
That even the weariest river  
Winds somewhere safe to sea.”

More recently, Logan Pearsall Smith, an eminent literary critic, in his autobiography, *Unforgotten Years*, echoes the same sentiment:

“We are indeed leaves that perish, as Homer told us long ago. I do not find that a fate to be regretted; to ask for a greater length of years would be to solicit the almost certainty of many miseries; and for any other form of being I feel no longing. All that I have read about what happens in a future existence makes the life beyond the grave seem an uncomfortable adventure. I have no desire for eternal bliss.” \*

We all remember the closing paragraph of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. “Oh, vanity of vanity, all is vanity. Which of us is happy in this world, which of us is satisfied? Come, children, let us shut up the box of puppets for our play is

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\* Quoted by Professor Norman V. Hope in *The Expository Times*, April, 1943.

played out." That is the same religion as Omar Khayyam's, the Persian agnostic:

" 'Tis all a chequer-board of nights and days,  
Where destiny with man for pieces plays.  
Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,  
And, one by one, back in the closet lays."

Feuerbach (1804-1872) said, "*Man ist was man isst*" ("we are what we eat"). And his philosophy had distinct influence on Nietzsche, Marx, and others of our day. For Marx, as for Feuerbach, there exists no God. Man is not essentially distinct from the brute. Thinking is only a chemical process. Death is the end of all.

There is only one answer to such paganism of the Orient and of the Occident. It is the Gospel of the Resurrection. Christ is risen and life for all men has taken on a new aspect—that of eternity!

Paul's evangel was Christ crucified. He used "the preaching of the Cross" as synonymous for Christianity's message to the world (I Cor. 1:18). But Paul always linked the Resurrection to the Crucifixion (I Cor. 15:3-4). In this great chapter he states, If Christ be not raised your faith is in vain; if Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God (vs. 13-15). The Resurrection of Christ confirms all He was and did and suffered for us on the Cross, sealing it with God's approval and confirming it by the greatest miracle of history.

A belief in the immortality of the soul was the highest attainment of pagan philosophy. Belief in the Resurrection of Christ and in our own resurrection, because of Christ, is the ABC of Christianity. Apart from the good news of the Resurrection, there would have been no Apostolic band and no Christian Church. Nor will it do for us to follow Liberalism and substitute a sort of "spiritual resurrection" for the Resurrection of Christ and the believer as described in the New Testament and affirmed in the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds of Christendom. By preaching the Resurrection we

refer to a historic fact not a cunningly devised fable. We believe in Christ's Resurrection on the authority of Christ Himself "by many infallible proofs for forty days" and by the command He gave His apostles after He arose from the dead. As Dorothy Sayers puts it in her plea for more dogmatic preaching:

"Between Humanism and Christianity and between Paganism and Theism there is no distinction whatever, except a distinction of dogma. That you cannot have Christian principles without Christ is becoming increasingly clear, because their validity as principles depends on Christ's authority."

Anti-supernatural Humanism robs us not only of the Virgin birth and of the essential deity of our Saviour, but of the power of His Resurrection as well. When men deny the Resurrection they can only preach Jesus of Nazareth as the great martyr who died a disappointed man and lives on only in the hearts of His followers.

Not so the Apostle Paul. "Now is Christ risen from the dead." Christ was his constant companion in the spirit. He saw Him after His Resurrection in glory. "Have I not seen the Lord Jesus Christ?" The Pauline Christology of Ephesians and Colossians would have been impossible, not to say absurd, if Paul had not believed that Christ Jesus arose from the tomb, ascended in His glorified body, and ever lives in heaven to be our Intercessor and Redeemer. The fifteenth chapter of Corinthians is not only a clear dogmatic assertion of the fact of the Resurrection. It is the very center and pivot of Christianity—without it Christians are of all men most miserable. But it is even more than this. It is the hallelujah chorus of the victorious life, the triumphant boast of an apostle, a page from his diary wet with tears, yet full of joy unspeakable and an indiscourageable hope. Think of words like these and read between the lines as you read:

"I am the least of the apostles. . . . I persecuted the church of God . . . five hundred brethren, of whom some have fallen asleep. . . . If in this life only. . . . I die daily. . . . This corruptible shall put on incorruption. . . . We shall bear the image of the heavenly.

. . . Death is swallowed up in victory. . . . Be ye therefore steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Paul does not preach the immortality of Christ's soul or our own immortality. If he had done that he would have been Plato's disciple not Christ's apostle. Baron Von Hügel points out that

"Plato at his best remains the first and last of the Greco-Roman non-Christian souls in his thirst and search after eternal life, uniting the ideas of beauty, truth, goodness and love as proof that life does not end at death. But Plato's love was *Eros*, not *Agape*, as we learn from Nygren's three volumes. Aristotle also had a kind of belief in immortality, for he stated: 'Insofar as we can we must live the immortal life and do our utmost to live according to the highest principles within us.'"\*

To many of the writers of the Old Testament the present life is only the portico of man's eternal destiny beyond the grave. Is it not true that the best and noblest men in all the non-Christian world through all the centuries have experienced a hope in the immortality of the soul and the certainty of reward or punishment in the life beyond? It is through this very fear of life beyond death that the soul is in bondage. And for such a world of fear Christ "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel."

Paul's missionary messages and passion were due to his sense of eternal values through the Resurrection. "Our light afflictions are but for a moment." . . . Soon there will be "the eternal weight of glory." The things that are seen are only temporal. Paul saw the invisible glory of the world to come. He heard the inaudible voices. He laid hold of the intangible realities. His passion for proclaiming the message of redemption was due to his sense of eternal values. He reasoned before Felix of judgment to come, till Felix trembled.

Dr. Deismann, the great New Testament scholar, believed that "for the past thirty years the discernment of the

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\* *Eternal Life*, pp. 35, 41.

eschatological character of the Gospel of Jesus has more and more come to the front in international Christian theology. I regard this as one of the greatest steps forward that theological inquiry has ever achieved. We today must lay the strongest possible stress upon the eschatological character of that Gospel which it is the practical business of the Church to proclaim, namely, that we must daily focus our minds upon the fact that the Kingdom of God is near, that God with His unconditional sovereignty comes through judgment and redemption, and that we have to prepare ourselves inwardly for the *Maran-atha*—the Lord cometh.”

Whether our view of Christ's return to judgment be pre-millennial or postmillennial, these words of the great German scholar are worthy of meditation. Where men deny the reality of Christ's Resurrection and His Ascension they do not, of course, believe in His visible and bodily return to this earth. But that is the clear teaching of the New Testament. It is not remarkable therefore that those who look eagerly for Christ's second advent are busy to complete the task of evangelism. “This gospel of the kingdom must *first* be preached in all the world for a witness.” The law of priority always produces a crisis.

There is no stronger incentive to immediate evangelism than belief in the imminence of Christ's return.

In a day when the pillars of Western civilization are crumbling, when the foundations of society seem tottering and when sword and famine and pestilence walk abroad, we must preach a message that is other-worldly or we have no message at all. In the words of Adolf Harnack, today's evangelism must be “in the midst of time, for eternity by the strength and under the eye of God.” The older generation of evangelists were not ashamed of a gospel that dealt with eternal issues. They preached a message that bridged death and revealed eternal glory or eternal woe.

Evangelism that preaches the Resurrection goes far beyond social reformation or new-world programs and political blue-prints. We can no longer go to the East to share

the social and cultural benefits of the West, for the whole of so-called Christian culture stands at a period of terrible crisis, every section of it under God's judgment. We are compelled by the present situation "to look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." On the walls of a missionary guest room in Sibolga, Sumatra I found these words:

"Light of Eternity, light divine,  
Into my darkness shine,  
That the small may appear small  
And the great, greatest of all—  
O light of Eternity shine."

In the harbor I could hear the noise of great merchant ships loading tin, tobacco, and oil; imperialism and commercialism dominated with greed for gain and grasping of treasure. But the Rhenish missionaries saw, beyond the visible, a greater treasure of God in human hearts, where the light of Eternity had already dispelled the darkness of sin. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The Resurrection of Christ is the living hope for a despairing world. It tells of the dawn of an eternal morning after our night of gloom. As Jesus said to John on lonely Patmos: "Fear not, I am he that liveth and was dead and behold I am alive forevermore." Because He lives we shall live also. The Cross cannot be defeated, because its apparent defeat was followed by the victory of Easter morning.

We are not ambassadors for a dead hero, the Man of Galilee, but of Him "who was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead," to whom "all power is given in heaven and on earth," and "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."

We are not ashamed of such a gospel now. He will not be ashamed of us on that day when the secrets of all hearts are revealed and we shall see His face. "Then they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and

they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

When the Gospel of the Resurrection lays hold of our minds and hearts, we begin to see the meaning of Barth's penetrating words:

"Eternity is not the prolongation of time. Eternity is the Quite-other, the Unknown which in Jesus Christ has broken into our world. According to this conception eternity is as it were the hidden, the other side of time. Time is empty impoverished eternity. Eternity is time that is filled full. There comes a year, there comes an hour when things grow earnest, when some crisis comes. That means eternity is flooding into time, as a mountain freshet after storm floods the dry bed of a stream. Therefore, the fullness of time is the crisis for man and God."

And death always opens the door to the flood of the eternal. Death is always a crisis. Because *that* time is always at hand, we must repent and believe the Gospel. Having done that, and only then, can we preach the Gospel of the Resurrection.

Above all, we need to give that message the place and emphasis it has in the New Testament. The word *resurrection* does not occur in the Old Testament. In the New Testament it is found forty times. Christ witnessed to the general resurrection in His dispute with the Sadducees (Matt. 22:23). He spoke of those who would receive recompense at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14). He proclaimed himself to be the Resurrection and the life (John 11:25). He taught the general resurrection in His words to Martha at the grave of Lazarus, before He gave proof of its possibility by raising Lazarus (John 11:44). And repeatedly He foretold His own death and Resurrection (Matt. 20:19; Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Luke 18:33; 24:7). The Apostles made the death and resurrection of Christ their central theme, from the day of Pentecost. They chose a successor to Judas to be a witness of Christ's Resurrection. They preached *the Gospel of the Resurrection* as unique and

sufficient (Acts 2:31; 4:2; 4:33; 17:18; 17:32; 23:6; 24:15; 24:21). Paul's central theme in his Epistles is the risen Christ, and Peter tells us that our Christian life is full of hope "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and full of glory" (I Peter 1:3; 3:21).

The Resurrection of Christ was the birthday of the Church and so the first day of the week became sacred. On it the Gospel of the Resurrection is the one most appropriate theme for the preacher the whole year round. Perhaps present-day evangelism fails in this respect most of all.

It is not our passion or our technique that is at fault but the subject of our message. "With great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 4:33). Dr. William Bancroft Hill, in noting that so many preachers have slender audiences and that their sermons lack power, asks:

"May not one explanation be that the risen Christ is seldom their theme? Not only is there an inclination to enter into unsuccessful rivalry with newspaper editorials or current topics: but when Jesus is presented, His earthly words or deeds are usually the topic. In the last half century we have centered thought and study as never before upon the life of Jesus during His public ministry; and this has caused the glory and power of the risen Christ to fade from our view. If we long and pray today for a second Pentecost, can we better prepare for its coming than by turning again to the risen Christ, and proclaiming Him to the world as eagerly and confidently as the apostles did on the first Pentecostal day?" \*

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\* *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, p. 158.



## VII

### THE BASIS AND MOTIVE FOR EVANGELISM

ALTHOUGH the Gospel of John does not contain the *word* evangel or evangelize, the idea of the world-wide mission of our Saviour and His love for the lost is found in nearly every chapter. It is the universal Gospel of Him who is the Light of the world, the Bread of life, the only Way, the only Truth, the only Life of humanity. Especially in the chapter of the Good Shepherd is this universal redeeming love of Christ manifested.

On the black marble slab in Westminster Abbey which marks the grave of David Livingstone is this text: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd—John 10:16."

No text could have been selected more appropriate to the memory of the great missionary who laid down his life for Africa. And in these words of our Lord we have the basis, the motive, the promise, and the goal of world-wide evangelism: "I have"; "I must"; "they shall"; and there "shall be one fold." Here is a fourfold imperative that arrests attention and is worthy of meditation. After Christ had spoken of Himself as the good Shepherd (in verse 14) He speaks of laying down His life for the sheep and, immediately after, because His death suggests the wide extent of its value and result, He exclaims, "Other sheep I have. . . ."

Rabbi Duncan remarks, "They are, of course, the Gentile nations—not other beings than men. The latter notion

implies a vast misunderstanding of the ends and destinies of this creation as well as of the Incarnation and death of the Son of God." All speculations of more worlds than ours are vague. The words refer to the universal mission of Christ and His right over humanity as Creator and Redeemer.

He was not only the Shepherd of Israel but the Shepherd of all humanity. Milton must have had John 10:10 in mind when he wrote of the arch thief in Eden:

“ . . . As when a prowling wolf  
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey  
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,  
In hurdled cotes amid the fields secure  
Leaps o’er the fence with ease into the fold,  
So clomb this first grand thief into God’s fold.”

In Ezekiel’s great chapter on the hireling shepherds of Israel we have the clear promise of the coming of the Messiah as the Good Shepherd.

“For thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold I myself, even I, will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.” The entire thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel interprets the tenth of John.

The universal mission of the Messiah is not strange to the Old Testament. We have it in the Messianic Psalms (2, 67, 72), and finally it becomes the theme of Isaiah and the other prophets.

Christ’s universal rule and universal triumph were part of the whole Messianic conception, yet in direct contrast to the Pharisaism of those to whom Christ was speaking, who had no dealings even with Samaritans. Here we have the Great Commission illustrated in the parable of the Good Shepherd.

I. *The Basis of the World Mission of the Church, “other*

sheep I have." Humanity is God's possession by His work of creation—and redemption (John 3:16). His eternal redemptive purpose was to make Israel the channel for a world-wide mission of salvation. If we believe the solidarity of the race, then all are Christ's lost sheep. "My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my sheep were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and there was none that did search or seek after them" (Ezekiel 34:6).

The genealogy of every man goes back to Luke 3:38: "The son of Adam which was the Son of God."

The Universal Fatherhood of God does not deny election or adoption but is at the basis of both. Here we have the Universality of the Gospel.

"And," said Jesus with simplicity, using the simplest conjunction that indicates that this thought is to be added to what has already been said, and is regarded as equally true, "other sheep I have which are not of this fold." Of two words that might have been used in the Greek for "other," the one used here denotes a numerical distinction rather than a qualitative difference. These "others" were to be distinguished as individuals from "these" who belong to "this fold," but the difference was a numerical distinction only. There was no difference of a secondary nature as though they were of a different sort or species.

God hath made of one blood all races and tribes and peoples. And all those "chosen in him before the foundation of the world," these are His sheep.

They have claim on the Fatherhood of God. As Malachi says, "Have we not all one Father?" They bear the image of God. Whose is the image and superscription on Hottentot and Eskimo, on Chinese coolies or Brahmin priests, on the youth of Harlem or of Harvard?

There is no super-race. All of humanity, sinful and fallen, belongs to the Good Shepherd. Frederic W. Faber wrote his great hymn on "the wideness of God's mercy like the wideness of the sea" with the thought of Christ as Shepherd. The first stanza is generally omitted. But it

speaks of God as the kindest shepherd whose fondness goes far out beyond our dreams, and then continues:

“For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.”

When we preach the Gospel we have no right to narrow its application by false limits of our own.

The Evangel is for all men. The great commission is world-wide in its scope. Nothing human can be alien to the Gospel. He died for all, who died for us. He hateth nothing that He hath made.

II. *The Motive of the World Mission* is also Christ—“I must bring.” The Greek text is emphatic. It is not a physical but a moral necessity (Cf. John 4:3).

The full idea of this is brought out in the verb which is translated “I must.” It is an impersonal form which alone remains to express that sort of moral necessity which men everywhere felt as impelling them to an action as though the necessity of the action arose in the decree of God by which all unalterable laws of the universe are governed, as when we express it by the phrase, “It is necessary,” thus recognizing a law outside of ourselves to which we must be obedient. The “moral necessity” which Jesus felt concerning the “sheep of both folds” was binding upon Him as the decrees of God which govern the universe, and which He realizes relate to the salvation of the world through His own death and His shepherding care. Jesus acknowledges His recognition of those “others,” that they also belong to “one flock,” and of the moral obligation resting upon Him as the Shepherd to “bring them” into the “fold.”

His *must* becomes our *ought*. This is the real motive of evangelism. We have it in Paul's, “The love of Christ constraineth me” and “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.”

In the Gospels we have the great Shepherd seeking not only for “the lost sheep of the house of Israel”—but Zac-

cheus, because "this also is a son of Abraham." So also the Syro-Phœnician woman and the woman of Samaria.

"Lovest thou me?" He said to Peter; then, "Feed my sheep."

In the parable of the sheep that was lost (Luke's Gospel) and in this whole chapter we have a portrait of the Good Shepherd, the Son of David who, like David, lays down His life for the sheep.

Zinzendorf's one passion and David Livingstone's long journeys were based on the same sacrificial idea.

Who can read of Hudson Taylor's program for all China without realizing that it too had the Shepherd motive. "Seeing the multitudes . . . as sheep having no shepherd."

When Jesus spoke these words, "other sheep," then, as at the Lord's Supper and in his high-priestly prayer, He sees the farthest horizon. "My blood shed for you *and for many.*" "Neither pray I for these alone but for *them also which shall believe* on me through their word."

The Gospel message today everywhere meets with response. "A hireling will they not follow," but "my sheep hear my voice." There is abundant proof for nineteen centuries and in every land.

As Adoniram Judson said from his prison in Burma, "The prospects are as bright as the promises of God." Here is a great promise.

"They shall hear my voice." He came unto his own sheep and they heard him not—everyone turned to his own way. He tried to gather the lambs. "How often . . . but ye would not." Now Christ looks to the future. He foresaw what we in our day experience, the triumphs of the Gospel wherever it is proclaimed in all the world.

Statistics continue to show the actual increase of the Christian Church in nearly every land. Thousands of out-castes are baptized in India every month. There are more Christians now in Korea than there were in the whole Roman Empire at the close of the Apostolic Age. In the Dutch East Indies there are over a million baptized Christians, most of whom have passed from paganism to Christ

in a half century. If, as Livingstone said, "the end of the geographical feat is the beginning of the missionary enterprise," then we can now begin to preach the Gospel in every part of the world. All continents and islands are discovered and made our neighbor. The whole world is a harvest field. In many places "the plowman overtakes the reaper and the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed." There is literally what Dr. John R. Mott calls "a synchronizing of crises." The printing press and the radio are used to broadcast the message. We must expect results commensurate with the pent-up prayers and sacrifice and blood and tears of the past. The penetration of Christian ideas and ideals in the life and literature of the Jews and Mohammedans today is phenomenal. Witness the life of Jesus by Rabbi Klausner and the two recent books by Sholem Asch, *The Nazarene* and *The Apostle*. Christ, who was cast out of the ghetto in past centuries as a bastard, is now the human ideal of modern Jew in the synogogue pulpit!

Albert Einstein and Rabbi Wise and Franz Werfel vie with one another in their high tribute to Jesus of Nazareth.

The *Jewish Daily Forward*, largest circulation Yiddish paper in New York, a Socialist organ of decades of militant atheism, is now selling the Old Testament as a prize for its working class readers. After years and years of savage attacks upon anything remotely connected with religious faith and tradition, this paper, we learn, is now printing research articles by Hebrew scholars to prove the historicity and authenticity of the Bible narratives, and goes to the length of branding most of the "higher critics" as a pack of camouflaged anti-Semites.

Similar change in the attitude toward Christ and the Bible can be noted in the Moslem world. And the ever-increasing sale of the Scriptures, even in this chaotic day, is a miracle of God's power.

The British and Foreign Bible Society reports:

"The foundations of the Society were laid in time of war, and its fabric was reared amid storms that threatened the annihila-

tion of liberty in Europe, as well as the destruction of religion itself. Now that Europe is again involved in war, with even more serious threats to freedom and faith, it is the Society's duty to redouble its efforts to place the Word of God in the hands of men."

This is no time for a slump in missions. The tide of the Gospel is at the flood, not at the ebb. Missionary giving is on the increase in Britain and the Netherlands, in spite of the terrible scourge they have suffered through the war.

III. These words concerning the "other sheep" also point to the goal of all evangelism. "There shall be one flock and one shepherd," said the Saviour.

No one could gaze farther into the future than our Lord Jesus Christ. What the seers and prophets saw dimly, he saw already accomplished. We talk about church union and ecumenic Christianity. Christ planned it and promised its realization in this brief statement.

In Him there would finally be a restoration of the unity of the race. As in Adam all died, so in Christ should all be made alive. In His Kingdom there would be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, barbarian nor Scythian—but a great innumerable multitude in white robes.

"One flock" (not one fold); there may be many sheep-folds, but it is one flock, because all know the voice of one Shepherd. Many are the folds in Europe, Asia, Africa, America. But all are one flock in Him. This is the true *unitas fratrum*.

And "one Shepherd." Listen to Ezekiel: "For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered . . . and I will set up one Shepherd over them" (Ezek. 34:11-23).

"Other sheep I have. . . . Them also I must bring." Such is the cry we can hear above the howling of the tempest throughout the world today. Who will hear His voice and catch the vision and the spirit of the Great Shepherd.

Because the lost ones are His sheep and He has made us His under-shepherds and not hirelings, we must bring them back.

“Although the road be rough and steep,  
I go to the desert to find my sheep.”

The lost sheep, for whom no one cares, except those who have the heart of the Shepherd—and hear the cry of the sheep.

“There is nothing finer nor more pathetic to me than the way in which missionaries unlearn the love of the old home and die to their native land [writes Forsyth in *Church and State*]. They wed their hearts to the people they have served and won; so that they cannot rest at home, but must return to lay their bones where they spent their hearts for Christ. How vulgar the common patriotisms seem beside this inverted home-sickness, this passion of a kingdom which has no frontiers and no favored race, the passion of a homeless Christ!”

James Gilmour in Mongolia, David Livingstone in Central Africa, Grenfell on the Congo, Keith Falconer in Arabia, Dr. Rijnhart and Annie Taylor in Tibet, Chalmers in New Guinea, Morrison in China, Henry Martyn in Persia, and many others like them, had this “inverted home-sickness,” this passion to call that country their home which was most in need of the Gospel. In this passion all other passions died; before this vision all other visions faded; this call drowned all other voices. They were the pioneers of the Kingdom, the forelopers of God, eager to cross the borders and discover the sheep that were lost. The world needs such evangelists today.

The days of the martyrs have come back. We hear their voices from German concentration camps, from Chinese exiles, from Christian refugees, from Japanese and Korean Christians who refuse to bow before the golden image of Shinto. This is no time for self-indulgence. While they crucify our Lord afresh and put Him to open shame we dare



not stand with Peter and warm ourselves against the cold.  
“Lovest thou me? . . . Feed my sheep.”

“Are you sheltered, curled up and content  
By the world’s warm fire?  
Then I say your soul is in danger!  
The Sons of the light, they are down with God in the mire  
God in the manger.”

The human family was never so large as it is today—two billion, two hundred million. The population of Japan alone increases by 800,000 annually. That of India 50 million in one decade!

There are a score of countries and areas without a single missionary: Tibet, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Somali-land, Lybia and Tripoli are outstanding examples. The need of these lands is as great and pathetic as *that of Central Africa* before Livingstone crossed the Zambezi. They are still living in B.C. while we write 1944 A.D.—“Other sheep I have.”

## VIII

### FAITH IN THE SOIL

THE metaphor of seed and sower, of soil and harvest, occurs again and again in the Scriptures. Job speaks of those that sow wickedness (4:8). The Psalms tell of "sowing in tears and reaping in joy." Isaiah calls them blessed "who sow beside all waters." Our Saviour takes up the parable of the sower and interprets it for all time (Matt. 13:3-19). He also tells of the tares and the wheat. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man," and "the enemy that sowed the evil seed" is the devil. While in Paul's Epistles we find the same figure of speech (I Cor. 15:36-43; II Cor. 9:6-10; Gal. 6:7-8).

It is in Mark's Gospel that we find a unique, short parable which seems to inculcate faith in the soil as well as in the seed and in the Lord of the harvest. We read that Jesus said:

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. For the earth beareth fruit of herself first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:26-29).

The parable seems to be an interpretation of the glorious promise given to Isaiah: "For as the earth bringeth forth its bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord Jehovah will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (61:11).

The true evangelist must have faith in God, faith in his message of life, but also faith in those to whom he carries the message. Faith in the Lord of the harvest, faith in the good seed, but also faith in the soil.

“So is the kingdom of God”—no other parable has such a sharp introduction. The Kingdom of God means His sovereignty in each of three realms. First, the human heart, that strange microcosm, “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,” but also made in God’s image and without rest or peace till it finds Him. It may also refer to the vast world of men—the kingdoms of this world, in which and instead of which God’s kingdom is to be established. Or, finally, it may refer to the Kingdom in the world to come—the eschatological aspect of some of Christ’s parables. Which is it here? The Kingdom of grace, or power, or glory? Undoubtedly the first. The parable in Mark deals with the good seed falling in an honest heart. The Kingdom of God in the individual soul. We may say that the parable is Christ’s interpretation of the great promise in the 126th Psalm; “He that goeth forth with weeping, bearing the seed-basket shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing the sheaves.” As the parable of the tares teaches forbearance, this parable teaches patience in sowing and faith in the soil. The love that will not let men go and the patience of unanswered prayer—these are two indispensable factors in evangelism.

Now we may have faith in the soil for two great reasons, and for the same two reasons have faith in the human heart. God created the soil and God made the heart of man. The soil acts on the seed as well as the seed acts on the soil. The seed of the Word falls into the human heart, which God has made for that seed.

Jonathan Edwards’ doctrine of Original Sin and his terrible sermon on “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” did not destroy his faith in human nature or his belief in common grace. He loved men and was friendly to little children. But let us go back to the parable.

God made the soil! By what marvelous process of age-

long attrition did He make Nile mud or Jersey loam? At first sight, few natural materials appear to be of less interest than the soil, yet its importance is manifest on the slightest reflection. From it springs all food material for man and beast. Everything goes back to the soil. From it, directly or indirectly, come all food materials needed by man and beast. The inorganic materials within it supply some of the chief substances utilized by plants for their development and growth, and from plants animals obtain much of their sustenance. There are bacteria in the soil. Whereas formerly the soil used to be looked upon solely as dead, inert material, containing certain chemical substances which serve as food constituents of the crops grown upon it, it is now known to be a place of habitation for myriads of minute, living organisms upon whose activity much of its fertility depends. The bacteria are responsible for many important chemical processes in the seed which make the soil a source of life. The soil constituents are available and adapted to the nutrition of crops because the soil is not dead. "One cubic centimeter of soil taken within a foot or so from the surface contains from 1½ to 2 millions of bacteria of many different kinds, as well as large numbers of fungi" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

In like strange manner, every human heart is soil that responds to God's seed or the devil's. Good soil, bad soil, or stony ground. All the residue of previous generations which we call heredity is in that soil. The clay, the lime, the loam are the home of bacteria—the elements and living germs intended by God for contact with the seed.

He hateth nothing that He has made. "He fashioneth their hearts alike." The husbandman is not sent to plow on rocks or sow on iron filings. This is the doctrine of common grace. Of which we also sing:

"Down in the human heart crushed by the Tempter,  
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore.  
Touched by a loving hand, wakened by kindness,  
Cords that are broken shall vibrate once more."

All the great evangelists have been lovers of men—even as Christ loved sinners. Read the lives of Whitefield, Wesley, Moody, or Spurgeon, for illustration of this truth. They believed in common grace, which Dr. Charles Hodge defined in these words:

*“The Bible therefore teaches that the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth, of holiness, and of life in all its forms, is present with every human mind, enforcing truth, restraining from evil, exciting to good, and imparting wisdom or strength, when, where, and in what measure seemeth good. . . . This is what in theology is called common grace.” \**

God’s image in man has been marred but not destroyed by the Fall. Therefore, we believe the field of the human heart lies fallow, is barren, dry, but it is still soil. The providence of God appeals to every heart. His voice is heard in nature and in man’s conscience. God’s particular providence extends not to the seed and the sower only, but to the soil itself. His is the seed—but His also is the soil. For He who put life into the seed prepared the soil for its germination. He sends His rain upon the just and the unjust. He makes the Sun of Righteousness, like the sun of heaven, to shine upon the evil and the good. Yes, there is life in the Soil!

“Not in entire forgetfulness, . . . but trailing clouds of glory do we come” into the world of sin and darkness. Look into the eyes of a babe, or the eyes of a savage or the eyes of even a brutal man long enough and you will see traces of God’s image. This is the doctrine of common grace. “As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, so shall my Word be.” Note also that we may have faith in the soil because, as in nature, so here the soil acts on the seed as surely as the seed on the soil. It is a twofold miracle. We know not how. No farmer, no biologist, no preacher can explain it. So is every one that is born of God. The seed is the Word. It holds the life-giving germ—it alone. God is the sole source of life and salvation! Yet the Bible also

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\* *Systematic Theology*. Vol. II: p. 667.

teaches that the heart receives the word by faith, lays hold of it—penetrates beyond its outer shell to the very kernel of Life and Truth. And this process takes place in the dark. Who can explain it, whether in the soil or in the human heart? First, there is the germ of faith, then the blade of hope, and then the full ear of love. The sower scatters the seed—God does the rest and does it in His own way. The sower sows in faith—faith that the seed is God's own living word and will be fructified by the soil. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "Now He that giveth seed to the sower," said Paul, "and bread to the eater, multiply your seed sown." "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly. He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." "Give and it shall be given unto you good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over." If the sower has no faith in the soil he will sow grudgingly and reap accordingly. The secret of personal evangelism is to see in every one you meet a plot of soil for the good seed of the Gospel. Keep on sowing.

We must also beware of the folly of digging up seed once sown to see if it has sprouted. There are such foolish husbandmen and such foolish evangelists. They carry microscopes, are hungry for statistics, appoint fact-finding committees, engage in endless surveys. The only survey that is always in order is that of "the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died." That survey is never complete.

The parable also teaches the sin of spiritual anxiety and irritable impatience. We must "sleep and rise night and day," for we can trust God to care for the seed in the soil. Only the Holy Spirit can "teach us the patience of unanswered prayer" in the work of evangelism.

For note the most beautiful word in this parable of our Lord, "the earth bringeth forth *automatically*." This word, in the Greek, so singular, occurs only once elsewhere in the entire New Testament. It is used here of the seed bursting from the soil of its own accord, and in Acts 12:10 of the iron gates which opened for Peter automatically. The

same word is used by classic authors to describe the earth's spontaneous and luxurious harvest in the golden age!

"First the blade, then the ear and then the full corn in the ear." The process of germination and growth brooks no interferences. The psychology of the soul is more, far more, difficult to understand than the chemistry of soil or the process of the germination of seed. Conversion is distinguished from regeneration and is a process-not always instantaneous. How many factors enter into it? When was Saul converted? Read your New Testament. Was it when Stephen prayed? Or when he cast his lot? Or on the road to Damascus? Or when the scales fell from his eyes, and Ananias spoke to him? When did Peter become a true follower of Christ? Was it when he forsook his nets? Or at Cæsarea Philippi, where he made his confession? Or at the Cross? Or when he was restored by Christ's threefold question, "Lovest thou me?"

The conversion of St. Augustine was a typical case of the seed struggling in the soil. Papini in his biography says:

"Augustine's spirit was like a March day, when winter with its rigors is about to depart, and spring has not yet decided to set Nature free with her all-conquering smile; when on one and the same day we may have the mists of October, the sunshine of May, the gales of January, and the rains of November, and already along the banks and in the naked hedgerows a few violets, half hidden by their wet leaves, push up their purple heads from beneath their hoods of green."

One great merit of Papini's work is the clear way in which the different stages of Augustine's spiritual pilgrimage have been traced from the Christianity of his childhood (Monica signed him at his birth with the cross) to Manichæism, from Manichæism to skepticism, from skepticism to Neo-Platonism, and from Neo-Platonism to Christian Catholicism. But underneath it all runs the story of the divided self and the struggle for reconciliation and peace. Monica, his mother, had sown the seed, and she kept on praying because she trusted God and the soil. You can never nag children into

becoming Christians nor argue them into the kingdom. We must learn to trust the heavenly Father. The Covenant of God is sure—"They shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels." Learn to labor and to wait. The husbandman has long patience.

The coming of the Kingdom is like a process of nature. The Divine method is by the seed of the Word in human soil. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Missions are not the mechanical manipulation of human forces or organizations. And therefore no living church can ever be reduced to statistical tables. There are dynamic forces in every humble heart and in every obscure faithful sower of the seed of which only God knows. The harvest is not the end of the annual report, but the end of the World. The reapers are not the missionaries, the pastors, the Sunday-school teachers—but the angels. There is great spiritual truth in the poem by E. Merrill Root called, "The Prayer of the Seed":

"I grow (Thy will be done)!  
From earth's oblivion  
Toward lightning and the sun.  
But, oh, since Thou didst share  
The world that I must bear,  
Hear my dark prayer!

"Birth is a miracle—  
And, therefore, terrible—  
Rememb'ring Calvary,  
Pity my agony!

"Dark, dark, this callous mould  
Covers my heart's deep gold.  
Strengthen me, shut alone  
With earth, and worm, and stone!  
Confirm my dream: the fair  
Leaves that shall find the air,  
The golden grain to be  
Bread of Eternity!

"O answer me—and bring  
The heartbreak of the Spring!"



## IX

### CLAY IN THE HANDS OF CHRIST

FOR many years one might see on the Kasr-al-Nil bridge that leads from the great city of Cairo to Gezira a blind man sitting by the wayside. He read out loud from a large Arabic Gospel in Braille to all who passed by. Amid flies and heat and dust, despite the noise of traffic, he gave his testimony to the grace of God. Often he reminded me of the story of the man born blind told in John's Gospel, for that chapter was a favorite one to him. That ninth chapter is, even from a literary viewpoint, an exquisite story, so real to life, so artistic in its presentation, so remarkable for its touch of humor and sarcasm and, most of all, for its climax—"One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

The detail, the repetitions and reiterations, as the Pharisees disputed, are like testimony attested before a court. There is no doubt of the sincerity of the witnesses. The portrayal of each of the persons in the scene is like a painting. We can see the blind man, his parents, the listening crowd, the scribes and Jesus in the midst.

But chiefly we note what Archbishop Temple speaks of in his commentary, that this miracle is symbolical. "The man blind from birth is every man. By nature we are blind until our eyes are opened by Christ, the Light of the world. . . . We are blind from birth and pay no heed till He anoints our eyes."\* Everything in the story is symbolical and typical, because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today. The evangelist himself points to the symbolism (v. 6), "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which means Sent)." Jesus, so inter-

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\* *Readings in St. John's Gospel*. Vol. I, p. 154.

prets Dr. Temple, "told the man to wash in the Pool of Apostleship; and when he did this, he saw. The Father sent the Son; the Son sent His disciples. This Apostolic mission is the only source from which the darkness of the world can win light and sight." Yes, Christ is the true pool of Siloam—the inexhaustible fountain of real apostolic power. The miracle was real and yet typical. He opened the eyes of one born blind then; and does it now. He did it on the Sabbath day, and that is His special day still for opening the eyes of the blind. He used temple clay made from dust and saliva, following the current and, doubtless, well-founded belief that saliva has curative properties. The deed, the day, the method, and the result are beautifully symbolic of what takes place when Christ opens the eyes of those now born spiritually blind.

The great day of Christ's opportunity to display His power then was, and now is, the Sabbath. It is the Lord's Day of Him who is the potentate of time, and He called it holy. The synagogue was His place of rendezvous with the multitudes. He went there, "as was his custom," we read. The Sabbath of the Old and New Testaments is the oldest religious institution (Gen. 1; Exodus 20). On that day the Jews came to meet God and hear His Law. On such a day Christ healed the man with the withered hand, the woman bowed down with infirmity, the man with dropsy, and the impotent man carried by his companions. How frequently the Gospels speak of His healing and teaching on the Sabbath. The synagogues at Nazareth and at Capernaum became spiritual clinics. After Christ's Resurrection He met His disciples repeatedly on the first day of the week. It began to be called the Lord's day (Rev. 1:10) and Paul refers to it as sacred for worship and offerings (I Cor. 16:2).

We ought to be thrilled and awed with a great expectancy every Sunday morning and evening because

"As o'er each continent and island  
The dawn brings on another day,  
The voice of prayer is never silent  
Nor dies the strain of praise away."

How many millions throng the sanctuaries of Christendom every Sabbath of the year! What vast audiences in every country of the globe! What a multitude it is that profess and call themselves Christians—more than six hundred millions! They need the touch of Christ's healing robe; they seek to hear His voice; their hearts hunger and thirst for something. Woe be to us if, seeing these multitudes, we are not moved with compassion. To look into the faces of a small or a large gathering of folk who come to hear the Gospel and not be greatly humbled and stirred by the responsibility of being God's messenger in the pulpit is to be unfit for such a holy office. "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach . . . the unsearchable riches of Christ." So Paul felt. And the poet interprets his feeling for us:

"Then with a rush the intolerable craving  
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call,—  
Oh to save these! to perish for their saving,  
Die for their life, be offered for them all."

Nor has the method of Christ's activity changed. He used temple clay. He uses human weakness. Paul himself speaks of the sharp contrast between the weakness of men and the power of God in the work of evangelism (I Cor. 2:1-5). This idea is also latent in the parable.

We read: "I am the light of the world." When he had thus spoken he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. . . . He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing" (John 9:5, 7). Tacitus relates how the common people in Alexandria importuned Emperor Vespasian to heal the blind by his saliva (History IV:81). And Pliny prescribes "continual anointing each morning with fasting saliva for inflammation of the eye." Jesus used the popular method to teach a higher truth, and even as the touch of His robe, so this contact with His person had miraculous power. Christ stoops to our needs and to our minds. Every word of His is a wonder and every wonder a word. "When the world by

wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." Ministers and ministers' sons are only temple clay, but God has used them, and can use them, to open the eyes of the blind. What higher honor than to rest in His hand, to feel His breath of life and to be moulded for His service! Spurgeon in his metropolitan pulpit, Dwight L. Moody addressing students at Northfield, Paul Kanamori speaking to the Japanese—what were they but clay in the hands of Christ to open the eyes of those born blind. God often chooses the weak and the base and the despised for His display of the miracle power of the Gospel.

"So with the Lord, He takes and He refuses;  
Finds Him ambassadors whom men deny.  
Wise ones nor mighty for His saints He chooses,  
But such as John or Gideon or I."

These words Fred. W. H. Myers puts on Paul's lips in his great poem.

The following beautiful prayer for aid was written by an aged Bible translator, working among savages in the South Seas:

"Lord, grant me grace to bend  
Until my years I end  
Over the poorest tongues beneath the suns;  
Such clay may yet supply  
Gems for some liturgy.  
And God's thoughts clothe themselves  
From lowly lexicons."

That God should use a single tract, like Newman Hall's "Come to Jesus" in scores of languages, to open thousands of eyes that were blind to the glory of our Lord, is also a miracle.

Those who once sat in darkness and the shadow of death in the non-Christian world have reason to thank God for those who first put the Evangel into their tongue or spoke it to listening ears for the first time. Because, even as the *method of Christ, so the result of His work is the restoration*

of sight. Well may each of us ask the question, Who hath sinned, I or my parents, that I should have been born spiritually blind? "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Men are blind to their own sin, blind to the mercy of God, blind to spiritual values, until Christ opens their eyes.

In one of his sermons, G. Studdert Kennedy tells what it means to have spiritual vision by the use of a splendid illustration. He imagines a copy of Browning's poems in the claws of a chimpanzee. The animal has life but no light, has sensation but no intelligence. Then he speaks of the same poems in the hands of a boy of ten who can understand its symbols but not its meaning. This is intellectual perception without spiritual contact. Finally, he puts the poems into the hands of one who knows and understands. There is no sense or meaning in the world as seen by sensual sight nor as seen by mere intellectual perception. We all need spiritual vision.

Through Adam's fall, through heredity and environment, there are sinister forces that blind every soul to that which is best and highest. We may say we are "rich and increased with goods" and yet know not that we are "poor and miserable and blind and naked." We need eye salve. Christ's touch has still its ancient power. He still uses temple clay. The Word spoken in human weakness is still clothed with divine power. Himself smitten with blindness because of the glory of Christ, Paul, when he recovered his sight, told of how "the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not" (II Cor. 4:4), and of how the unbelieving Jews were blind (II Cor. 3:14) to the glorious Gospel of Christ. But God, in Paul's day and now, commands "the light to shine out of darkness" and shine in our hearts "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 4:6).

In a stray poem, Alexander Harvey gives an interpretation of John Bunyan's thoughts in Bedford jail on this miracle of Christ:

"I am more wretched than the man born blind  
 Whose eyes the Lord anointed with the clay  
 And sent off to the pool. The light of day  
 Redeemed him from the dark. Sin did not bind  
 Those eyes. He sat and begged. Had he repined  
 Or cursed his Maker or disdained to pray?  
 Never! As he was bid he walked the way  
 That showed the power of God to all mankind.  
 I cursed long with the mockers. I was quite  
 The child of hell. Christ Jesus set me free  
 And turned the darkness in my soul to light.  
 I'll tell my tale here under lock and key  
 And say with him to whom the Lord gave sight:  
 I know that I was blind but now I see."

So it has always been. When we can say, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see," then we are prepared to witness to the power of Christ, because (like the man born blind) we have *seen* Him and *talked* with Him and *worship* Him (Jno. 9:38). "Now it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes." What are you going to preach about next Sunday? Conversion is a miracle so great that only God can work it. But He does it through those who have experienced the power of the Evangel themselves and therefore can preach only one message—"He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see" (Jno. 9:15). "Since the world began was it not heard that any *man* opened the eyes of one that was born blind" (9:32). Jesus said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

What are you going to preach about next Sunday? Surely in war time, when paganism is on the march, when titanic forces are grappling on the battle fields, we have no time to think of blind beggars sitting in the temple court. Dr. Karl Barth answers that question in an open letter to American Christians:

"If the church really proclaims the Word of God according to Holy Writ, then there can be no question whether it should make the war, its causes, problems, tasks and outlook, the theme of its preaching and whether it should make the obligation to military

service and to buy war bonds and the like, the contents of its exhortation. That is not what Holy Writ demands of the preachers of the Gospel (nor is it what is needed by the people of to-day as in all other ages)—that they proclaim from the pulpit again what is already being sufficiently stated by the newspapers and the propaganda agencies of the state, and far better than the preachers could do it. Unhappy preachers, and above all, unhappy parishes, where that is the case!

What, then, shall they preach? The word of the reconciliation of the world with God through Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:17-21) and nothing else. But this in its full scope! \*

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\* *Christendom*, Vol. VIII, No. 4, p. 447.

## X

### ITINERANT EVANGELISM

(I Cor. 12:21)

THE twelfth chapter of I Corinthians contains one of the greatest statements on the organic unity of the race, of human society, and of the Church, in the whole Bible and in all literature.

The parable of the body and its members is not new in Oriental literature. It was used by Marcenius Agrippa 500 B.C. and by Seneca and Livy. But Paul raises it to the highest level by applying it to Christ as head of the Church and to all the diversified offices and spiritual gifts of believers.

Christ spoke of the unity of the Church as the vine and its branches. Paul repeatedly uses the body as type. In every case, however, Christ is the Head. Each member is indispensable to the other. Unity should make jealousy of others impossible. What would the ear, the hand, the tongue do if other members were not at their service? All the organs are essential to full life. The head over all is Christ (Eph. 4:16, 25; 5:30; Rom. 12:4; I Cor. 12:12-27).

But Paul waxes very bold and (thinking of his own missionary career) always on the march and with no certain dwelling place, he bursts out (as the tears fall on the manuscript): "Neither can the Head say to the feet I have no need of thee." I need Christ but also Christ needs me! Even if He does not need me, He wants me!

For Christ cannot carry His Gospel to the Roman World except on Paul's willing feet!

In the words of St. Theresa:



“Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which He is to look out compassion to the world; yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now.”

It is only Paul who recalls Isaiah's words: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who publish good tidings” (Is. 52:7; Rom. 10:15), and he adds, “And how shall they [run and] preach except they be sent?”

“The Lord taketh no pleasure in the legs of a man,” said the Psalmist; but He must use the feet of his saints to carry the tidings of His Gospel. “As my Father hath sent me, even so do I send you.”

This remarkable statement, therefore, may be used to emphasize the indispensability of itinerant evangelism in the church today.

Without evangelism—personal evangelism—the Church could never have been founded. Without it the Church becomes a static and dying enterprise; without it you cannot conceive of national or foreign missions, for the Head of the Church cannot say to the feet, “I have no need of thee.” After a whole night in prayer Jesus chose the twelve to go out and preach!

Indeed, the everlasting, glorious Gospel remains forever local, parochial, provincial, until it finds willing feet—feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

Not to the lame, the halt, the crippled, came the great marching order of the Master, but to those young, strong fishermen, “who went everywhere preaching the Word.” To those who climbed the steep ascent to heaven in peril, toil and pain, on their own feet as messengers and martyrs of the Truth!

Dwight L. Moody once affirmed that he would rather save one soul from death than have a monument of solid gold. “The monument I want after I am dead and gone,” said he, “is a monument with two legs going about the world, a saved sinner telling about the salvation of Jesus Christ.”

We distinguish here pulpit evangelism, radio evangelism,

and newspaper evangelism from personal itinerant evangelism.

I. ITINERANT EVANGELISM simply means to go everywhere with the Gospel message. Not to wait on the pulpit steps for people who crowd your church. Not to rest at ease in the manse or your home and expect inquirers to find their way. Not to sit still but to run swiftly with the King's message of pardon. To go out into the highways and byways and compel them to come in.

The Resurrection Gospel began its triumphal march when on the first Easter Sunday the women ran to bring the disciples word. The Early Church learned its lesson from the lips and from the life of our Lord. It was a company of believers who "went everywhere preaching the word." Each convert a willing evangelist—men and women.

Driven by an inner impulse or scattered by persecution, they were always on the go. Their feet were on the march (not marking time)—willing feet, weary feet, bleeding feet!—on the highways of the Roman Empire.

The life of Jesus Himself can rightly be understood only when we follow on the map of Palestine the itinerary of His ceaseless travel for three years' ministry, when He literally went about doing good. "Let us go to the other villages also," he said. We read only once that He rode. And this was to His trial and rejection and death. From Jerusalem up the long road to Galilee in all its villages to Cæsarea Philippi on the northern border, to Jericho—to the borders of Sidon.

John the Baptist looked at the feet of Jesus and said, "I am not worthy to loose the latchet," of His sandals.

He walked by the sea of Galilee preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom. "He must needs go through Samaria," John says. Not geographical necessity but a moral and redemptive necessity. Then, weary of walking, He sat at the well and made it His pulpit to an audience of one outcast woman. And what a sermon it was!

And what an itinerant evangelist Paul was! The record in the Acts, as supplemented in all his epistles, is astounding!

He, too, traveled on foot, or by sea in small sailing ves-

sels. Paul, the Roman citizen, going across the Empire from Jerusalem to Spain—the regions beyond—Damascus—Ephesus—Antioch—Rome.

Paul the intrepid traveler—by sea and by land. Paul the dauntless and the bold pioneer. Paul the prisoner—still preaching by his letters and messengers, who carried his gospel everywhere.

On the map of the Mediterranean basin his missionary journeys measure over six thousand miles.

Alone and in prison, Paul thought not of surrender, but of world conquest. The two empires were already engaged in a death struggle, and Paul knew which was to win, the totalitarian state of Rome or the Kingdom of God. "In real life," said an eminent preacher, "Nero sits on the throne and Paul languishes in prison and many years must pass before people begin calling their dogs Nero and their sons Paul. But that time comes. As God lives, that time always comes." It came because, while Nero sat on a throne, Paul traveled!

In the church militant there is no substitute for the missionary passion. When the Church ceases to evangelize, she ceases to be evangelical; when she ceases to glow she ceases to grow. What a world vision, what fierce loyalty to truth, what unflinching love for humanity, and what sacrificial service appear in the life and Epistles of this world citizen of the first century!

Indeed, the history of the Church down the ages is the story of itinerant preachers. They kindled the fires of revival in every age and every land.

The Early Church and the Church of the Reformation had a sense of urgency. The Apostles preached the Gospel with haste to proclaim it before the Lord's return. If the Christian religion is to live and conquer, it must recover the primitive sense of the urgency and immediate hopefulness of its message. For it is still true that its commission is not to argue but to tell the good news and reap a harvest that is ripe—ripe all at once. A synchronizing of crises! And at the end of the Age.

The Apostles carried the message into the regions beyond. They were the bridge builders and pioneers at home and abroad. Every place the soles of their feet trod upon became a promised land for the Gospel.

Think of Patrick in Ireland, Boniface in Germany, Savonarola in Italy, St. Francis in Europe, Hudson Taylor in China, John Wesley and Bishop Asbury in America, or David Livingstone in Africa! Think of Charles Finney of Oberlin, Simpson, the founder of the Christian Missionary Alliance, and their successors.

Who is worthy to loose the latchet of their shoes or to follow in their footsteps?

Ten thousand times ten thousand miles they traveled preaching, teaching, healing, until at length, exhausted, not by going the second mile but the second thousand mile, they fell in their tracks. Every mission station on the map of the world has its God's acre!

George Whitefield crossed the Atlantic thirteen times in a sailing vessel and ate hard tack to preach to the Colonists. On his first journey he was fifty-four days at sea! We read that John Wesley "at the age of eighty rose at four o'clock in the morning, traveled from thirty to sixty miles a day, preaching two to four times, besides writing and visiting the sick and superintending the churches." And in all this labor he says, "I was never spiritually or mentally weary." When a young man in college at Oxford he rose at four A.M. and lived on twenty-eight pounds a year. Such a life was bound to have influence and power.

The long, long trail of early Methodism across America is red with blood and wet with tears. The same is true of Presbyterian preachers in the Far West who were pioneers of the Kingdom. They gave Oregon to the Union and the Gospel to Oregon.

When David Livingstone's body was brought for burial to Westminster Abbey, the London paper, *Punch*, wrote:

"'Tis the last mile of many thousands trod  
With failing strength but never failing will.

By the worn frame, now at its rest with God,  
That never rested from its fight with ill.

“Or if the ache of travel and of toil  
Would sometimes wring a short, sharp cry of pain  
From agony of fever, blain and boil,  
’Twas but to crush it down and on again!

“Open the Abbey doors and bear him in  
To sleep with king and statesman, chief and sage,  
The missionary, come of weaver-kin,  
But great by work that brooks no lower wage.

“He needs no epitaph to guard a name  
Which men shall prize while worthy work is known;  
He lived and died for God—be that his fame:  
Let marble crumble: this is Living-Stone.”

And Livingstone is only one outstanding example of “how beautiful are the feet of those who publish glad tidings.”

“Charles Wesley sang his songs to God  
With the clop-clop-clop of the horse’s feet  
In the slushy mud of country roads,  
And the saddle-bags slapped out the beat.

“Charles Wesley’s heart was broad as the light,  
His spirit went high through the nights and the days.  
‘Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing—  
To sing my great Redeemer’s praise.’

“Charles Wesley sang his songs for men  
With the clop-clop-clop of the horse’s feet,  
For men who knew no temple or church  
But the long and dusty city street.”

Of George Whitefield we read: “For years he spoke forty hours a week to thousands of people. When in old age his health was failing he put himself on short allowance, preaching only once every week day and thrice on Sundays.” There were giants in those days.

## II. WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF ITINERANT EVANGELISM?

It is the same message as that of the Christian pulpit, the

same message as that one and only message of the Christian press, pulpit or radio; but it is always more personal, more simple, more direct, more penetrating, more powerful. "I will make you fishers of men." Men are caught one by one.

Personal evangelism is a collision of souls. Mass multiplied by velocity equals impact—conviction multiplied by passion. It is the terrific impact of personalities. It is Nathan speaking to David: "Thou art the man." It is like Christ's heart-to-heart talk with Nicodemus, or His unfolding of the mystery of the Gospel to one poor sinful woman at the well. It is Christ in the home of Simon the Pharisee saying, "Seest thou this woman?", piercing through the Pharisees' self-righteousness.

Itinerant evangelism is to carry the cup of cold water to the dying—to go into the byways of life, the lonely huts and hovels—the hospitals, camps, prisons—to leave the ninety-and-nine in the church pews and seek for the lost sheep until you find them. It is the quest for one lost soul.

"And none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed,  
Or how dark was the night that the Lord went through  
E'er He found the sheep that was lost."

Itinerant evangelists have followed the blood-stained tracks of the Master all down the ages. Out in the desert is the cry for the Shepherd. Lost sheep are on the mountains, not in green pastures.

Thorns and briars do not grow in the church aisles. No one would despise the power of the pulpit—but lost souls are not generally sitting in the front pews or on the elders' bench.

Moody and Spurgeon and Wesley and Finney were preachers, but their greatest work as soul-winners was personal evangelism on their feet in the highways of life. Even the average preacher has experienced at some time the ecstasy of "mounting up with the wings of an eagle" in his own pulpit. And he has run to Presbyteries and Synods and Conventions "without growing very weary"—but the climax

(according to Isaiah) is to be able "to walk and not faint" from house to house in your own parish—to do itinerant evangelism!

Wear out your shoe leather for Christ. That's what Paul did at Ephesus, according to his own testimony: "Teaching in public and from house to house, . . . admonishing every-one night and day for three years, even with tears" (Acts 20:20, 31).

Nothing in the character of the Apostle Paul is more astonishing than the breadth of his vision, the wideness of his program, and, at the same time, the greatness of his loving heart for individuals. By a new creation, Saul the Jew, with his Pharisaic prejudice and nationalistic limitations, became Paul, the Apostle to the Roman Empire. His spiritual biography was the growth of a narrow soul into the measure of the stature of the fullness of his Master, Jesus Christ, in whom there was neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, Roman nor barbarian. The middle walls of partition were all broken down—and, if not, Paul would break through them. "Who maketh thee to differ?" he cried. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." "Is God a god of the Jews only?" Such categories of thought were not only startling to Paul's contemporaries; they were revolutionary in his own life.

And such itineration produced churches that were self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating across the Roman Empire.

How shall we in our day regain the sense of urgency? Think of the Scottish preacher, Horatius Bonar, a great preacher and hymn writer, but also incessant in his visitation of the parish. He wrote:

"Sin worketh, let me work too,  
Sin undoeth, let me do. . . .  
Death worketh, let me work too.  
Busy as death my work I'll ply  
Till I rest in the rest of eternity."

### III. WAS THERE EVER A TIME WHEN CHRIST NEEDED WILLING FEET MORE THAN HE DOES TODAY?

Fields "white already to harvest"—that is the true picture of the whole world. It is an exact description of the situation confronting Indian missions. One of the largest movements of the time is that of the outcastes, the "untouchables," away from the Hinduism that has kept them despised and degraded. By thousands they are crowding to the gates of the Christian community, ignorant, despised, but conscious of their need and eager for friendship. They have heard that there is a Gospel, and they are waiting to be gathered in.

And it is an exact description of what has happened again and again in the new centers of our own land—"white for the harvest"—because of war-conditions.

There, where people find themselves in an unfamiliar environment, lonely among a host of strangers, meeting new problems as well as opportunities. The fact is evident that they do not wish to form a pagan community. And especially where, as often, young parents and growing families predominate, what comes home to the Church is not the difficulty but simply the immensity of its task. The fields are "already white to harvest" in these days of migrant populations and on the outskirts of all our great cities.

Dare we substitute the radio or newspaper evangelism for pastoral visitation? We may use both, but not as substitutes.

Is house-to-house visitation essential to evangelism? Can we ever fill the pews unless we tramp the sidewalks and the country roads?

Can we occupy the unoccupied areas without willing feet, without pioneer missionaries?

In the days of His flesh the Master's feet were the members of His body that received highest honor; they served his whole body—for He went about doing good.

His feet were often weary with travel, dust-covered with toil, and bruised by sharp pebbles and thorns. "Those



blessed feet," as Shakespeare calls them, "which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed for our advantage to the bitter Cross" (*Henry IV*).

His feet were wet with human tears of love and wiped by the tresses of penitence and shame. "She hath not ceased to kiss my feet." His feet were anointed by costly nard for His burial, and after that pierced on the Cross for our sins.

Can the Head say to the feet, "I have no need of thee," after all that?

Rather does He say to us now as then: "Ye are my witnesses" (to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about Jesus, our blessed Saviour).

"Peace be unto you." These were His words, and then, "As the Father hath sent me even so do I send you."

"He showed them his feet" (John 20:19, 20; Luke 24:40).

And Peter speaks of it all as "an example that ye should follow His steps" (I Peter 2:21-24).

And was that why He washed the feet of His apostles? (John 13:13-15).

Let Bishop Badley of India answer:

"Christ, if ever my footsteps should falter,  
And I be prepared for retreat,  
If desert or thorn cause lamenting,  
Lord, show me Thy feet,—  
Thy bleeding feet, Thy nail-scarred feet,—  
My Jesus, show me Thy feet."

## XI

### THROUGH EYE-GATE TO MANSOUL

IN HIS *Holy War* John Bunyan tells how the famous town of Mansoul had five gates so impregnable that they could never be forced open but by the will and leave of those within. The castle of the city was the place of the Recorder, Conscience, and the seat of the chiefs of the town, Lord Will-be-Will and Lord Innocent. When Diabolus encamped before the city he decided at his council of war that the two most important gates were Ear-gate and Eye-gate. "For Ear-gate was the place for hearing all without the town as Eye-gate was the place of seeing. There he laid his ambuscade within bow-shot." Captain Resistance was slain by a dart. The inhabitants saw forbidden fruit through Eye-gate. Then they became drunk with pleasure, opened "both Ear-gate and Eye-gate and let Diabolus in with all his bands."

And then he tells how, after the inhabitants of Mansoul had lived long in rebellion against Shaddai, their rightful prince, He lays siege and recaptures the town through Eye-gate and Ear-gate and takes possession. However heavily barred, these gates, once opened, led straight to the heart of the city. King Immanuel broke the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron asunder.

The printed page or book is fully as important for evangelism as the spoken word. Eye-gate is close to Ear-gate. It is true that there are a billion illiterates in the wide world and that literacy is still a mark of rank in most of Asia and Africa. But where men *can* read and reading is available the book, especially the Book of books, has great advantages. With the invention of printing came the revival of learning and the Reformation. It has been said that the

craft of letter-press was the medium which turned the darkness of the Middle Ages into light, which secured to posterity the intellectual achievements of the past, and which furnished to civilization a means of recording all future progress.

Of course writing and reading were common long before printing was invented. The origin of human script is lost in the mists and myths of the ages.

The whole history of civilization goes back to the day when man began to write records. Everything before that is prehistoric and shrouded in darkness. It is the book which stands pre-eminent, invincible, overwhelming in the affairs of the human race. The written record was the mother of civilization. Ur of the Chaldees had its libraries in the time of Abraham.

The Vedas give us Indian social life and thought millenniums before the days of Gutenberg. No one knows the exact date of the Aztec calendar and its inscriptions. The monuments and inscriptions in the tombs of Egypt tell a story which is no longer *The Book of the Dead*. And Moses (whatever else he knew or wrote) was acquainted "with all the wisdom of Egypt." So we have in Scripture at the outset "God and a tablet of stone written by His own hand and at the end of all things earthly—God and an opened book."

But between that earliest revelation and God's last word is the Battle of the Books—the Word of God against the words of man. For there are many voices in religion, but only one divine revelation. There have been many prophets, but only one Saviour. That is the eternal issue. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of God abideth forever."

The prophets of the Old Testament were not content with their spoken message. Neither was God. Moses was commanded to write (Ex. 24:4) and Jesus testified that he wrote of Him (John 5:46). David wrote at least some of the Psalms, for they bear the imprint of his tragic and triumphant life. Isaiah and Jeremiah wrote their prophetic

messages (II Chron. 26:22; Jeremiah 36:2; 36:1-16). As for the Apostles, their message was not only by preaching but by epistles. When their tongues were silent forever, through martyrdom, their written word went forth to all the world and is now read in a thousand tongues. As Dr. Ritson of the British and Foreign Bible Society once remarked, "The words of Jesus when the woman broke the alabaster box of ointment were a prophecy of Bible societies!" "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. 26:13; Mk. 14:9).

The history of the expansion of Christendom has always included the figure of the writer with his inkhorn by his side. Barnabas and Clement wrote epistles. Justin wrote two apologies and a dialogue with a Jew. Tatian prepared a harmony of the Gospels. Commodianus used poetical ridicule against the gods of the heathen. Tertullian brought all his abilities into the service of the Gospel by his pen, and Cyprian wrote on the "Vanity of Idols." *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis has been translated into scores of languages for Asia and Africa. At the time of the Reformation, Calvin and Luther, to mention no others, did more by their pens than in any other way.

The fact is that in all ages and in all lands the written page has been the ubiquitous missionary. We are told that Luther threw an inkpot at the devil in the Wartburg while preparing his version of the German Bible. The legend is prophetic. The best thing to throw at the devil of ignorance and error is an inkpot—in modern terms, a printing press!

To change the figure, we read that "the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations." Is it not true that from the days of St. Augustine the vision of the City of God has been the hope of the Church in times of tribulation and depression? The glorious symbolism of the book of the Revelation is the heritage of the children of God. The Tree of Life bears twelve manner of fruit for the redeemed, but its leaves are for the healing of the

nations. Was there ever a time when the world needed such healing more than in our day? The clash of color, the lure of greed, the lust of power, the love of war, international jealousies and suspicions—only the leaves of the Tree of Life can heal these.

The influence of the earliest Bible translations on the life of a people is a story that never grows old. What Jerome, Wycliffe, Ulfilas, Luther and others did for Europe, Martyn, Bruce, Van Dyck, Goodell and Riggs did for the Moslem Near East, and hundreds of other translators for the tribes of Africa and the peoples of Asia.

Beginning with the Bible, other leaves of healing—in fact, a whole Christian literature—has blossomed forth and scattered its benign fragrance in every land. In a single year the American Press at Beirut printed 143,075 volumes, aggregating over twenty-five million pages.

“When once illiteracy becomes the exception to the rule [says William Archer], how marvelous will be the change! . . . If you create a reading public it is but reason to provide it with something good to read. Well-edited, interesting, well-illustrated papers to circulate through each of the great regions of the country would be only a logical corollary to the whole theory of popular education.”

In our land, and wherever illiteracy is no longer dominant, the problem remains how to get people to read, and to read the Gospel message. In America today, in every home there is a three-cornered fight between the two windmills of civilization—the radio and the movie—against the book. The book is by far the older, but the radio and the movie are usurping its place. Far more time and money are being spent on movies and radio programs than on books and reading.

It is true that Bible pictures and drama have their place in evangelism and can give a message of truth. It is even more true (as we see in our next chapter) that radio broadcasting of the Gospel is an ever-increasing channel for its wide proclamation in many lands. But neither of these, nor

both together, have the permanent and penetrating power of the printed page. One reason may be that some preachers who are proud to be *on the air* or *in the movies* were formerly only *in the air* in their theological stability. There is, moreover, an ancient and divine sanction for the written word.

Few missionaries in the Near East were such eager personal workers and preachers of the Gospel as the sainted L. Lilius Trotter of Algiers. Yet she wrote:

“There is one way above all others in which the final evangelization of the world can be speeded. Men and women take long to train, long to qualify, even when on the field: they are costly to keep, costly to move about and much ‘in evidence’ to unfriendly eyes.

“But we can send here, there, everywhere, over hundreds of miles of unreached territory, the swiftly traveling messengers in print, costing as little to issue by the thousand as the single living messenger would expend in a week. Should not those who believe that ‘the King’s business requireth haste’ use them to the very utmost?”

Many experienced missionaries at home and abroad are fully persuaded that we must enter Mansoul by Eye-gate. As Bunyan tells us, it was the wisdom of the Old Serpent when the inhabitants were suspicious of strangers to *show* himself, “all in a manner invisible,” before he approached Ear-gate.

President Charles R. Watson of Cairo once sent a cablegram to America reading: “No agency can penetrate Islam so deeply, abide so persistently, witness so daringly and influence so irresistibly as the printed page.” Such has been my own experience for forty years in Moslem lands.

In 1914, Mr. Hooper and I sailed down the Red Sea, and we tried to land at Yenbo, the port of Medina. When they saw us the people said, “This is holy ground, and no Christian is allowed to land at Yenbo.” One man stepped out from the crowd. “Yes, they shall land,” he said, “because I am their friend.” I said, “Who are you?” He said, “My name is Mohammed.” We followed him to his house, and,

after he had showed us his hospitality in true Arabian fashion, he said, "Do not call me Mohammed, but call me by my new name, Gurgis (George)." "How can your name be Gurgis? You were born here in Yenbo." "Yes," he said, "and my father's name was Mohammed." He brought down from a shelf a copy of the New Testament and turned to the last chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel and read to us, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." He said, "One day I obeyed that command and I baptized myself Gurgis." What could we do when a Mohammedan inquirer proved his faith by his works and announced his own baptismal name in that lonely port of West Arabia?

An Arab who came to see a missionary colleague described how the Gospel differed from the Koran by saying, "The Koran resembles one of those costly vessels that come to us from Persia filled with rose-water and carefully sealed, for which you pay a high price in the market. But the Bible resembles the Euphrates and the Tigris coming down from Aleppo and pouring out life for the whole of Mesopotamia."

And here are some questions asked by young Mohammedans in crowded meetings held in Madras, Hyderabad, Bombay, and Lahore. They had read the Gospel. "One of the principal claims which Christians advance as to the personality of Jesus is that He is the Son of God. Can these claims be sustained from Mark 10:18; Luke 18:6; Matthew 19:17; and John 14:12; and John 20:17?" "Did Jesus ever dream of making Himself pass for an incarnation of God? Please give me evidence from the three Synoptic Gospels." "What inference would you draw from verses expressing that Jesus was God and His dying ejaculation? See Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34." This whole series of questions proves that they were not only familiar with the Scriptures, but that they were studying the Bible for the evidence that the Bible affords of the mission and the works of Jesus Christ.

Many years ago I visited the old mosque of Santa

Sophia in Constantinople. Its magnificent dome has as an adornment one of the great texts of the Koran inscribed in beautiful Arabesque. The words, high above the heads of all the worshipers, are these:

“God is the light of the Heavens and of the Earth. His light is as of a lamp set in a niche, kindled from the blessed olive tree, neither of the East nor of the West. Light upon light, glory upon glory: God is light.”

When I entered Santa Sophia I saw the inscription and, with my pockets full of literature, mostly the Gospels, I paused to read it. As I expected, one of the Mohammedan worshipers said, “Can you read Arabic?” I said, “Yes, to read that is comparatively easy, but to understand it is not so easy.” He said, “Can you explain it?” I said, “I should like to try. Let us be seated.” We sat down in the mosque, and a small company gathered round. Then I opened my Testament, gave away copies of the Gospel, and read to them from the eighth chapter of John: “Jesus said: I am the light of the world; he that followed shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” In the mosque they gladly accepted these Gospels and listened to the interpretation of God as the Light, and the Light Incarnate, and the Light through His Holy Spirit, and there was none to hinder or make us afraid.

I visited an old sheikh in charge of the mosque of Omar in Jerusalem. After we had seen the tomb of Othman, we sat in his little study. I asked him, “Have you a Bible?” From a niche he brought forth a Bible and there we sat together and studied that Book. He, the man who guards the mosque of Omar, was seeking the light that never shone on sea or land, but that floods the face of Jesus Christ.

“The printed page never flinches, never shows cowardice; it is never tempted to compromise; it never tires, never grows disheartened; it travels cheaply, and requires no hired hall; it works while we sleep; it never loses its temper, and it works long after we are dead. The printed page is a visitor that gets inside the home, and stays there; it



always catches a man in the right mood, for it speaks to him only when he is reading it; it always sticks to what it has said, and never answers back."

In his tract, "Thistle-Down" D. M. Panton tells of the power of a tract in these words:

"Can any limit be put to the extent of its possible influence? Luther wrote a book on Galatians which, falling into Bunyan's hands, converted him; and the 139th translation (an African dialect) of *Pilgrim's Progress* has just been issued. We are told that more than 150,000,000 copies of Spurgeon's sermons have gone into circulation."

Sometimes a single tract or even a torn page of the Bible has influenced a whole nation. Such was the case in the conversion of Joseph Neesima of Japan in the well-known story of his life.

Centuries ago a young Frenchman, who had been wounded at the siege of Saint Quentin, was languishing on a pallet in a hospital when a tract that lay on the coverlet caught his eye. He read it and was converted by it. The monument of that man may now be seen before the Church of the Consistory in Paris, standing with a Bible in his hand. It is Admiral Coligny, the leader of the Reformation in France. But the tract had not yet finished its work. It was read by Coligny's nurse, a Sister of Mercy, who penitently placed it in the hands of the Lady Abbess, and she, too, was converted by it. She fled from France to the Palatinate, where she met a young Hollander and became his wife. The influence which she had upon that man reacted upon the whole continent of Europe, for he was William of Orange, who became the champion of liberty and Protestantism in the Netherlands.

The printed page is deathless: you can destroy one tract, but the press can reproduce millions. As often as it is martyred, it is raised. The ripple started by a given tract can widen to a stream down the centuries, until it beats upon the Great White Throne. How many lives have been

changed or brightened by Newman Hall's tract, "*Come to Jesus*," or Hesba Stratton's "*Jessica's First Prayer*."

The prayerful and tactful distribution of the Scriptures, the exposition of the Bible or Bible texts in a wayside pulpit, the message of the Gospel in a shop window or on life's thoroughfares, so that he who runs may read; the use of the daily newspaper to broadcast a Gospel message, the table for literature in the vestibule of a church—all these are legitimate and fruitful methods of evangelism for our day. Only let us be sure that the printed page carries a true message and that we begin, continue, and end this ministry of the Gospel, in prayer:

O Lord, grant that our debt to the Bible and many other books shall weigh upon us so heavily that we shall not be content until that debt has been turned into a purpose, and men, women and children everywhere shall share our experience, and, in turn, say, Blessed be books.

We ask Thee to bless all writers of creative books, all workers who put a book into hands that have never before held and possessed one. Amen.

Then, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, we may expect to have victory over Mansoul at Eye-gate. In the words of Bunyan's allegory (so appropriate in a world at war):

"Also at Eye-gate where Captain Good-hope and Captain Charity were stationed, was great execution done; for Captain Good-hope with his own hands slew one Captain Blindfold, the keeper of that gate; this Blindfold was captain of a thousand men and they were they that fought with mauls; he also pursued with his men, slew many and wounded more, and made the rest hide their heads in corners. In those days the Diabolónians lay dead in every corner, though too many were still alive in Mansoul" (*The Holy War*, Chapter V).

## XII

### STORMING AT EAR-GATE (RADIO)

IN OUR day hundreds of thousands of people are able to hear the Gospel who never darken the door of a church and have never seen the face of an evangelist. This is the miracle of radio—so modern that the first broadcasting of speech in programs for the public began in 1920 at Chelmsford, England, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Electro-magnetic waves were studied by Maxwell in 1865 and by Hertz in 1887. In 1896 Marconi transmitted them as wireless telegraphy. Today a radio set has become part of the equipment of home and camp, from city apartment to the frontiers of civilization.

Essentially, radio transmission is a vast trumpet to carry the human voice or music to the widest possible distance. The earliest method of broadcasting a message was indeed by the trumpet. The Greeks, the Romans, the Etruscans used it in battle. So did the Chinese and ancient Egyptians. The sound of the trumpet and trumpeter is heard in all Scripture. From the ram's horns at Jericho and the silver trumpets of the tabernacle (Num. 10:2; Joshua 6:4-20), the trumpet of the Lord and Gideon (Judges 7:26) to the days of David, Nehemiah, Isaiah and Ezekiel. It became the symbol of broadcasting the word of Jehovah. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion and sound an alarm in my holy mountain" (Joel 2:1). "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet and declare unto my people their transgression" (Isaiah 58:1). The thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel tells of the spiritual watchman's duty. "If the watchman see the sword come and blow not the trumpet,

. . . and any person is taken away in his iniquity, . . . his blood will I require at the watchman's hand" (Ezekiel 33:1-9).

The ram's horn (shofar) that ushered in the Jewish New Year from the days of Moses, is still used in the synagogues of Jewry today. Wolf Kurtzman, the oldest inmate of the Brooklyn Hebrew Home for the Aged, was pictured in the New York press blowing the shofar on September 30, 1943, to usher in *Rosh Hashona*. But the shofar is an anachronism. Every Jewish family has its radio, and on the Christian Sabbath we are told that thousands of earnest Jews listen to the broadcast from pulpits in our great cities. Did Charles Wesley ever imagine a day such as ours when he wrote his missionary hymn:

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow  
The gladly solemn sound;  
Let all the nations know  
To earth's remotest bound,  
The Year of Jubilee is come;  
Return ye ransomed sinners home!"

In Bunyan's allegory, when Ear-gate was broken open, "all the trumpets sounded, the captains shouted, and the town shook." And he goes on, "Now, from Ear-gate the street was straight even to the castle which Diabolus had made his irksome den." Therefore, *that* gate was defended by Captain Prejudice with sixty deaf men under him! But Captain Conviction stormed the gate with battering rams and Captain Prejudice fell by the hand of Captain Execution; while the captain of the two guns, that once were mounted on the top of Ear-gate, was cut down with Captain Treacherous and the rest.

"After some time and labor the gate of the castle that was called Impregnable was beaten open and broken into several pieces. Then were tidings sent down to Ear-gate, for Emanuel still abode there, to let him know that a way was made in at the gates of the castle of Mansoul. But O! how the trumpets, at the tidings, sounded throughout the Prince's camp, for the war was now near an end and Mansoul itself near being set free!"

Such an allegory needs no interpretation. In our own day we must use the battering ram of the radio incessantly and repeatedly to summon Mansoul to surrender to Jesus Christ. The world, the flesh and the devil must not be allowed to monopolize this astounding and tremendous power of the air. A recent writer describes the present use of the radio by the warring nations as "an incessant babel of sounds in more than forty languages and dialects; hope, hate, and hokum, claims and counter-claims, more words in one day than Shakespeare wrote in a lifetime."<sup>1</sup> But perhaps the bard of Avon himself refers to radio at its worst in war time:

"Open your ears; for which of you will stop  
The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?  
I, from the Orient to the drooping West,  
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold  
The acts commencèd on this ball of earth;  
Upon my tongue continual slanders ride,  
The which in every language I pronounce,  
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports."<sup>2</sup>

The present global war has proved that as a weapon of war, *waged psychologically*, radio has no equal. It carries the human voice seven times around the globe in one second. Radio speaks in all tongues to all classes. It penetrates beyond all frontiers and laughs at censorship. It is estimated that the world's radio-listening audience at the beginning of 1942 numbered some 300,000,000. There were more than one hundred million receiving sets in existence. Europe had forty million and the Near East nearly a million. The German Radio Chamber declared in 1939:

"We spell radio with three exclamation marks, because we are possessed in it of a miraculous power—the strongest weapon ever given to the spirit—that opens hearts and does not turn back before closed doors; that jumps rivers, mountains and seas;

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<sup>1</sup> Charles J. Rolo, in *Radio Goes to War*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Henry IV*, Part 2.

that is able to force peoples under the spell of one powerful spirit.”<sup>3</sup>

The attempts of the Axis powers to win over the Arab countries and the Moslem world against the Allied nations, is an amazing story of radio propaganda and assault from Zeesen near Berlin, and Bari in Italy.

It was as satanic in its slander as it was ridiculous in its clever camouflage. Herr Goebbels at the German radio “was the mouthpiece of the most gigantic lying machine of all time and in the main it proved extremely efficient.”<sup>4</sup> In 1937, Bari broadcasts were already made in sixteen languages for the whole Mediterranean area. Not until 1939 did the British (BBC) begin assault against this campaign of falsehoods. Today all governments have their radio departments and those at war their radio-fronts. But this game of war has its rules. Rival stations separated on the dial by a hair’s breadth dutifully respect them. The International Broadcasting Union, Geneva, holds its conferences and discusses and controls radio regulations. Air waves are sacrosanct, yet there is freedom of the air.<sup>5</sup>

To keep a check on the twenty-four hour stream of broadcasts pouring out on the ether, the leading nations also have listening posts. The BBC’s wartime schedule calls for a coverage of 230 broadcasts daily from over forty countries in thirty-five languages, from Arabic to Mandarin and Maltese. Over four hundred listeners record, transcribe and translate nearly a million words a day. To such colossal and universal proportions has the radio grown before it is twenty-five years old! And we have only spoken of its political use. Commercially, radio broadcasting has eclipsed the most lavish advertising in print and exceeds it in expenditure and effectiveness.

Why and how should evangelism use this method? When every voice of the world, the flesh and the devil is luring

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<sup>3</sup> *Radio Goes to War*, pp. 45-50. Putnam.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, pp. 56-57.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, p. 60.

itching ears, and battering at Ear-gate day and night, surely the Church was true to its commission when it also got on the air. "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation. . . . And he shall speak peace to the nations. And his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:9, 10). "Let the cities lift up their voices; . . . let the inhabitants sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. . . . The Lord will go forth as a mighty man. He will stir up his zeal like a man of war; he will cry, yea; he will shout aloud; he will do mightily against his enemies" (Isa. 42:11-13). And in the book of Revelation the voice of the Risen and glorified Redeemer is compared to that of a trumpet, it is a loud voice like the sound of many waters, a great voice from heaven (Rev. 1:10; 21:3).

The Great Commission surely includes every possible method to reach every creature with the good news of salvation in Christ. The printing press and the radio are God-given instruments, and the wise evangelist employs both to reach Mansoul. There are no statistics available on the use of broadcasting from the pulpits of America, but it is widespread. Radio programs include a great variety of religious broadcasts, music, sermons, direct evangelism, hymn singing and morning devotions. And we learn that the National Broadcasting Corporation received 159,200 requests for copies of sermons delivered over their network in the year Oct. 1, 1942—Sept. 30, 1943.

The first missionary broadcasting station in the world was HCJB ("Heralding Christ Jesus Blessings"). It is located at Quito, Ecuador, and began its work in 1928.

"Then Clarence W. Jones, a gospel musician of outstanding ability and now one of HCJB's directors, made a deputation trip to Venezuela, Panama, and Cuba to find a suitable location for a Gospel radio station serving Latin American mission fields. In 1929 he was brought together providentially with Reuben E. Larson. . . .

"Within a year Mr. Larson had obtained from the Ecuadorean

government a twenty-five-year permit for a station in Quito for 'religious, cultural and educational purposes.' Incidentally, it was the first regular broadcasting station in Ecuador with daily programs. As soon as Mr. Jones had inspected the site and verified technical conditions, he returned to the United States for equipment and personnel. By September, 1931, the 200-watt transmitter, along with other fragile equipment, was shipped from New York to Guayaquil. From there those seventeen precious boxes were safely carried up over steep Devil's Nose to the city of Quito, where everything else was in readiness. On Christmas day, 1931, a small group of missionaries gathered in the living room which served as studio while the first program went over the air; thankful to God for this answer to years of faith and prayerful vision." (Voice of the Andes Report.)

This station, now known everywhere as "The Voice of the Andes," grew and prospered. Today they are using nine languages over four stations and release four hundred Gospel broadcasts each month. Ecuador is an example of the growth of radio programs everywhere in Latin America. A government booklet tells how "interest in radio has been greatly stimulated through the introduction of short-wave broadcasting and the reduction in prices of short-wave receivers. The long-wave sets, previously used, gave unsatisfactory results because of local atmospheric disturbances. During 1939, approximately 3500 radios were imported, and it has been estimated that about the same number was imported in 1940. Ecuador now has seventeen broadcasting stations, of which nine are located in Quito.

But "the Voice of the Andes" is the voice of the Master. Its object is to preach the full Gospel to as many listeners as possible around the whole world. It is not a commercial enterprise. The aim of the Christian group that operate the station is expressed frankly and clearly in their Report:

"It is the aim of the directors of the station and personnel to point the beam antenna towards the different countries, depending on the hour of the day, sending to that particular section the Gospel in the language of its people. This will necessitate an extremely heavy schedule upon those at the microphones as well as those at the controls.



"Truly, Romans 10:18 is real ' . . . their sound went into all the earth.' It is nothing less than staggering to think that a servant of the Lord can speak into the microphone of a powerful transmitter like the new 'Voice of the Andes' and literally reach more people in an hour than could be reached in a lifetime otherwise.

"Believing that God has a mighty plan for Christians to carry the message of His redeeming grace to all mankind in our generation, we feel that radio has been given to the 20th Century Church as a sacred trust to use in evangelizing both at home and on the mission field. It is for this holy purpose of making Christ known, first to the Spanish-speaking nations, afterwards to the world, that Radio Station HCJB exists and to which it is dedicated."

Responses have come to this one center of radio evangelism from Iceland, Pitcairn Islands, Salvador, Sumatra, the West Indies, every part of South America, as well as Mexico and the United States.

One asks how do the Indian tribes of South America manage to listen in?

"'How glad,' writes Mr. Larson, 'we are to tell the Quechuas of Him who made the sun, but more than that, who came to earth to die and to redeem them from sin.'

"Of course everyone in South America doesn't have a receiving set, and in backward countries they are very scarce. But as we all are aware, there are four million receiving sets in Spanish-speaking America—a good-sized parish to begin with. Every month come hundreds of letters to HCJB, indicating that many are listening and being blessed. . . . For example, one of the Christian families in whose midst one of the 'listening boxes' is planted, gathers together, whenever possible, their friends and neighbors. They listen attentively as the national music and news are broadcast from the capital. Then comes the cultural message, followed by 'The Open Forum,' when the Way of Life is made plain. From one to the other is a natural progression. When the Gospel message closes, the receiver is turned off and personal work is tactfully and prayerfully carried on. From all these 'listening posts for Christ'—east and west—come the same stories. When the 'Sunday School of the Air,' by the children and for the children, is broadcast, whole households listen."

We have quoted at some length about this *one* station because its program is ideal. Chinese Christians at the outbreak of the present global war were carrying on a similar program of evangelism for many hours daily at Shanghai. There are many broadcasting stations in other lands and in our own land. But "The Voice of the Andes" is an example that may well be followed.

There is a far greater responsibility for the evangelist when on the radio than when in a pulpit. The trajectory is far greater; the range of his voice and message is not bounded by walls or weather. Those who listen in can tune off much easier than pew-holders and without the least embarrassment to themselves or the preacher. A radio message, moreover, because it is necessarily brief, should be carefully prepared and perfectly spoken. When Paul writes of the gift of tongues he gives several cautions that are very relevant to radio. "Even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" There are so many kinds of voices on the radio, and none of them is wholly without significance. But the real message of the Gospel has *supreme* significance and relevance. Paul did not preach Jesus as a great character and ideal. He preached Christ crucified and resurrected, the Saviour and the Judge of all men.

"Wherefore let him that speaketh" on the radio "pray that he may interpret" the Gospel. "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else . . . how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" Paul teaches us that he would rather speak five words with his understanding "that by my voice I might teach others than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace as in all churches of the saints" (I

Corinthians: 14 *passim*). There follows a very apt passage about women evangelists which we hesitate to quote; but as in the house of God, so in the world of ether under the dome of the stars, and at the radio transmitter, "Let all things be done decently and in order." Radio evangelism and song at its best are a constant benediction and blessing. But radio evangelism at its worst is an abomination that defeats its own end, because it does not covet the beauty of holiness and a sense of God Himself listening in. We must ourselves tune in to the voice of the Master before we can be His messengers to others. There are radio speakers and radio programs that are reverent, persuasive and fruitful in spiritual results. Evangelism by radio, however, has its own perils as well as its own peculiar place and power.

### XIII

## POSSESSING OUR POSSESSIONS

**THE** evangelist no less than the preacher, and the preacher as evangelist, needs to be “thoroughly furnished to every good word and work.” The pastoral Epistles were primarily addressed to missionary *evangelists*. Although *that* word is used only three times in the New Testament, we have seen in our first chapter that the word for *evangelism* (both noun and verb) is frequently used in Paul’s Epistles. In the Acts we read of Philip the evangelist, and in Ephesians the evangelist’s vocation and ministry are closely linked to that of apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers (4:11). All of these servants of Christ are His gift to the Church “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” Christ’s body, the Church is, most surely edified, built up, by adding *new stones* to the spiritual edifice. For this task men need to be especially called and qualified as evangelists.

So Paul writes to Timothy in charge of a large field for evangelism, the great city of Ephesus: “Preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, watch in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry” (II Tim. 4:2-5). Richard Baxter, who was an ardent evangelist in the days of Cromwell, described his own ideal in the words:

“I preached, as never sure to preach again,  
And as a dying man to dying men.”

And it was the Apostle, ready to be offered up as a martyr and who knew his departure was near at hand, who wrote the second epistle to his dearly beloved son whom he re-

membered night and day in prayer (II Tim. 1:1-3). What an appeal he makes for a full-orbed Gospel and the best of preparation in mind and heart! Do not be ashamed of the Gospel; hold fast to its vital teaching, even to the form of sound words, the *credo* your mother and grandmother taught you; remember Jesus Christ; study hard, so that you need not be ashamed or cause shame to others when you divide the word of truth; avoid foolish discussions and debate; preach the Word; give attendance to reading yourself, and as soon as you come to me in prison, bring the books and especially the parchments; make full proof of your evangelistic power "For I am now ready to be offered. . . . I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (I and II Tim. *passim*).

Paul's ideal of an evangelist is also expressed very forcibly in his first letter to the Corinthian Church, where conditions were so similar to those in many churches of our day. There was a carnal spirit breeding dissension and division, and the Church was entangled in the Gentile world's ideas and ideals. Their sectarianism had produced spiritual poverty. They chose particular leaders and followed them—Apollos, Cephas, Paul. There was even a party that presumed themselves to be the only ones "of Christ" (I Cor. 1:12). But so broad was Paul's Gospel that he rebuked them and gave an inventory of all that belonged to the Gospel and to the Christian. "For all things are yours; whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death or things present or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Therefore, "let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 3:22-4:1). The chapter division here is most unfortunate. All things are ours when and because we are ministers of Christ (to whom we ourselves belong) and faithful stewards of God's mysteries in the Evangel. We are reminded of the prophecy of Obadiah where there occurs the pregnant phrase, "The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." He spoke in apocalyptic vision of the latter days; Paul

thought of the spiritual heritage of those in Christ and their boundless possessions. The two voices have one imperial and arousing note, namely, to claim, to have and to hold all that God has promised and given us for our task. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It is for us to sink shafts into that inexhaustible lode of pure gold and heavenly riches. The Evangel of the Cross is a rich mine of gold, but the evangelist must "search it out to the furthest bounds, amid stones of obscurity and of thick darkness and break open a shaft far away from where men sojourn" (Job 28:1-4). Then they will possess their possessions.

The Gospel we preach is not a simple Gospel in the sense that it ceases to be profound. It contains all the depth of the riches of God's love in Christ Jesus. It is unfathomable as man's sin. It is high as heaven itself. Such a Gospel should never be thin. I remember an address Dr. J. Gresham Machen gave in London to a group of conservative believers. His theme was "The Peril of Unintellectual Fundamentalism." Such a peril can be avoided by adding to a simple faith in God's Word a deeper knowledge of its meaning and a wider outlook on life and human culture. The Christian preacher can at least echo the poet's boast and put in it a deeper meaning:

"I am the owner of the spheres,  
Of the seven stars and the solar years,  
Of Cæsar's hand and Plato's brain,  
Of Lord Christ's heart, and Shakespeare's strain."

All things are yours—so possess your heritage. In describing it, Paul first gives us the inventory and then, as climax, the title deed—"Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

The sovereignty of God the Father is the corner-stone of all property rights in the universe—temporal and spiritual.

Alas! most of us live on the coast and never strike inland. We are afraid of the venture. Timid, sectional, parochial, provincial, sectarian souls! Poverty-stricken, emaciated weaklings! "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos and I of

Cephas." I am a Presbyterian; I am a Calvinist; I am a Methodist; I am a Fundamentalist; I am a High church Anglican. We forget that the smaller the hinterland, the smaller our resources. The smaller the diameter of our brotherly love, the smaller the circumference of our spiritual power. As the Psalmist says, we will only run the way of God's commandments "when he shall have enlarged our hearts."

The Corinthian Church needed Paul's imperial outlook and missionary passion as a Roman citizen redeemed by Christ. It needed the Greek culture and Hellenistic learning of Apollos. It was also in need of Peter's gospel and his memories of Galilee and Golgotha. When they shared their spiritual wealth the three sectarian parties would indeed be "of Christ," for He was the Master of them all.

The impression we receive of a man's spiritual wealth or poverty depends on the area kept under cultivation in the garden of his soul. Only Christ can give largeness of heart and magnanimity of life. He is the inexhaustible fountain of tolerance and love and sympathy.

Now and again we meet, in every walk of life, men with no better coast line than our own, but with far greater horizon and much ampler resources and reserves of power.

When we seek the reason for this great wealth of personality we shall find it to be none other than this: These men and woman have entered into their heritage. They preach a rich and a full Gospel because they have been to school with many of Christ's Apostles. They have sunk hidden shafts and found new gold and silver. Perchance, Dr. John H. Jowett has given them a vocabulary of pure English; Dr. Alexander Whyte has taught them the exceeding sinfulness of sin; Bishop Phillips Brooks led them to new discoveries of the beauty of holiness; Toyohiko Kagawa was their teacher in the school of humility and self-sacrifice; Bishop Lancelot Andrewes taught them how to pray; Dwight L. Moody gave them wisdom in preaching straight from the shoulder. And they had learned to do individual

work for individuals from the example and teaching of H. Clay Trumbull.

To possess your possessions does not depend on circumstance or natural talent. It depends on your will, "Whosoever will may come and take."

John Bunyan traveled to the Celestial City while his body was in Bedford jail. That was the real Pilgrim's Progress. Luther, in the Wartburg, translated the Bible into such household German that he led captive for Christ a whole nation. (Alas, today they are again in bondage.) Such heroic souls not only explore new territory but write the guide-books for other pilgrims to the City of God. What a shelf there is of these "Baedekers of the soul!" We mention only seven: Bishop Andrews' great book of *Private Devotions*, which has no equal in the realm of prayer; Thomas à Kempis on the *Imitation of Christ*; John Cordelier, the Roman Catholic mystic, in his handbook, *The Pathway of Wisdom*; Charles Gordon's *Letters to his Sister*, written from Khartoum; Arthur's *Tongue of Fire*, which still stirs a fever in the blood of age; Forbes Robinson's *Letters to his Friends*, which opens extraordinary new vistas of other-worldliness and the patience of the saints; and that priceless little book on *The Practice of the Presence of God*, by Brother Lawrence, a scullion in a monastery. The Christian soul finds Christ everywhere.

"I see His blood upon the rose,  
And in the stars the glory of His eyes;  
His body gleams amid eternal snows;  
His tears fall from the skies.

"I see His face in every flower;  
The thunder and the singing birds  
Are but His voice, and, carven by His power,  
Rocks are written words.

"All pathways by His feet are worn,  
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea;  
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,  
His Cross is every tree."



So one could turn to the great hymn writers and read the story of their pilgrimage of faith—the spiritual adventure, the bold ascent, the mountain-top experience of men like Bishop Heber and saintly Faber, Charles Wesley and Cardinal Newman, Isaac Watts and George Matheson. One needs only to study the pages of the hymnal really to believe and live in the Holy Catholic Church. From Andrew of Crete in the fourth century to Frank Mason North of the twentieth—all are ours.

But to read these authors is not enough. Nor is it enough to possess a guidebook. That would be as futile as the former American trick of a stay-at-home, impecunious world traveler who pasted hotel labels of Europe and Asia on a suitcase that had never crossed the sea!

How suggestive is the thought of the Apostle that each of us may supplement our own narrow lives and enrich them by possessing the immortal part of every great and noble life that has ever been lived!

Even the mere contemplation of the great moments of the past produces enlargement of the soul. One has only to compare the mental outlook of the reader of one local Christian newspaper with that of the man who has by personal sacrifices accumulated a small library of Christian literature and experience across the ages, and lives in it.

According to Paul, not only the past is ours but the future, the world to come, the days that lie ahead.

Although in one sense the future belongs to everybody, in another sense it does not. In the first century the future belonged to St. Paul; it did not belong to the men who thought he was a fool. In the thirteenth century the future belonged to St. Francis of Assisi and Raymond Lull; it did not belong to those powerful bishops who every once in a while attempted to silence them. In the sixteenth century the future belonged to Martin Luther and John Calvin; it did not belong to the Pope. In the eighteenth century the future belonged to John Wesley; it did not belong to those influential ecclesiastics who crowded him out of their

churches and forced him, against his own inclinations, to preach in open fields.

To whom does the future of the Church in this twentieth century belong, save to those who are already looking beyond its horizon and who can read the signs of the times?

Neander, commenting on Paul's statement, says:

"The sovereignty over the world was indeed conferred on man in his original estate. But this, being lost through sin, was restored again by redemption. 'Ye are Christ's.' The spirit which is bestowed on Christians carries in itself a principle which every thing must eventually obey, and which will subjugate the world ever more and more, until at last the promise, that 'the meek shall inherit the earth' is fulfilled, and the world has become the theatre of the Divine Kingdom."

"All things are yours." All true Christian teachers of every name—Paul and Apollos and Cephas, Luther and Wesley and Phillips Brooks, Cardinal Newman, Moody and Spurgeon, Barth and Brunner. And we Presbyterians might add three Johns—John Huss, John Calvin, and John Knox. We do not belong to them. No, they belong to us! That is the real significance of the present-day ecumenical movements of Stockholm, Lausanne, Oxford, and Edinburgh.

Every faithful minister profits the whole Church, and every member of the Church may and ought to derive benefit from the teachings of all Christendom. It is thus the mind is expanded beyond mere party limits and party cries into a true Catholicity.

Paul's declaration, "All is yours," also promises the world to Christians, pre-eminently in this sense; for all secular arts and all the sciences help to furnish mortar for building the temple of God. Christians are called not to leave the world, nor to curse the world, nor to ignore the world, but to overcome and rule it for God. Music, painting, sculpture, poetry, architecture—all the fine arts—have laid their finest tribute at Christ's feet, and in that sense they belong to every Christian.

Yet the world is nothing but a scaffolding that will be

broken up when it has served its end in assisting to construct God's temple.

And Christ's promise is our Magna Carta, our title deed. "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

The glorious Gospel of the blessed God has not one but four dimensions—length, breadth, depth, height. Like the love of God, it takes "all the saints" to measure it!

All things are yours—let us claim them now! All the depth of the riches of love in Christ Jesus! God give us largeness of heart. For the path of eternal wisdom in all creation is growth by sacrifice and service. When we consider our lost opportunities, our luke-warm messages and our half-hearted service to Him who laid down His life for us, there is only one escape from a guilty conscience—prayer and repentance.

O God, we are ashamed of our religious complacency, we regret our narrowness of heart, we mourn our spiritual apathy. We have not yet attained, nor are we yet perfect. Help us to strive for the mastery. Show us that we are not rich nor increased in goods, but poor and miserable and blind and naked. Help us to put on the whole armor of God and to go out and possess our possessions—to lay hold of our great inheritance with all the saints. We ask it for Jesus' sake. Amen.

## XIV

### “HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE”

**THE** true evangelist needs not only intellectual preparation by possessing all his heritage and his resources, he needs also the baptism of fire. The Holy Spirit alone can confer this grace, even as He did at Pentecost on the Apostolic Church. If we believe, with Barth, that time is on a different plane from eternity and that eternity floods time with its fullness when God breaks in, then Pentecost was such an occasion. The glory of the Manger came at the fullness of time; the glory of the Cross was God reconciling the world to Himself; the glory of Easter was the triumph of Christ over death; the glory of the Ascension was the promise of His return. All these together constitute “the glorious gospel of the blessed God” which is committed to our trust (I Tim. 1:11).

So when the day of Pentecost was fully come, there came “a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, . . . and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak” as they had never spoken before.

The Jewish rabbis, translating Psalm 14:6, found more in it than a psalm of nature, and in the Septuagint wrote: “Who maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire” (Cf. Hebrews 1:7). But this so-called mistranslation is explained beautifully. “When the angels are sent on a mission to earth they are wind: when they stand before God they are fire. The angel said to Manoah, Why dost thou ask after my name? Sometimes He makes us fire and

at other times wind; sometimes men, at other times angels." \*

"When God of old came down from heaven,  
In power and wrath He came;  
Before His feet the clouds were riven,  
Half darkness and half flame.

"The fires that rushed on Sinai down  
In sudden torrents dread  
Now gently light, a glorious crown,  
On every sainted head."

And what Keble put into this ancient Whitsunday hymn Dr. Samuel M. Shoemaker of our day puts into short, sharp words: "It is a wonderful experience to see the first holy fires of rebirth kindle in one's own or another's life. . . . And if the early fire of conversion is to be kept burning, it needs the fuel of fresh inspiration. . . . Evangelism means bringing the good news of the Gospel to the people. Evangelism is loving people with the help of God till they find His love." \*\*

What we need in every minister's heart and in every church is a baptism of fire—a renewal by the Holy Spirit.

"Teach me to love thee as thine angels love  
One holy passion stirring all my frame  
The baptism of the heaven-descended Dove  
My heart an altar and Thy love the flame."

When Christ said he came to cast fire on the earth (Luke 12:49) or when John the Baptist promised that the Messiah would baptise with fire they both chose a universal symbol of God's presence and power in all ages. Fire-worship is one of the oldest religious cults. The origin of fire (altho its use is world-wide) is lost in obscurity. Many legends tell how man brought down fire from heaven.

In the Bible fire as symbol of deity occurs from the book of Genesis to the book of the Revelation. Was Abel's offering accepted by fire? Do we not read of Abraham that "it

\* Expositor's Greek Testament IV. p. 255 ("Book of Jubilees").

\*\* "A Way of Renewal," in *Religion in Life*, Autumn No., 1943.

came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a flaming torch passed" through his divided offerings, and God made a covenant with him? All of us remember the bush that burned with fire for Moses, and the giving of the law on Sinai, where "the sight of the glory of the Lord was as a devouring fire on the top of the mountain." The pillar of fire in the wilderness, Gideon's angel and his sacrifice, David's altar on the threshing floor of Ornan, Elijah's fire on Carmel and at Horeb, the coal of fire that touched the lips of Isaiah, Ezekiel's wheels of fire under God's chariot throne, and Malachi's final promise of the refiner sitting at his fire to purify the sons of Levi. All of these Old Testament references speak of God's inaccessible light, ineffable glory, and marvelous power. There is also the promise and symbol of God's fire-baptism. Is there any message more needful for evangelism or more relevant?

But there can be no fire without ignition. Then follows combustion (which is always sacrificial) and the result (as in our public service) is light, heat, and power. Such terminology is up-to-date. It speaks of the laboratory, the factory, the garage. Everyone can follow the process, but no one can fully explain it. "I am come to send fire on the earth," said Jesus (Luke 12:49). When He does cast it in human hearts His ministers become flames of fire. This was the significance of the supernatural phenomena at Pentecost. "The tongues parting asunder" (R.V.), says Wetstein, were originally one mighty flame. It (not they) sat upon each of them," symbolical of the Holy Spirit who gave them utterance. The Apostles, after such experiences, became what Jesus said John the Baptist was, "a burning and a shining light." The burning must come before the shining. We cannot reverse the process.

What does fire do? How does it act? It has fourfold energy in nature and in the realm of spirit.

1. Fire separates and unites; it tears apart and welds together. So does the Holy Spirit. Fire follows the law of cleavage when by its combusive action it tears wood and coal into their elements. Fire separates. Think of the in-

tolerance of Christ, His divisive demands, His stern rebukes, His sevenfold woe to the church leaders of his day. Immediately after His promise of a fire-baptism, He says, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division" (Luke 12:51). Christ's very presence demands decision. He divides all humanity by His Advent—to the right and to the left, to highest heaven or deepest hell. In Christ forgiveness joy and peace; without Christ, without hope, without God. When great multitudes followed Him, He turned and said, "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).

But even as His fire separates, so it also unites indissolubly—things broken asunder are soldered in the fire. Our sectarian divisions and parochial prejudices disappear in the furnace of His love. Our race problems and class hatreds and ecclesiastical disputes dissolve when brought close enough to His crucible. All the copper, iron, silver, brass, and gold melt into a new substance—the bell metal of heaven, vocal with the harmony of the Holy Spirit. In Christ there is "neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female," East nor West. Such Christian unity is not artificial but supernatural. In fire-baptism we not only believe in, but *live* in, the communion of saints. That too is evangelism.

2 Again fire purifies. Jesus Christ is the crucible of character. He is the purgatory of His saints, not hereafter but now. When we draw near He will "set our iniquities before us, our secret sins in the light of his countenance." All meanness, hatred, envy, criticism, suspicion, jealousy, disappear when he sits as a refiner and thoroughly purges the sons of Levi.

"I thought His love would weaken,  
As more and more He knew me,  
But it burneth like a beacon,  
Its light and heat go through me."

We have seen in an earlier chapter that there is no search-

light for sin so powerful and penetrating as to sit at the foot of the Cross. *There* we receive, again and again, not only our message but our commission and our passion for evangelism. He that is forgiven much loves much. Love so amazing, so divine, demands our whole life and all our powers. Such love is living flame.

3. Fire also consumes. It destroys what is fit only to be burned. As the incinerator in an army camp exists not to purify but to destroy, so the fire of God puts away forever from the gaze of men all the dross of our mistakes and follies, all the dregs of our regrets and failures. Read the story of Peter's restoration. If we are truly repentant the fire takes care of all the wood, the hay and the stubble of our ministry. It cannot touch the gold and silver and precious stones. As David said, "Thou knowest my foolishness and my sins are not hid from thee." No, they were not. Yet God's fire of cleansing made of David a man after his own heart. Christ restored Peter.

4. Fire has energy and power. It is one of the most powerful forces in nature and in man's service. All our manufacturing genius goes back to Tubal Cain, who first built a fire in his mother Zillah's hut and "became the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron" (Gen. 4:22).

The fire of God is his Holy Spirit. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses to me." The wisdom of God and the power of God were manifested at Pentecost. God's energy was felt when Peter spoke boldly and preached the Gospel of the Cross to those who crucified our Saviour. Three thousand converts were baptized in one day (Acts 2:41). "Fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles."

The Gospel spread from Jerusalem to Samaria, to Antioch, to Ephesus, to Rome and the borders of the empire in one generation. The flame that separates, unites, consumes, and purifies also spreads like a prairie fire! What glorious symbolism for the ministry of evangelism! The



Gospel goes from heart to heart, from house to house, from city to city. "Behold," says the Apostle James, "how great a forest is kindled by how small a fire; for the tongue is a fire." The tongue of the wicked; but also the tongue of the righteous. One burns with the blaze of hell; the other is fanned by the flame of heaven. The one is only "a wandering star, to which is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever and ever." The other is as the shining light that shineth more and more to the perfect day. "Ye are the light of the world," and a city that is set on the hill of God cannot be hid.

Who can put a limit to the latent energies, the divine capacities, the supernatural power that result in any life wholly surrendered to God and set on flame by His Spirit? Think of the great evangelists in the history of the church—those who rediscovered the heart of the Gospel and proclaimed it abroad—John Huss, Wycliffe, Luther, John Knox, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, George Whitefield, Charles Finney, Charles Spurgeon, Dwight L. Moody, and their successors in every land and age.

Every spiritual revival began in some evangelist's heart, chosen of God and surrendered to God. Read the Acts of the Apostles and the history of the Church. Chapter after chapter, it is the record of a flaming ministry—ignition, combustion, dynamic, and illumination.

What matchless courage against all opposition! What patience in seeming defeat, what love for all humanity bursting through race or class prejudice! What self-discipline in ages of self-indulgence, what boldness in proclaiming a message, which, in their day and in ours, was to the worldly-wise foolishness and to the self-satisfied moralist a stumbling-block!

Yet with that message of the Crucified-Resurrected Saviour they turned the world upside down and right side up, intellectually, socially, and morally. In the words of Harnack:

"About the year 50 Christianity was an ellipse whose foci were Jerusalem and Antioch: fifty years later these foci were Ephesus

and Rome. The colossal change implied in this proves the greatness of Paul's work and the work done by the first Christian missionaries." \*

So vast was the prairie fire of evangelism kindled by the tongues of flame at Pentecost!

For, as Deissmann puts it, it was "the lightning of Damascus that found plenty of inflammable material in the soul of the young persecutor. We see the flames shoot up and we feel that the glow then kindled, lost none of its force in Paul the aged." \*\*

In this respect, as a flaming evangelist, Paul rises sheer above all other missionaries. Xavier and Livingstone approached him in world-conquering instinct; St. Bernard, Francis of Assisi, or Whitefield, in passion for souls; but Paul surpasses them all in his throbbing heart of love, his ceaseless enterprise, his influence over men, his devotion to Christ, his impetuous forward movement and utter contempt of suffering. From the moment of his conversion to the day he left prison for martyrdom Paul had but one passion. His love for his Saviour and *his* evangel (he calls it "my gospel") burned with more and more brightness to the very end. At the age of sixty he engaged in almost superhuman labors with a body scarred and worn by long travel and persecution. This also was his great literary period. During the half year of his third missionary journey he wrote three epistles, the greatest of all his epistles, that to the Roman, his "thunderbolt Epistle to the Galatians," and the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which throbs with the sorrows of a wounded man and reveals the story of his own inner life—the fires of desire, fear, and hope burning in his soul for his converts. If ever a minister of Christ was a flame of fire it was Paul, the "man in Christ Jesus"—the greatest thinker of his age, the one to whom we owe the emancipation of the Early Church from its Jewish nationalism, and whose Epistles throb with life today wherever the Gospel has been proclaimed. The secret of it all lies in the two words which

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\* Harnack's *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. I, p. 83.

\*\* *St. Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History*, p. 123.

he uses one hundred and sixty-four times as his characteristic expression of Christianity—ἐν χριστῷ IN CHRIST.

"Christ! I am Christ's and let that name suffice you,  
Ay, for me too He greatly hath sufficed:  
Lo, with no winning words I would entice you,  
Paul has no honor and no friend but Christ.

"Yes, without cheer of sister or of daughter,  
Yes, without stay of father or of son,  
Lone on the land and homeless on the water,  
Pass I in patience till the work be done.

"Yea, thro' life, death; thro' sorrow and thro' sinning,  
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:  
Christ is the end, for Christ is the beginning,  
Christ the beginning for the end is Christ." \*

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\* First two and last stanzas of Frederic W. H. Myers, *St. Paul*.  
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