

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

GLEANINGS FROM THE PASTORS STUDY

by Pastor Tom L Daniel, Waco Texas USA

First Collected Edition 2023

Front cover: Pastor Tom Daniel
standing outside the
entrance to Tabernacle
Baptist church, Waco, Texas

Back cover: Tabernacle Baptist church
Waco, Texas.

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INTRODUCTION

"The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those that published it" (Psalm 68:11). Even in times when faithful witnesses appear most scarce, the Lord has "His own," tucked away in His love, serving at greatly divergent locations of earth. One of the men who kept up a good ministry in the Southern portion of the United States beginning in the 1950s, was TOM L. DANIEL (July 6, 1906 - Oct. 1, 1972) of Waco, Texas.

Born early in the 20th Century in Texas, Daniel came from a long line of Kentucky ancestors. He always believed that a rudimentary love of the truth was his heritage from those stalwart Kentucky pioneer Christians, some Baptists and some Methodists. His ancestors had labored without ceasing to carve out good communities in their home state, and when they arrived in Texas they apparently worked even harder. Little is known of Pastor Daniel's childhood. His schooling was elementary, but his love of reading kept up his training and prepared him (in God's good providence) for the work he would do when he entered the pastorate in later life.

Evidently Tom Daniel was around 30 years old when he began attending the services of Tabernacle Baptist Church, South 15th St., Waco, Texas, under the pastoral care of the late A. REILLY COPELAND. Pastor Copeland was a fiery preacher, a hard "sin-fighter," something of a "fundamentalist" and a dispensationalist - leading a strong church in the 1930s known throughout Texas and the Southwest. He sold many books, conducted effective radio broadcasts, and was constant in his tirade against "modernism." Having been well trained, with a good theological library and a Presbyterian background, A. R. Copeland was a Calvinist, and his controversy with

modernism was based on *sounder theology* than that of his fundamentalist peers. In his pulpit ministry, Copeland stressed a true work of grace and deep Holy Spirit conviction and repentance as essential to salvation, this latter emphasis causing a stir and, at times, spiritual awakening throughout Tabernacle's congregation.

In other words, Tabernacle Baptist Church, under Dr. Copeland's pastorate, was in many ways unlike other independent Baptist or fundamentalist assemblies in those days!

Tom Daniel made a profession of faith, became singer and preaching assistant under Copeland for a time. Then near the outbreak of World War II, the question hit Tom Daniel as powerfully as a German grenade: *Have you been born again? When have you ever seen yourself a poor lost sinner, totally depraved, falling at the feet of the Lord and begging for His mercy?* He said, *"I was busy praying for another lost sinner, when God opened my heart to see that I too was lost and needed someone to pray for me!"* He then took his place among the large company of "seekers" in Copeland's congregation. But the Lord gloriously delivered Tom Daniel in the fall of 1941. He came back with renewed fervor, preaching the gospel of Christ, as called on by his pastor. Recognizing in Brother Daniel the sincere zeal of a true convert, Copeland soon led the church to appoint Daniel as assistant pastor.

In order to support his wife and family, Brother Daniel worked as a truck driver during those years, living in a small house on Gurley St. in Waco. He acquired a good basic theological library, studied hard, and was content to remain in the shadows of the older pastor for many years. Changes were taking place in the church congregation. Large numbers of people continued to be awakened

under the preaching of Dr. Copeland, supplemented by Daniel's Bible teaching and preaching services in homes and mission outposts. And no doubt many were brought to a true saving knowledge of Christ.

The "book store" started by Copeland occupied most of the walls of the church's auditorium and was well-stocked with fundamentalist and Calvinistic literature. Visitors came from nearby Baylor University, many customers from all parts of the city, and tourists constantly sought out the place. Copeland enjoyed spending many hours working as "manager" of the "best stocked Christian bookstore in the Southwest." As this work grew it occupied more and more of his time. In the fall of 1955, at age 66, Copeland suddenly presented his resignation as Tabernacle church pastor, but requested to continue with the bookstore. Of course Copeland's leaving the pastorate proved greatly upsetting to the church. What would become of their unique ministry? Who could possibly fill the pulpit of an A. REILLY COPELAND? Copeland knew! He advised the church to call TOM L. DANIEL! 14 years later, Pastor Daniel was to write, in his annual congregational letter: "You chose me as your pastor on December 18, 1955. My education was very limited; my needs were numerous and urgent, and I was utterly incapable of making any provision for them. All those needs the Lord alone supplied; and others were merely instruments by which He conferred His bounty... Therefore let us not on this occasion forget the special mercies we enjoyed... Having seen the hand of the Lord in delivering poor guilty sinners from all their enemies, let us pay tribute to whom tribute belongs, and honor to whom honor belongs. The message of the gospel of grace has been blessed and sent out by this church to a good portion of the world."

When Daniel first assumed the leadership of that church, he naturally sought to follow in the style and format of Copeland. That didn't work for him, as he soon came to see. So he turned aside from constant tirades against "modernism," which had been a Copeland trademark, to preaching the old Puritanical, experimental Gospel of God's sovereign saving grace in Christ. Like his predecessor, Daniel used radio, speaking each Lord's Day morning over the local station WACO. Later tape machines were purchased in order to copy the programs for a chain of stations, ultimately reaching out with Daniel's GOSPEL OF GRACE BROADCAST from the Heart of Texas, to the Pacific Northwest, and to the Carolinas.

Daniel published many of his radio sermons in mimeographed booklet form. These soon found ready reception by Christian readers in various parts of America and the world. A selection of these titles are now reprinted in this volume.

We trust that with the aid of the Holy Spirit, you will receive many spiritual blessings as you read these gleanings from the ministry of our friend, "the Beloved Texan" and Baptist pastor, T. L. Daniel.

Wylie Fulton
2022

THE LEPROSY OF SIN

Satan's great role throughout history is to keep the sinner blinded and the fact of sin concealed. These are the very things upon which the world prides itself, but which lure men to eternal damnation. The ministry is so trained today that every device is used to confirm the sinner in his sins. The modern ministry bypasses Holy Spirit conviction and repentance, and by this means allows the sinner to get into the church with as little knowledge of his wicked depraved condition as possible, making him feel that he is doing God a favor and helping in His kingdom. They studiously ignore, conceal and virtually deny the fact of sin and its potency in human affairs. "The whole world lieth in the evil one" (1 John 5:19); he is also its prince, and since the evil one is the author of sin, it is not surprising that his utmost endeavors should be constantly put forth to blind the minds of his deceived victims as to the presence of sin in the world and its disastrous effects upon mankind ...

That man is by nature a sinner and totally unable to help himself, is denied in the great institutions of the world, whether they be secular or religious. Whatever line of books one may examine, the same falsehood as to the real character of human society will be found. Books of science, encyclopedias, biographies, tell only of the achievements of great and worthy men. Likewise most of the religious books tell the same false story; and few there are that declare the truth as to this world and as to God's judgment upon it; but nevertheless the Word of our God standeth sure. Every form of the lie has an acknowledged standing in literature, but the truth has none. The effect of all this deceitfulness of sin is to harden the hearts of the people, so that they will not hear

the Word of the Lord concerning the real character of the world and its works - so that they will not believe that "the whole world lieth in the evil one," and that he is its ruler and god. And so they become utterly indifferent to the declared purpose of God for the glory of Christ and His co-heirs in the world to come ...

When the soul is quickened by the Spirit of God he is made to realize the truth of the Scriptures. From the crown of his head to the sole of his feet he is covered with shame and guilt before God and his own conscience. Neither he himself nor any other creature is able to cleanse him from his shame, make retribution for this guilt or improve anything at all in him. Now he becomes humble, meek and pliable before God and man. The same Spirit who acquainted him with the reality of his misery also opens his heart to the truth of Christ's deliverance. Now he discovers in that Saviour all that he needs. And thus the sinner is dethroned and Christ becomes his Lord and Saviour.

Excerpt from Tom L. Daniel's book on total depravity, entitled The Leprosy of Sin.

THE SINNERS FALL AND GOD'S RESCUE MAN'S TOTAL DEPRAVITY

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12.

We read the occasion of this statement in the third chapter of Genesis spoken of the first couple. We read a portion of this to see how they were estranged from God, and how they ran away.

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." - Genesis 3:8-11.

In this we see the story that is followed in the heart of every sinner since that day. They pass the excuse for their wicked and corrupt condition on to someone else. Every man seeks to evade the fact that he is a depraved, wicked, hellbound, hellborn and hell deserving sinner. And as long as he can work any possible means to evade the fact that he is justly condemned, he will do it. He will never face himself as he truly is, untill the Spirit of God completely knocks down every prop - every hold that he has, and leaves him stripped naked before God, so that he has no covering.

We read in John 15: 22, that Jesus said "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin." Now that is a deplorable condition - yet a healthy sign. When God strips a sinner down so that he finds no refuge in his religion, his prayers, his Bible study, in anything that he has; so that they all become as filthy rags to

him, he breaks down in the dust of repentance and says with Job "I abhor myself." Man's wicked and depraved condition is a fact he denies until the Spirit of God by the unfolding of the word reveals it to him. Without divine restraint man will follow his own bent nature which is always away from God. So very corrupt and determined is the tendency of the human heart that man desires only to be alienated from God. When he comes into the presence of God, and God's presence is manifested to him, it terrifies his heart, and stirs all the wrath and enmity of his soul; he becomes miserable and doesn't want to be in the presence of God. That's why when the gospel is preached in the power of the Spirit, sinners must take their place as sinners, or else they have to move out. So incurable and self-willed is the spirit of rebellion and hostility against God that their progress is only from iniquity to iniquity, and can only lead to that death which is the wages of sin.

The sinner doesn't want to face his sins. He does not want to know about them. Oh, he is willing to go to a certain length, but he is unwilling to face his sins, and take all the blame, except as the Spirit cuts him down. His everlasting ruin is inevitable if God should let him alone. If God deprives him of the lifegiving power of His Spirit, and the blessed instruments of appointment through which the Spirit acts in salvation, and puts forth no energy of his grace to rescue him from destruction, then all is done that needs to be done to make his destruction sure and without remedy. I'll tell you my friend, when God leaves you, you are gone. You'd better not trifle with God when He troubles your heart. You have this warning in God's word - "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov.29:1) You can't trifle with God. You had better hear Him because it is an awful thing to be brought face to face with your condition, and be unwilling to acknowledge it. When you run away from it you are hardening yourself, and turning away from the only mercy there is.

There is no easy way, or easy route to be saved. God says the way of the transgressor is hard. It is true that salvation is free, but when men are brought face to face with their wicked undone condition, there is a bitter warfare. You have the enmity of the flesh, you have the devil warring in you, and you

are cooperating with him in it. So the only thing that can be done, is that God should overpower you, and make you willing. We read in Psalm 110:3 "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power", and God does temper the will of a sinner and break him down before Him, but He has to jerk everything that he has out from under him - he is left with nothing. Psal.130:1, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee O Lord." And it must be out of the depths, for that is the only place God deals with a sinner - out of the depths of his wicked undone condition.

There can be no swifter judgment, no more direct and dreadful misery than for sinners to be forsaken of God, bereft of His grace, and allowed to fill themselves with their own ways. When God leaves a sinner alone, he is left to sit in the darkness of everlasting despair and condemnation. He must remain forever a sinner against God. And as such he will forever be the victim of his own passion, for the wickedness of his heart would have it no other way. God pity men and women when they are faced with the reality of their condition and unwilling to come clean with God. When we say that man is totally depraved we mean that the entrance of sin in the human constitution has affected every part and faculty of man's being. That's why it's impossible for you to make a decision for God. The only decision you can make is against God. Total depravity means that man in spirit, soul and body, is the slave of sin and the captive of the devil, and walks "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2.) A power outside of the sinner must take hold of him and lift him every inch of the way. The sinner is free, but free in one direction only - free to fall, free to sin - (Romans 6:20) "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." The sinner is free to do as he pleases; but his nature is to sin. Except by the restraining grace of God, the sinner gives full vent to his feelings which leads him to live for himself. "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." (Rom. 1:32). "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin." (2 Peter 2:14) This Scripture shows such a class of men.

You can substitute every sin there is for the word adultery - having eyes full of that; that is, the "Lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life" and they cannot cease from sin. Read Rom. 8:8, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Here is Spiritual inability. Then we read in Hosea 4:17, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." So when God departs from men, leaves them, forsakes them, and hides His face from them, lets them alone - then they justly gain the punishment which they deserve as the harvest of their own sowing, and the fruit of their own planting. It is then we see the absolute necessity of God's dealing with man's heart, bringing him out of darkness into the glorious light and liberty and life in Christ Jesus. Did you ever see that you were a vile sinner? Were you ever broken down before Him? Oh, but you say you know that different people have different experiences. An experience is not salvation. Every sinner that is saved certainly has an experience, but the experience is not salvation. Christ is salvation.

Man is a rational being, and as such he is responsible and accountable to God, but to say that he is a free moral agent is to deny that he is totally depraved. Because man's will is governed by his mind and heart and because these faculties have been polluted and corrupted by sin, then it is only natural that if ever man is to turn or move in a Godward direction, God Himself must work in him "Both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13). And this is a mystery. The word of God is full of the mysteries of God. But the mystery of all mysteries is when God makes the sinner a new creation. Nicodemus couldn't understand it with his natural mind-although a mighty man in knowledge he couldn't understand it. He said "How can these things be?" And it is a mystery, but praise God, when He transforms a sinner, when He makes a new creation out of him, then it is the mystery becomes a part of him. He knows about it. (Col. 1:27).

As a creature, natural man is responsible to love, obey, and serve God; as a sinner he is responsible to repent and believe the gospel. For the sinner to come to Christ that he might have life he must realize the awful danger of his situation; he must see that the sword of divine justice is suspended over his head; he must be awakened to the fact that there is but a

step betwixt him and death, and that after death is the judgment. Jesus said (John 6:44)"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." And he does draw your heart, my friend; He does it by opening your eyes to your wicked and hellish way, and to your wicked rebellion against God. And that sinner as God awakens him and exposes his heart, begins to cry for mercy. That's the way God draws your heart, and that's when you begin to cry for mercy. Because when you see yourself a wicked, hell-deserving sinner, brother then you will cry for mercy. You'll cry for mercy. You will know that you need mercy, and you will never get saved until you realize that salvation is by the mercy of God. Mercy flows through only one channel - the precious blood of Christ. The blood of Christ alone can blot out sin.

The heart of the natural man is so "desperately wicked" that if he is left to himself he will never come to Christ. To come to Christ for life the sinner must abandon his own righteousness and be willing to be made the righteousness of God in Christ; it is to disown his own wisdom and be guided by Christ's; it is to repudiate his own will and be ruled by Christ's will; it is to unreservedly receive the Lord Jesus as his Lord and Saviour, knowing there is no way of escape apart from God's divine grace. But is the sinner willing to take such an attitude before God? Our Lord gives the answer in John 5:40, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." No; for in the first place he does not realize the danger of his situation. He must be quickened: (Eph. 2:1)"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." That word quickened means brought to life. You are made alive to the wicked and undone condition. In Rom. 7:9, Paul says, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Then it is by the law of God; He says (Gal. 3:24) "The law is our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ." We are made alive to our wicked and hellish heart, and to the deceptive way of our walk in this world. We come before him in mercy and grace that we might receive Him. Men, when left to themselves, will not acknowledge all their righteousnesses are as filthy rags, but like the Pharisee (Luke 18:11), will thank God that they are not as other men. They are not ready to receive Christ as their Lord and Saviour because they are unwilling to

part from their idols. They will hazard their own soul's eternal welfare, and exposure at the judgment bar of God where there is no mercy, rather than to be exposed by the light of God's countenance here before their fellowman, where there is mercy and grace. I tell you, it takes a mighty power to bring the sinner down, hence we say that, left to himself, the natural man is so depraved at heart that he cannot come to Christ. Man is at ease apart from the operation of the Holy Spirit, his spiritual eyes are darkened, and his spiritual ears are deaf so that he cannot hear. When he is disturbed by the alarms of conscience he flees to any refuge but Christ.

Now you preachers go ahead and pull your little punches. Go ahead and get sinners into a profession, but they will be made twofold more a child of hell (Mat. 23:15; Lk. 6:39). Some men brag that, give them fifteen minutes and they can lead a lost man to Christ. You also hear them bragging about how many souls they have won for Christ. Why a man who makes a statement like that is blind; he doesn't know the Lord. He has never seen the hopeless and helpless condition of a sinner. Have you ever seen that? If you have ever seen yourself a hopeless, helpless sinner, you will not go around bragging about how many you have led to Christ. You know you couldn't lead yourself to Christ much less someone else. It is only the Lord that can draw the heart, and nowhere in His word does He speak of anyone leading another to Christ. You say, didn't Paul and Silas speak to the Philippian jailor? Yes, they told him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ - that was the message they had for him, but they didn't lead him to Christ. It was God who convicted that man and brought him down. Salvation is of the Lord. They told him what Christ would do for him. You say, well, isn't that leading men to Christ? No, it is just declaring a fact. It is Christ that draws them by the cords of His love and by the power of His Spirit men see what they are.

In Prov. 1:23, we have this command from the Lord "Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." The recourse of the depraved heart is found as it answered back with the words of verse 29, "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." That is a deplorable condition. When

men hate the knowledge of their true condition they run to someone who will prop them up. They find some false prophet or some blinded religious worker to prop them up, - who will say "the devil is bothering you; you are alright." They are both the same in heart, and console each other in their blinded condition and hatred of God, even when he is given space for repentance. God gives us a picture in Amos 8:11, 12, of a great famine that shall come upon man when God withdraws the influence of His Spirit and word. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water; but of hearing the word of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." What a terrible thing? Sinner you had better get out of that setback condition and quit running away from God; you had better hear the word of God. You despise God's word and go on as if you were going to live a million years. You will live a million years, but not here on this earth. You will live a million years in the pits of hell if you don't repent. Heb. 12:16, 17, is descriptive of man when forsaken of God, as seen in the life of Esau - "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Such a condition can only prevail in those who have been enlightened by the word and the striving of the Holy Spirit; and who draw back short of a full and complete work. I tell you, you better make it your business sinner, to come and hear the word of God. You better make it your business to cry for mercy. You better make it the fervent desire of your heart to cry and fall on him for mercy because that is the only deliverance there is - the Lord Jesus Christ. It isn't a preacher, or a priest, that gets you out of this condition. It isn't a church that will get you out; it isn't your baptism, or speaking in tongues - it is Christ only, who breaks the power of sin over you. You read in Col. 1:13,14, He delivered them from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. The Lord told Nicodemus that unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of

God. The sinner can see his own kingdom but not the kingdom of God.

You cannot get the full extent of this dreadful condition unless you follow the lost soul to its final chamber of despair. We see him dark and lonely (he is sitting in hell) and unpitied; sitting in solitude, among millions like himself; reminded daily with embittered regrets over the folly of a life of wasted privileges which have passed; feeding only upon his own recollections of unnecessary guilt, groaning in anguish that it cannot be forgotten; crying in sorrow, where there is no sympathy; uttering piercing complaints, only to be heard by others in like sorrow; shrinking, pining, under the wrath of a neglected God, only because the sinner compelled God to leave him alone. He said leave me alone; leave me alone - leave me alone! I will go where they can comfort me. For this the sinner trades the peace which passeth understanding, and pleasures ever more. I wonder if that is your case sinner. I wonder if you are in that predicament. You think you are going to spend eternity somewhere. If God has troubled your heart, if it seems that He has torn your soul apart and you are left as a helpless and hopeless one, let me point you to the Lord Jesus Christ who takes away the sin of the world. The soul that turns to Christ - receives him, feeds upon heavenly food for time and eternity; and in both is nourished and supported by divine power, enjoying a happy contrast to the evils of spiritual famine.

Sinful men are sanctified and made holy through the truth; but it is God who sanctifies them. And if they waste the opportunities which He affords them to gain this spiritual increase, or if He withholds the power of His grace, then Paul plants and Apollos waters in vain. Men have wearied God with their sins, and made Him to serve with their iniquities, until He has arisen and departed from them. They have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness and have corrupted God's sacred presence by claiming familiarity with Him. So God help you dear sinner. We are praying for you, that God will bring deliverance. Coldness and indifference and spiritual slumber creep over men's minds, and bind them up. They hear without feeling - almost without consciousness. They are exhorted,

but it avails nothing. Come, dear sinner, bow before the Lord, and cry for His mercy.

God will not strive with man always. This warning we find throughout the word of God. We find it in the life of Cain, who cried out "My punishment is greater than I can bear." We find it in the life of Esau who cried, "Wilt thou not bless me, even me also," but he found no merciful response; no place could be found for repentance; though he sought it carefully with tears. We find it in the life of Judas, as he was turned away when he returned the thirty pieces of silver, and cried "I have betrayed innocent blood." We find it in the life of the Children of Israel, as recorded in 1 Cor. 10:1-14. Verses 11, 12, give the faithful warning, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Vain are the pretensions of all those, whatever they may have of the gospel; who live in sin, who love not God, nor seek His glory. When the conscience of a sinner is wounded with guilt, and oppressed with fears of divine wrath, this is grace and mercy being extended, you are called out of the world, into fellowship with Jesus Christ. Called you are, out of a state of open rebellion against God, into a state of reconciliation and friendship, a conscious peace and heavenly joy. Such a holy calling will inspire a noble incentive to obedience. Yes, beloved, your calling is truly noble. You are called out of darkness into marvellous light and out of worse than Egyptian bondage, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. If you heed not this warning, the word of God and the gospel of Christ will be an eternal witness against you; it will be the savor of death unto death to your soul: while God, even God Himself, will be your eternal enemy.

GOD'S GLORY IN BESTOWING REPENTANCE

The message of repentance is more or less bypassed by the average minister. The message which is prepared by most of them is one that will magnify the works of man, edify the mind of man, and glorify the work that man does. But man never knows anything about the glory of God until he first finds out how he himself has disgraced the Lord. Now the apostle Paul was very clear in all of his epistles, and three times, I believe, in the New Testament he gives a testimony how the Lord delivered him, an enemy of God. In the commission that was given him, found in Acts 26:18, we read "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Verse 19 - "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." In the last part of verse 20, we read "That they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

Man in his natural estate has every avenue of approach to God closed. He has nothing in himself by which he can approach God. God must come to him. Therefore we read in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." His soul is a death chamber with all the windows darkened, for we read "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Then we read "dead in trespasses and sins." - "The natural mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Thus we see sin is a transgression of the law.

The first and chief thing required by the law is supreme love to God. Now this lack of love and obedience to God and this rebellion against Him is our great wickedness of which we must repent. Preachers, more or less, are

preaching on sins instead of the sin which is man's deep seated enmity against God. But that is our great wickedness of which we must repent. It will never be in our hearts to repent unless we truly see our blame. We can never truly see our blame until our eyes are opened to see the nature of our sins which are exceedingly many and exceedingly vile, and to perceive the glorious work of God - that is, His redemption in Christ, His longsuffering and forbearance which leadeth thee to repentance.

Now the commission that the apostle Paul received, as revealed in Acts 26:18, was first to open their eyes. The sinner is blind morally. He cannot evaluate the right and wrong of any matter, as to its relationship to God, because the first principle of right judgment is impaired. You read "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Then we read also "Having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart." Now the apostle Paul also declares "But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away," (2 Cor. 3:14-16).

A sense of the great evil of sin is essential to true repentance. Man's appraisal of sin cannot be judged aright until it is seen in the light which God gives through His blessed Holy Spirit. You read in 2 Cor.4:6, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Thus a deep sense of the evil of sin is plainly essential to repentance. In fact it is from this that repentance immediately springs; so that is the

work of God in bringing the sinner to see who he is. My friends, you better weigh well what is now being presented if you value your soul. Because the deceitfulness of sin may have hitherto closed your mind to the terrible condition you are in. If this be your case, are you willing now to be undeceived? Are you willing to really see yourself; to let the light of the glorious gospel discover the spring from whence all your iniquities flow? Then be assured of this one thing, never was any sinner pardoned while he was impenitent. And never was a soul really penitent while insensible to the evil of sin. Never did a sinner perceive the great evil of sin till he became acquainted with the infinitely great and glorious God against whom he has sinned. That is the purpose of the light of God, so He says in 2 Cor. 4:6. God takes that light and pierces down to the very depths of the heart, into the deep crevices of the darkness of it, and discovers the deceitfulness of the heart to the sinner. This brings terror and fear to him to know that he stands in the presence of a holy and righteous God covered with his wickedness, deceit, malignity, and the many other things which possess his heart as a hopeless, helpless sinner.

You may have been sorry for your sins when you got caught, thus exposing you to shame before men, or because the sin has brought down God's chastening hand upon your body or temporal affairs - but if you have never seen how great the sin that is against that God Who is infinitely glorious in Himself, then your repentance was not genuine. God has not pardoned you. Man must repent, not because of the shame of exposure before people, but because the Spirit of God has brought him face to face with the reality that he has sinned against God. But until we are brought face to face with the reality of what we are, then we live in a world of unreality. Because the reality of life can

only be known as it is presented by the Spirit of God and the word of God.

So a man who has had his eyes opened is brought to the knowledge of himself, the knowledge of his condition and the knowledge of his ways. When his condition is acknowledged, the Psalmist describes it thus - "Surely his salvation is nigh to them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psa. 85:9, 10) "Righteousness shall go before him; (and-note my friends it is righteousness) and shall set us in the ways of his steps," verse 13. God clears the way for the sinner not only by blotting out his past but also his present and his future. Until then he is blind both morally and spiritually. He cannot see a single divine object - that is spiritually. He has no perception of anything pertaining to God, to Christ, or to heaven. Certainly he will have a smattering of knowledge as to the right and wrong of things, but my friend the right and wrong of things as we see them is not always God's appraisal of what is right and wrong. Every man has his own standard of righteousness, but the only true measurement of righteousness God will accept is Christ. He says of man "That all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." So you must have your eyes opened to what you are. Surely only the divine power of God can bring such a proud heart into the dust of repentance. Man gropes in moral darkness. He thinks he sees and assumes the right to weigh and judge things in the light of his own knowledge... even upon Scripture and of God himself. So the language of a sinner's heart is - I care not what God requires; I am going to have my own way. I care not what God thinks of me; I refuse to submit to His authority. I care not what He has threatened to do to those who defy Him; I will not be intimidated. Certainly he is not so brazen as to put it into

these words, but his attitude is expressed by turning upon the true message of God. And the true message of God cannot be separated from the messenger whom He chooses to carry the message to you. They say well, that is his interpretation; that is what he believes about it. Or, Well, I see it this way; and, I don't understand it that way. My friend, you better stop arguing with the truth of God. Take your place as a sinner. It is a cinch that if you are right as you say you are that God will answer to it with the revelation of His word and His Spirit. When the Holy Spirit enlightens and convicts the soul, the language of the sinner is this: "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

I want you to know my friend that the salvation of God is a closed corporation. When I use that term I mean by it that it is between you and God. It is not between you and your pastor, or you and the priest, or you and any other mediator. "For there is no other mediator between God and man." There is just one, He tells us in Timothy - "which is Christ Jesus the Lord." You come face to face with Him. You come before Him the first visitation as a sinner - as a sinner condemned - unclean. You come before Him, not telling Him what to do, or what you know, or how well trained you are; but you come before Him as a helpless, hopeless, doomed and damned sinner. You acknowledge it from your heart. It is then that God can deal with you and bring you out of that terrible and damnable condition that you are in. Yes, you have to see yourself as God sees you.

So when a sinner's eyes are opened, he sees only darkness. Just darkness - he has nothing; he is closed in. When we say darkness, we mean spiritual darkness. The things which he thought were so well known to him amazingly fly away. The goodness of God which he had proclaimed so long (that God is so good) - these things flee

from him. He sees that he is under the wrath of God. That is the darkness he is brought into. As to his state - he is blind; as to his position - he is in darkness. When his eyes are opened and the bright light streams into his soul, he then begins to judge himself and his ways according to God's measure. He sees his guilt; he sees his rebellion; he sees his infidel reasoning. He sees the vanity of his mind, his pride and ambition, his selfishness and worldliness. All these things are judged and abhorred. You remember the lesson of the mighty man Job - He said "I abhor myself. I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear but now mine eyes see, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in sackcloth and ashes."

The Psalmist speaks on this wise, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance" Psa, 90:8. You know what we are and what the world thinks we are are two different things. When the Spirit of God begins to drive home and discover the deep darkness of that heart, He brings out the secret things too. Yes sir! There is nothing hidden from Him. He says, "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." So all our sins that we would like to forget, God remembers. Sin is not merely what we think wrong, not what our neighbors think wrong - no, nor what ministers tell us is wrong; it is what the Lord of all thinks wrong. In many things we offend all, says James. "There is not a just man upon the earth," says Solomon, "that doeth good and sinneth not." Our ignorance must be fearfully great if our own conscience also does not tell us the same thing. He speaks of our secret sins... and these as though they are sins of which we are guilty. Is there a person here, or listening to me throughout radio land whose conscience does not accuse of many such things as these. Are not our hidden transgressions our heaviest and worst?

Sin appears to God in its true color. Sin cannot be known, except by God and near God. Beneath His all seeing eye, sin is stripped of all its poor disguise. In the holiness of His presence his depravity comes out. His guilt, pollution, and baseness stands out and exposed. Thus to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light is the work of God in bringing sinners to repentance. I will tell you, sin is more than picture-show going, beer drinking, and carousing around. It is a far deeper thing than that. We can clean up and reform, but if the regenerating work of God by His Spirit has not discovered the deep darkness of your heart (not the deep darkness of the heart of fleshly things, but of rebellion and of failing to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself ...because on these two laws, says our Blessed Lord hang all laws), then you have not repented. When these laws are wrought in the heart of a repentant sinner, then God says "I will give you a new heart" and I will write my laws upon it. My Spirit will lead you forth and you will know who you are, and what you are, and to whom you must answer.

Fallen man is not on trial but is a criminal already sentenced. We read in John 3:18, "he that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already." Not will be - but is condemned already. Now that is your place sinner friend, under the condemnation of God. And that condemnation means judgment. And that judgment means separation from Him: for the separation of God from man is that judgment. He casts him out forever. We read "There is none righteous, no, not one" - not even you, my friend. "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God; they are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10-12). That is God's indictment

against each of us. No pleading will avail; no excuses will be accepted. We must repent.

The present issue between God and the sinner is, will man bow to Him? Have you ever bowed to Him as Lord? Will man endorse with his heart God's verdict? We don't want to have to admit that, do we? It is just here that the gospel meets us. It comes to us as those already lost, and those who are ungodly, and without strength, and enmity against God - so the word of God declares. The gospel of God is good news - only good news to the broken repentant heart. Hence the demand for repentance toward God before faith to our Lord Jesus Christ, as we read in Acts 20:21. The sinner's life history is set down before the Lord of Glory. We read in Psalm 90, "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." And the very fact that God keeps them there is self-evident that He may eventually set them before us. We all know that there are things in our memories of which we seldom think; but God remembers. He told a man in hell - Son remember. Brother he remembered too. And you will remember too. *And you will remember too.* When told of our secret sins, we remember them and each train of circumstances connected with them.

The scripture declares that when the rich man in hell begged for water to cool his parched tongue - God said, "Son, remember." This common operation of the memory may discover to us that at present we know but little of its power. Oh, our memory! It is an indelible record put there for ever and forever. It was designed to hold fast every idea that has ever passed through our minds. It is spoken of as "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched". Yes, our memory probes our conscience. Before the conscience is seared over this power is known. Sooner or later it will have it again. Then where will our sins be when

our eyes are opened whether it be in this life or the life to come? They will be where the transgressions of the people spoken of who when pricked in their hearts, cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They will be where Cain's foul offense was, when he said "My punishment is greater than I can bear." They will be where the sin of Judas was when he hanged himself. They will be before our eyes like those of wicked Pilate, never to be removed unless God removes them. It is God who will place them there. He touches the guilty conscience. He sets tormenting memory to work and arrays all our iniquities before our terrified eyes. They lay heavy as a mountain of lead upon us, and stick like arrows into the soul. Let me tell you my friend, it is an awful thing to fall into the hands of a living God, as Paul tells us in Hebrews. Such a vision caused the apostle Paul to cry out, "O wretched man that I am."

My friend, this presents a mighty grave picture. It presents a message that reveals to us where we stand before a Holy God. I would have you to know, my friend, that it is a mighty choice work of grace and mercy to have God open your eyes and your heart. You should count it the greatest privilege in the world, if God speaks to your heart this morning. Don't you turn away from that holy commandment of God that says "repent." Repent, for "God hath commanded all men everywhere to repent," so He says, in Acts 17. So you had better hear the word of God and let God deal with you heart. Forget about the shame of it - in this sense there is mercy. Forget about your own glories of the past, and let them fade as a leaf. The scripture says that our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. And they do fade as a leaf, and you are left there as a bare tree, with nothing but the naked limbs hanging on it. The leaves have passed away. God help you to repent and acknowledge your lost condition. Fly to Him for mercy while there is yet time -

“Today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart.”
May He give you grace to repent in dust and ashes - Job 42:5,6. "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give unto them beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for mourning, the ointment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousnesses, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Isaiah 61:3.

September 1963

GOD'S WORK OF REGENERATION

Introduction

God's work of regeneration is a gracious study. We have many, especially among our Baptist brethren, who believe and teach the doctrine of the New Birth. But it is a strange thing to me that men will preach this mystery of the New Birth, and declare it to be a complete and total work of God, using the metaphor that Christ used with Nicodemus (John 3:8), "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof," etc.) to show the Divine work of God and His sovereignty in it all; and yet they will deny the doctrine of election.

Men fight and become furious over the doctrine of election and say that it is not of God, putting it on the outside as a heretical perversion of the Word of God. But God's Divine sovereignty in choosing, electing, calling, is certainly told in this doctrine of the work of regeneration. This doctrine places it exactly where the Scripture says — in the hand of a sovereign God. It is His from beginning to end.

Need of Regeneration

This need is a fact that cannot be denied. It is an experimental work of grace which our Lord declares must be wrought in the sinner if he ever sees the kingdom of God. Sinner, you know nothing of the Lord's kingdom. His kingdom is a real kingdom. It has its inhabitants: those who are born of God. This is the principal doctrine of Christ, that as Prophet He came to teach; and as King to work in the heart. So imperative is this work of grace, that our Lord gives it a double emphasis: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee ..." All of God's sayings certainly are true, but to some there is affixed a special note of certainty, because of their extraordinary weight and because of man's unbelief.

So necessary is regeneration that a man cannot see, know or enjoy any of the graces that God bestows upon him without it. One may embrace this doctrine; he may declare its teachings and contend for its necessity, but until he experimentally goes through this cataclysmic change, whereby he is brought out of chaos and his whole bent nature put to death — until a new creative power is effective he is not in the kingdom of God but in the kingdom of Satan. Our Lord says one must be born again. That is, he must be renewed and turned by the Holy Ghost from nature to grace, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, according to Acts 26:18.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” Therefore the New Birth is necessary on account of the fall of man in Adam, and the consequences of it. In Adam all die, says the Word of God. As in Adam all have already died, because in Adam all sinned. We read again in Romans 5:19, “By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.”

Nature of Regeneration

Regeneration is a work of God from beginning to end. “By his own will begat he us by the word of truth.” Since all mankind was changed in Adam from what they were in a state of creation, then men must be changed in Christ from what they are in a state of corruption. Through Adam’s disobedience the whole world of mankind from generation to generation by relation were plunged into a state of corruption. Now this corrupt nature is not only hereditary but absolute. It is real, my friend. It is *enmity* with God — He says not “at enmity” but “ENMITY” with God. So we read in Job 14:4, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.” Every person that is born according to the course of nature is born *unclean*. If the root is corrupt, certainly the branches must be. Neither is your nature improved or mended though your parents be born

again. Our righteousness, (individually) is by grace, not by nature; not by natural generation but by spiritual regeneration.

There are but two states recorded in the Word of God; one saving, and the other damning; a state of sin and a state of righteousness. All men are divided into two ranks; some are slaves of the flesh, and others are led by the Spirit. Some live only for themselves, and some live unto God — there is no medium between them. Every man is in one or the other of these states. All, from the most beautiful moralist, to the most vicious toad in nature's field, from the rich young ruler who was not far from the kingdom of Heaven, to Judas who was in the very bottom of the pits of Hell. All are in a state of DEATH. We read that man is as a wild ass's colt, and no beast is more wild and brutish than man in his natural birth, and it is certain that he will remain in this wild and willful nature without grace: "For except a man be born again he cannot see, and cannot enter," says the Word of God, says the Blessed Son of God. Man cannot see the Kingdom of God, therefore he cannot know the Kingdom of God.

Man is Contrary to Regeneration

Follow me a little further. There must be a contrary nature to Satan before we have an enmity to him. We are never enemies of those who encourage us in what we approve. Now to prefer one's self above God is an essential part of our corrupt nature. Therefore all men by the law of nature are a law unto themselves, which in the last analysis is making ourselves our god. Self-esteem, self-dependence, self-seeking, is denying our affections and our subjection to the Sovereign God. Then the necessity of regeneration is the standing law of Heaven, and that "except a man be converted, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 18:3). This is necessary in order to obedience to the command of God, "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" (Read Ezek. 33:11.)

Man's obligation to God, to meet the just demands of His Law, is forever binding; because Christ died *for* sin that men might die *to* sin. Christ laid down His life that men might lay down their lusts. Thus His death is a city of refuge to the penitent and not a sanctuary for the presumptuous. God intended it to take men and women out of and not hold them in the mire of SIN. "He is the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). Now man and God can never be brought together until that enmity in the heart against God be removed.

Seeking to obey the Law of God is the first evidence of grace being shed upon a poor sinner. When the Apostle Paul was broken before the Lord, he was heard to cry out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" It is true that salvation — or regeneration — is not effected by human works, but nevertheless neither does salvation come apart from an obedient heart. The rich young ruler was loud in proclaiming his keeping of the Law, but he turned away sorrowful when obedience was demanded. God must change His own nature or the sinner's nature! There can be no friendly communion between two of different natures without the change of one of them into the likeness of the other.

The Dividing-Line of Regeneration

MAN by nature hates a Holy God, and looks upon Him with some dreadful notion, and is averse to all that God is, all that God has, and all that God demands. But regeneration is a change of a thoughtless, hard-hearted, rebellious sinner into a thoughtful, tender-hearted, obedient servant of God. Those who in times past gave only lip service to God are made to admire, to revere and to love Him as the Greatest and Best of beings, rejoicing in Him as their supreme happiness. Yes, something takes place when God regenerates a sinner. Regeneration is more than just church membership or a knowledge of God's Word. It is the implanting of the seeds or

principles of every grace and virtue in a heart that was entirely destitute of them, and so full of sin. The haughty, stubborn, deceitful heart is made humble, pliable, simple and honest as that of a little child. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven but whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 18:3-4).

The heart that formerly had no delight in communion with God, now feels a deep desire to draw near to Him and call upon Him with true sincerity and the freedom of a little child. We read, "Because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). The Greek word for "Abba" is Papa. It is a very affectionate term, and is used by every redeemed sinner. So the heart that lived in a world of make-believe, with no thought of his future state, now being regenerated, feels the energy and power of that doctrine, and looks upon Heaven and Hell as two of the most important realities. Heaven is real to you when you are born again, my friend. And Hell is real to that sinner who is brought under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. This work of grace is never founded on man's natural notions or reasons. When one is born again, God imparts spiritual life, dispels darkness and shines into our hearts. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

These portions have been selected from a booklet of radio messages by the late Tom L. Daniel, pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church, Waco TX until his death in 1972. He was a most blessed-of-God preacher and teacher, the Lord using him to awaken and instruct many poor sinners in the way of Grace. I knew him and was for a while (during my Army days) a member of his congregation. What a blessing! His memory is always encouraging!

Wylie Fulton

THE GREAT SINNER

We will find our Scripture reading in the little book of Hosea, and also in Romans chapter two. Listen to these words from the little book written by the prophet Hosea, chapter seven verses 1 to 3: *“When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria: for they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without. And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face. They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies.”*

Then if you will turn with me to the second chapter of Romans, verses 1 to 6. *“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: Who will render to every man according to his deeds.”* There you have the scripture background for this study.

I would like to give you a little background on the prophet Hosea. He is called by many, “the prophet of love.” Like in the New Testament we think of the beloved John, and we think of Hosea as the prophet of love of the Old Testament. Hosea, like

Amos, began preaching in times of great prosperity, and it seems his ministry came to a close when the nation was struggling in the grip of anarchy. All classes of society became demoralized. Even the priests were no less than bandits and rejoiced in the sins of the people, because it increased their revenue. Covetous hearts they were. Things went from bad to worse, until the prophet exclaimed, *"There is no truth, nor knowledge of God in the land,"* and added the nature of their wickedness as you will find in Hosea 4:1, 2: *"Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood."* This is the nature of their sins at that time, as well of as many in our times, and he is heard to say, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."* The people are simply stupid, when it comes to the things of God, they have no brains. "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart," as he tells us in chapter 4, verse 11. The age old condition that has always plagued man, we find being multiplied as he declares, "And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face" (Hosea 5:5). That is, Israel has a diseased heart. Thus this brings us to our text, *"Ye have eaten the fruit of lies ... they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness"* (Hosea 10:13; 7:2).

Then too, I would like to take a few moments here to *give* you something of the analysis of a lie. I have used this portion in our broadcast before but I think that it is worthy of consideration. Sin is not only continually repeating itself, but it is continually propagating sins of its kind. Every sin is multifarious. Sin breeds sin as lice and locusts were bred in Egypt. But sin not only multiplies itself multifariously but, propagating its kind also begetting sins of other kinds that operate in different forms. It is estimated that there are five parent virtues and five parent vices. The virtues are **Truth, Justice, Wisdom, Benevolence** and **Self-control**. As far as has been discovered **Truth** manifests itself in thirty-seven

ways; **Justice** in twenty-two; **Wisdom** in twenty-eight; **Benevolence** in Fifty-one, and **Self-control** in eighty-five. These five parent virtues propagate themselves multifariously into two hundred and twenty-three distinct virtues.

The corresponding vices are, **Lack of Truth**, manifesting itself eighty-eight different ways. In other words, a lie can manifest itself in eighty-eight distinct forms and fashions. Notice—**Lack of Justice**, fifty; **Lack of Wisdom**, twenty-four; **Lack of Benevolence**, twenty-six; **Lack of Self-control**, two hundred fifty-four—aggregating into four hundred and fifty-two distinct vices. This is *double* the number of virtues, plus six, showing the congeniality of the soil for evil. What a brood of multifarious vices from five multifarious virtues. Each of these four hundred and fifty-two vices is capable of being multiplied *indefinitely*. If a lie can assume eighty-eight distinct forms, and each form multiply itself indefinitely, then what of the man who gives himself to lying, who loves it, and who lives on it? Who, not only exerts himself to the uttermost in telling them, but engages all he can to assist him.

So it was by two great lies man was led away from God. By the same two lies he has been kept away from God. On these two lies the world has been feeding ever since the fall. The word is used in a twofold sense, (1) a lie as to a *fact*, as you read in Genesis 3, and (2) a lie as to *doctrine*; untrue reports and unsound teaching, false testimony and false knowledge. It has been said, “This falsity may be negative or positive, for these are the words of Satan, ‘ye shall not surely die,’ and ‘ye shall be as God.’ The lie comes sometimes from man, sometimes from Satan, down since that day, but never from God, for God is not a man that he should lie. These lies are referred to above ... the one a flat denial of the perfection of the Godhead; the other, an assertion of creature-perfection. One saying, there is no such thing as sin and punishment; the other, that there is no such thing as creature-hood limitation and dependency - or in other words, ‘the captain of his soul

and the master of his fate.' *'Ye shall not die ... ye shall be as God.'*"

The world is made to believe this prince of darkness. These two lies God has written His Bible to contradict, for the whole Divine Word is a confutation of them. This fact is in a most glorious and absolute demonstration of its lie, and is to be seen in the life and death of Jesus Christ the Son of God. His death, as the sin bearer, testified, "Ye shall surely die;" and His life as the dependent Son of Man, showed that no circumstances, no progress, no knowledge, could ever make man a God, the creature the Creator; but the human, however blessed and holy and wise, must ever be the human, and indeed the Divine God will ever be the Divine One.

Israel's history, to which our text refers—as well as that of all mankind—is a history of the fruit of lies. "They believed not God." They rejected the truth, received the lie, and the fruit of this was judgment. Every sorrow that came on Israel was the fruit of a lie. You read this prophesy of Amos, and Hosea and many others. Their last great sorrow, the ruin of Jerusalem and the slaughter of its citizens, was the fruit of a lie. Yet Jehovah still loved Israel and longs to save them. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I cast thee off, Israel?" For though Israel turned back over and over again, Jehovah was still willing to continue the Divine pursuit. A manufactured god of human devices was deeply scorned by the prophet; he traced indeed, as we have seen, all of Israel's sins back to infidelity to God. In Hosea 13:1-2, you will find it written, "When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died. And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves. *"They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness,"* saith the Lord.

One may ask, "What is sin?" Well, it is not an accident, nor something forced, nor a misfortune, nor a disease, nor a weakness. It may be all of these, perhaps in a sense of the

word, but to reach its taproot we must go down much deeper; It is something of a more fatal and terrible character, something, first, with which Law has to do—God's Law. Secondly, it is something which Righteousness abhors, and, thirdly, which the Judge condemns; fourthly, it is something which calls for the infliction of punishment from God. To put it more plainly, it is guilt, it is rebellion, it is insubordination, it is crime, and therefore, every mouth must be closed, and all the world become guilty before God (Romans 3:19). Man's tendency is either to deny it or to ignore it. He either pleads not guilty, or he smoothes over the evil, giving it favorable names. If this does not succeed, he puts the blame on others; he shifts the responsibility to nature, or environment, his education, or even God himself. But let no man deceive you, sin is all that God has declared it to be—and as such must be dealt with by God and felt by ourselves. Thus the Scriptures tell us "*sin is the transgression of the law*" (1 John 3:4). And Jeremiah 17:9 tells us the heart of man is deceitful.

Let us not trifle with sin, let us learn its true nature from the terribleness and wrath and condemnation threatened by God against every sin, great or small. Hosea cried, "*Let us follow on to know Jehovah*" (6:3). God had smitten and He had made them feel the mighty pain of their sin, and he stretched out his hand and said, "Come let us return unto the Lord, for He will pardon." But Ephraim would not take heed. "Grey hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not ... for they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind ... I have written to him the great things of my law (lit. 10,000 things), but they are counted as a strange thing" (Hosea 7:9; 8:7, 12). Therefore the only alternative is written in Hosea 10:8, "They shall say to the mountains, cover us; and to the hills, fall on us." It is time to seek Jehovah God who says, "I remember all their wickedness."

God remembers! His memory fails not in one thing. My friend you listen to this: age blots out nothing; the past is as clear and whole as the present. Our memory and God's memory are very different. Our forgetfulness does not make

Him forget. He remembers the person, the time, the circumstances, the thing itself; public or secret; bad or good; negative or positive. He remembers sins! Don't you ever forget that! Let no one say, "God is too good to remember them." Though man should forget God remembers, and He can call up sin to your remembrance. It will and must come up at last! "Son, remember" was spoken to the rich man in Hell (Luke 16:25). Men may try to forget it, to drown all thought of it, to erase all traces of it, but it will come up as we read in Job, "His bones are full of the sins of his youth" (Job 20:11). Sin's remembrance came to Ephraim and he cried, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, even confounded because I did bear the reproach of my youth" (Jer. 31:18, 19).

Did you ever feel the awful weight of sin upon you, my dear friend? If you have never seen yourself a sinner, you know nothing of the grace of God in salvation. To such a person as this who has been made to remember his sins we can be assured there is such a thing as forgetfulness with God. For example, He says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12). *Incredible, but nevertheless, true!* And how is this? The prophet in the Old Testament and the apostle of the New tell us that this is one of the provisions and the results of that blessed New Covenant that God has made. He says, "I will not remember their sins and their iniquities, I will write my laws into their hearts" (See Heb. 10:16-17). That covenant has been sealed with the blood of the Son of God. It is the blood that enables God to forget sin; that blots out all of our sins from His eternal memory so that it becomes as if it had never been seen. But remember, my friends, if you are not under the blood, God does remember sin. The great world's motto is God does not remember sin and so they neglect the sacrifice for sin, and put away all fear of Hell. They say there is no such thing as Hell, that it is an out-moded doctrine; but be sure your sin will find you out. "They

consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness,” the great sins of this great sinner.

The world’s history is the same. Our race has been eating the fruit of lies, not simply of sin, but of lies. The sorrows, sighs, tears, pains of our race are the fruit of lies; the original lie of Paradise as it has continued since then. The sweating, toils of man, the travail pangs of woman, the cries of suffering of infancy—what are they but the fruit of a lie? The fruit of a lie is its bitter, poisonous, long-lasting fruit. And the world’s last days are no improvement upon its first, for it is in these last days that we have men receiving “a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” (2 Thess. 2:11). The judgment with which God has visited the professors is the eating of the fruit of the lie. Each soul’s history is the same.

We begin to believe lies as soon as we can believe anything at all, and we act daily upon believed lies. The two original satanic lies are continually coming up and along with them many others. All of them lead us astray. Satan, or the world, or the flesh, or a friend, or a book, or a scene whispers the lie. It is fair and specious. We believe it; it brings forth fruit, we eat of it, and the end is bitterness and disappointment, indeed. The apostle describes the latter days, “For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud ... lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof” (2 Tim. 3:1-5). Is it not true that these “feed on lies”? Or else the apostle would not have said, “From such turn away.” Now what keeps us from Christ? A lie or lies! What is unbelief, but the belief of a lie? That is the wages of sin, yet God in His gospel meets the lie, and all the lies which have sprung up on the earth. He sends us the truth; He sends us the true One, even our Lord Jesus Christ. He says, “Yes, ye shall be as God, but not in your way; I will make you partakers of the divine nature, not by eating the forbidden tree, but by eating of Him whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed, as John’s gospel tells us in the 6th chapter.

All untruth, all error, all false doctrine, as well as false statements have in it the nature of a lie. Men in our day think man is not responsible for the truth; that there is no sin in the reception of error. God protects His own against this; and calls on them to receive truth, His truth, as expounded in the Holy Scriptures. We find the prophet Isaiah giving the same warning to Israel and to the world when he declared, "Wherefore hear ye the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem ... for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves ... Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters shall overflow the hiding places" (Isa. 28:14-17). The judgments of God were ready to break in upon and overwhelm the impenitent nation of the Jews, and like a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, as a mighty flood of mighty waters, overflowing bearing all before it. The prophet had repeatedly given them kindly warning of these approaching judgments, but they continued secure and impenitent, with no apprehension of danger. They flattered themselves into thinking they were wise enough to keep themselves safe. They thought themselves entrenched and fortified in their rituals, their strongholds, and the sanctity of their own temple and nation.

These were the lies which they made their refuge, and the falsehood under which they hid themselves. They were deceived into believing that they were as secure as if they had "a covenant with death and entered into an agreement with hell, or the grave" not to hurt them. Losses, bereavements sicknesses, and a thousand calamities that I cannot name may yet try us all. The enemy is now breaking in like a flood upon our country, and we are in danger of being overwhelmed. Death will certainly attack us all, and who shall be able to stand against the king of terrors when the refuge of lies is demolished? Surely Hosea's message is not out of date. The God of ancient history is the God in modern history. All national events are still under the Divine control. Hosea is distinctively

the prophet of grace—he anticipated and in a very true sense prepared for Calvary. “Come back,” he pleads, “come back, sinner!” If you could see God’s love to you, you would come back!

THE SINNER COMING TO CHRIST

I want to bring you a message today entitled, "THE SINNER COMING TO CHRIST". I hope you will listen to this message, because I believe God will bless your hearts and open your eyes to some of the dealings of the Lord Jesus Christ, as we see Him set forth in the eternal Word of God.

I don't think there can be a more beautiful language used to describe the nature and work of God than is found in the Song of Solomon, picturing Christ in His wooing and making love to the sinner, and on the other hand, of the sinner seeking and mourning after the Lord Jesus Christ. The words of the Song of Solomon set forth THE WORK OF GOD IN CALLING, AND WOONG THE SINNER, AND WORKING UPON HIS HEART.

We have as our text the eighth chapter, beginning with the fifth verse where we read, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." So here you see THE LOVE OF GOD being poured out. He says that many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Then in the third chapter of the Song of Solomon, we see THE SINNER as God has quickened his heart, and he BEGINS TO SEEK AND MOURN AFTER THE LORD. He says, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, BUT I FOUND HIM NOT. I WILL RISE NOW, AND GO about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I WILL SEEK HIM WHOM MY SOUL LOVETH: I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" In the

Song of Solomon we see the pronoun, "HIM" used, referring to the Lord, and the pronoun, "HER" used, referring to the sinner who is seeking the Lord. It says "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" There-fore, you have here the picture of Christ and the sinner, and the picture of Christ and the Church.

So our text very aptly describes this present evil world as a densely populated WILDERNESS. We are told of this wilderness in Proverbs 24:30-34, "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down." I John 5:19, describes the sinner as being asleep in the lap of the evil one; "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Again we find his description in Proverbs 6:10-11, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man."

The Prophet Isaiah makes mention of our Beloved, setting Him forth thus, "I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Isa.42:6, 7). Also we see our BELOVED, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the parable in the fifteenth chapter of Luke as the GOOD SHEPHERD who goes out after His sheep. So this work is exclusively given into the hands of my Beloved. "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isa.42:8). So we see THE LOVE OF GOD AS IT SETS IN TO DRAW THE SINNER; and we see where the sinner is - OUT IN THE WILDERNESS OF THE WORLD. The Lord Jesus Christ when He calls a sinner, takes him up, as it were, in His arms and gives him grace to lean upon the Beloved. Then all the way through this wilderness world our Beloved keeps us upon His great arm. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isa.40:11). The Prophet

Isaiah said, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is THE ARM OF THE LORD REVEALED?" (Isa.53:1). So His great arm of salvation takes hold of the sinner and brings him out of darkness into light, out of sin into salvation; out of hopelessness into hope; out of turmoil into peace; out of the darkness of the world of sin into the greatness and love of God. So it is upon Christ that we are leaning; He found us under the apple (citron) tree we read in Song of Solomon 2:3, where the Lord Jesus Christ is pictured finding the sinner.

At the feet of Christ the sinner is found. There He awakens us to His love. The awakening of this love in us is the giving unto us a new life. It introduces us to a new world, lets us lean on new objects for comfort and support, and fits us for enjoying even the presence of God. Thus found by the Lord Jesus Christ, quickened by Him to His love, and given to Him by the Father, we are led away from our disconsolate condition, up from the wilderness, to the city of the living God. But, OH WHAT AN AWAKENING, when Sinai thunders! Yes, when the thunders of the laws of Sinai, with its clouds of darkness, and the lightning flash of a quickened conscience lays the heart bare with the sword of truth; that is an awful day in the life of a sinner. But this must needs come about. Sin is a most grievous, heavy, and dangerous burden. This is a burden we have brought with us into the world, and, while we remain here, with which we must struggle; "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

There are many, no doubt, who hear me that have no feeling of the BURDEN OF SIN. But why? They are all, in a spiritual sense, DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS. But when Divine life is communicated by the Spirit of God, the feelings are restored to the once dead and insensible soul. While one is dead he is in the land of silence where no complaint is heard, but when life is restored the person feels and complains. The Apostle Paul felt this burden, and thus tells us that he was "alive without the law once." He thought himself a good man, and had never sensed the awful burden of sin - "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." So the cry of the desolate soul is heard: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? " (Rom.7:24). The body of sin had affected all the powers of his soul; and

though it was deeply felt, he could do nothing toward rescuing himself.

Sin is a daily, most grievous burden; and only by the quickening power of God is the sinner made to mourn. First, he mourns because of HIS GUILTY DISTANCE FROM GOD; secondly, because of HIS OWN SIN THAT HAS PUT A WALL BETWEEN HIMSELF AND GOD. And this, many a sinner describes, as the way God has dealt with his soul. God warned him, yet he persisted; his conscience checked him but he opposed it violently; he is brought to death's door by sickness. Many are the times that a sinner vows what he will do, if only God will raise him up. God raises him up, and then the sinner breaks his vow. God's patience is tried; and according to Romans 2:15, the verdict of his own thoughts casts him down. His own heart condemns, according to I John 3:20. The curse of God is in his tabernacle (Proverbs 3:33). The wrath of God abideth on him (John 3:36). The door of mercy is shut against him, for "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat" (Matt.7:13).

The sinner may say, "Oh that there were no hell, no judgment to come, no God, no here-after." Indeed I experienced these words effectually in my own heart. That dear man, Job, was heard to say, "Oh, that I had never been born. Oh, that no eye had ever seen me. Wherefore came I out of my mother's womb to see trouble?" "Thine heart shall meditate terror, " says the Word of God (Isa. 33:18). So this, my friend, is stumbling upon the dark mountains, according to Jer.13:16. This is the region and shadow of death, according to Matt.4:16. This is the horrible pit, and this is the miry clay that the Psalmist describes in Psalms 40:2. This is the deep mire that he speaks of "where there is no standing" (Psa. 69:2). This is deep calling unto deep at the noise of water-spouts, while they are bursting and discharging their vengeance on the vessels of wrath, while the waves and billows go over them. THIS IS GOD SHUTTING UP A SINNER. Here a man can find no opening, and here he is shut up. This is the employ of the damned in the chambers of death, which also the devils experience; the gloomy land of darkness without form or order; and the pains of hell that gets hold of the sinner.

But, oh glorious fact, our text states as definitely and positively as possible: they "SHALL COME, " (John 6:37). Oh blessed moment when God sets in to woo the sinner and bring him unto Himself! It does not say "they may come," as though man had a choice in the matter. Such a doctrine dishonors God because it attacks the sovereignty of God. It wrests the crown from the head of Christ the Mediator; it denies the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit: therefore proclaiming a Saviour who performs only half of the work of reconciliation, leaving man to make up the other half by means of his faith. Neither does it say they "can come;" such blinded souls are constantly busy, carrying incense to that cursed altar of human virtue and human righteousness. They never cease teaching, "if thou, O man, will do this, then God will do that." Such pathways are a delight to the natural man and are right in his own eyes, "but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). When God strikes home to our heart, then all our comeliness, all our goodness, is smitten with the mighty hand of God's Holy Law and we are shot through and through with guilt, and made to feel the keen edge of His Holy Law. And when you are under the guilt and pressure of God's judgment and wrath, brother, no sinless perfection can live there. No atheism can live there; no deism and Arminianism can live there. No Arminian can ever flourish under such conditions as this. Such principles can only flourish on the hard soil of a benumbed conscience that is seared over as with a hot iron, and kept hard by the perpetual industry of the devil and the assistance of wicked company. Yes, that is the only way a sinner can continue in these ways. But when the Holy Spirit lays siege to the heart, dead sinners shall hear and live! When He calls unto salvation the unwilling one shall become willing in the day of His power; He calls, and they "SHALL COME" according to God's holy inspired Word!

One that is truly burdened with sin will not allow himself to live in the secret practice of sin. Either your conviction will put an end to your course of sin, or your sinning will put an end to your conviction, according to II Cor.7:11. True sorrow for sin will give you a very low and vile estimate of yourself. A soul really burdened with sin will never try to stand in his own

righteousness before God (Psa.51:3, 4). He knows very well that if he is ever saved, the Lord God of Heaven must save him; and he sees, as King David did in the fifty-first Psalm, that he is a vile sinner. He says, "My sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil." The sinner MUST come out of the world; he must leave her and give a bill of divorcement. His understanding then becomes enlightened; his heart renewed. He now hungers after other things, and seeks other food; he tastes and sees that the Lord is good. He begins to seek, and cry to, and mourn after the Lord. Yes, the FIRST thing that comes about then, is, the sinner sees HIS GUILTY DISTANCE FROM GOD; and SECONDLY, he sees that SIN HAS PUT A WALL BETWEEN HIMSELF AND GOD. But he must know the Lord; he must have Him at all costs. That's the reason the Lord says, "Except a man forsake all, he cannot be My disciple." But the Gospel is full of hope for such a convicted sinner. It breathes nothing but hope to a sinner that is moving Christ ward under his troubles; but in hell the pangs of desperation rend the conscience of the damned forever. They have no rest there.

There is nothing so sweet as THE FAVOR AND PEACE AND PARDON OF GOD to a soul that has long been restless and anxious under the terrors and fears of conscience. One may labor and strive, look this way and that, but all in vain. Christ and peace come together, sinner friend. YOU CANNOT HAVE TRUE PEACE WITHOUT HAVING CHRIST. You may have a false peace, but you cannot have a permanent, enduring, hopeful peace, until you have Christ. No sooner do you come to Him, roll your burden on Him, and receive Him as He offers Himself, but the soul feels itself eased of a burden: "being justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Rom.5:1).

Oh, what an unspeakable gift is this grace of saving faith! Those who have to wrestle repeatedly with an unbelieving heart, a heart that cannot believe, readily own that true faith is a blessing indeed. They freely confess that it is not of their own making, but one of the great benefits of grace which the Lord bestows. Oh, you that preach grace, then turn around and say that the sinner has to do all the work, all the thinking, all the believing! You say you preach grace, preacher, but you don't preach grace - you preach a mixture of it, and the

Apostle Paul said, "I do not frustrate the grace of God" (Gal.2:21). To frustrate the grace of God, is to lay something upon the sinner that he can do. The Apostle Peter, in his teaching in Acts 15:10, said that there are those that lay heavy burdens on sinners, which they cannot bear. The sinner can do nothing in himself; grace must lay hold. Jesus Christ must woo him and draw him by the cords of His love. He says, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6); He says again, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

Sin is the sum total of evil, and is also the cause of all the trouble man is appointed to endure. There is no happiness for a rational being, but in God. SIN MAKES GOD, in whom is no enmity, AN ENEMY TO US: and man is now enmity itself. Those who are only mere professors have no desire for God, because God "is glorious in holiness, " and there is nothing upon earth which the carnal and wicked mind hates so much as true holiness. God does not save you only from hell, but HE ALSO SAVES YOU FROM SIN. If you are still lapping up the pleasures of the world, and reveling in them, you have no love of God in your heart. It is no wonder that our Lord Jesus Christ looked out at the Pharisees with their professed righteousness, and said, "I know you, you have not the love of God in you." One art of the deceitful heart is to misrepresent the true nature of piety and devotion, but when the Spirit begins to expose the corruption of their hearts they draw back and despise it. They say, "I will not hear him. I will not hear that crazy old preacher. I will not hear that message, because I don't believe such doctrine as that. Nobody else preaches such things - he acts like, and talks like there is nobody saved but him. He says that there is no church where there are any saved people but the church which he pastors." Well, that is not so, my friend. Your old rebellious heart is riled up, and you are not willing to come clean with God. Well, brother, you had better wake up and quit fighting God, and take your place as a lost sinner, and come before Him and sue for mercy.

If men possessed good and honest hearts (which all claim to have), they would search diligently for the truth, and judge impartially of its evidence, and would always embrace this truth.

Atheism is a disease of the HEART rather than of the head. It is not for the want of evidence that men apostatize from the worship of the true God to idolatry. We read in the Word of God, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1: 21). When the heart is turned away from God, and the supreme love of the heart is placed on the preacher, or any other human, it is no wonder that we are continually disappointed in our aspirations and dreams. Now, you may understand something of the necessity of God's drawing the heart out unto Himself. Likewise, when THE TRUTH OF GOD LAYS HOLD OF THE HEART it is selfevident to the sinner that only the "SHALL COMES" whom the Father hath given to the Son, will be able to enter in, or even desire the righteousness of God.

Therefore, the sinner whom God has awakened SHALL COME from under the dominion of sin. He shall come out of the world, and he shall come from under the tyranny of Satan. All men by nature are in Satan's power; they are his willing slaves and servants. No one voluntarily leaves his service. Who can loosen his fetters? Only the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son; He is able to demolish the prison doors. "Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness... to open the blind eyes, and bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house" (Isa. 42:5-7). Oh blessed moment, when God lays hold of the heart, and the sinner is broken. He SHALL COME BY FAITH, and the power of Christ's precious blood, pardoning and cleansing from all sin, purges his conscience from dead works. He experiences that God has come nigh to him, that he may taste and know that the Lord is his. He may enjoy communing with God; he may live the life of faith that the apostle speaks of in Galatians 2:20.

HE SHALL COME IN HOPE. At times he finds the hope set before him to be as an anchor to the soul, both sure and

stedfast, and which entereth into that without the veil. This hope is a safe guide upon all pathways of life. This hope does not put to shame, like the vain hope of the world; or like the hope of hypocrites and professors not having the Spirit. Their hope is worse than if they had no hope, and is nothing less than a spider's web. "Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands" (Isa.59:6).

Then HE SHALL COME WITH LOVE. Oh, what love the sinner has then! To the Pharisees our Lord said, "But I know you, that you have not the love of God in you." The gracious gift of Divine love is the portion of them that fear the Lord. He receives a true delight in, and love for, God and His Word. True, this love is more in exercise, and greater and stronger at one time than at another; nevertheless it is an unfeigned and unquenchable love which the Lord sheds abroad in the hearts of His people by the Holy Spirit. Yes, it is the true love of God. These graces cannot be destroyed in the believer, and each of them shall be privileged to enjoy these true riches in so far as he dies to himself, and becomes one plant with the Lord Jesus Christ (Isa.61:3; Matt. 15:13).

It is too often that men are seeking heaven, but would not have anything of God. But YOU must have Him; and when the sinner is brought down into darkness and made to feel the awful wrath of God, and then made to seek the Lord, and sue for mercy, then it is that he finds Him. He says, "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13). Sinner, you will find Him at the end of your way - yes, at the end of your way. When you leave your way, then you will find Christ's way, and the way of Christ, is Christ Himself, for He says, "I am the way." "I AM THE WAY." Oh, sinner, look to Him; look to Him in His merciful grace. Trust Him; He is merciful and good, and I ask you to do this, while Christ is drawing you .

HOW MAY I KNOW I HAVE FAITH?

I received a letter from one of our radio listeners that prompted this message, and I am happy to give you the scripture concerning this most vital and most needful truth of "How May I Know That I Have Faith?" or "How May I Know That I Am Saved?" - or "Is It Possible For One To Know That He is Saved?" Upon the authority of God's holy inspired Word I tell you that you can know that you are saved: and you WILL know you are saved, whenever the Lord Jesus Christ saves you. He notifies you that you are His, BY HIS SPIRIT'S INDWELLING PRESENCE and, of course, BY THE REFORMATION OF YOUR LIFE that He brings about through the Divine work of grace (2 Cor. 5:17).

Now it may seem rather odd that in the 4th verse of the little book of Jude, he speaks of those - "Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Every person that attempts to climb up SOME OTHER WAY as the Lord tells us in John 10, is a thief and a robber, and he is turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Now "Scribes," "Pharisees," and "hypocrites" were very familiar terms used by our Lord in referring to those who opposed Him in His earthly ministry, and they also are described as professors that claim familiarity with God. Such people are ATHEISTIC in heart, OBSTINATE in will, DIABOLICAL in their planning, and FULL OF GUILE in their practice. God's word gives a description of such a people in Jeremiah, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?"

Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins...Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter" (Jeremiah 12:1-3).

So you notice God speaks of them as being LIKE sheep, but they will be slaughtered. He says that they draw NIGH unto Him with their lips, and our Lord Jesus Christ Himself mentioned that, but, said He, "THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME." So, first, THE HEART MUST BE TRIED, and GUILT MUST BE KNOWN, before one can say and know that he has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and has been brought forth from darkness to light. "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer.17:10).

It is only when FREE GRACE awakens one to the sense of his real condition that he is eager to avail himself of the righteousness of God in Christ. Saul, the Pharisee, was transformed into Paul, the servant of God; concerning which he declared "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, THAT THEY SHOULD REPENT AND TURN TO GOD, AND DO WORKS MEET (FIT) for REPENTANCE" (Acts 26:19,20). Now, the Scripture says in the book of Romans that man is alive in the flesh, a guilty culprit, who is without excuse, because he is sinning against light, and stands exposed to the righteous judgment of God. Whether IGNORANT HEATHEN as in chapter 1, CULTURED PHILOSOPHER as in the first part of Romans 2, or RELIGIOUS JEW as In the balance of the second chapter, "THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE: FOR ALL HAVE SINNED, AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD" (Rom.

3:22,23). Nevertheless, God visits man in mercy, and floods him with His forbearance, longsuffering, and tenderness; these are all designed to lead to repentance. God's wrath never leads to repentance (Rev. 16:8-11), and sad to say, so sordid and sinful is the natural heart that even God's goodness (Rom.2:4) does not produce repentance until that heart is awakened by the spirit of God. God's truth proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit, if not resisted, produces repentance. THEREFORE TO CRY, "BELIEVE, BELIEVE" TO MEN WHO HAVE NO SENSE OF NEED IS FOLLY. None ploughed deeper than Paul before urging men to turn to Christ. If one never admits his depraved and wicked condition, the Word of God is rendered ineffective; the sword of truth is turned as it strikes the flinty heart - "If God peradventure will give them REPENTANCE to the ACKNOWLEDGING OF THE TRUTH; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will (2 Tim.2:25,26). Therefore if men refuse to hear the report that He sends to them, THEY MUST DIE IN THEIR SINS. He has said "Hear, and your soul shall live."

Now we have an example of this in the 21st chapter of Matthew. That is, of men who have profession without the knowledge of sins and the power of sin broken over them. We read - "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not" (Mat. 21:28-30). Now that is the condition of professing Christendom today, that is, a large majority of them. They say, "I GO," but they only say it with THE LIPS, and they never GO. They go into the church, they go into religious activities, they go into this cult or that cult; they go into this

professed familiarity with God, but THEY NEVER GET TO CHRIST. And so the Lord asked, "Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto Him, the first," that is, the one who said unto him, "I will not," but later did go. And so the faithful preaching of the Gospel and the emphatic declaration of man's needy condition are designed to produce "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). But if men refuse to heed, if like Israel they "always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51), then the inevitableness of it all is, THEY WILL BE GIVEN UP TO HARDNESS OF HEART AND MUST BE JUDGED ACCORDINGLY.

Then we call your attention to the SECOND thing that one must know to know that he is in Christ: ALL PRETENSE OF GOODNESS MUST BE DENOUNCED. Phariseeism is a SECRET SIN, not discernable by man; the outside of a false profession may LOOK FAIR TO MAN'S EYE, but be sure of this one thing; this is not well enough, God must try the hearts and reins. Thus, when a beam of light in conviction shines into the soul, the proud unbelieving heart - (natural atheism) - overshadows and darkens it. Poor self-deceiving HYPOCRITES are made to look into the mirror of God's Word, but they turn away and forget what manner of persons they are - thus deceiving themselves. Of these the Word of God speaks in describing Cain in Gen.4:3; Absalom in 2 Sam. 15:7-10, Ananias in Acts 5:1-8, and Simon in Acts 8:13-23. The unbelieving PHARISEE is described thus: "And he spake this parable unto certain which TRUSTED IN THEMSELVES that they were righteous, and despised others" (Luke 18:9). The Pharisee never goes to the Word of God to square with it, but he goes to this one and that one, and he judges himself in his own eyes, and therefore he pronounces good that which is not good. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself,

"God, I thank Thee, that I AM NOT AS OTHER MEN ARE, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican."
If you want to get a further study into this, see 2 Pet. 2:2-10, and Luke 11:22.

It is a sad story when one trusts in himself. "All is vanity and vexation of spirit" the writer tells us in Eccl. 1:14. There is a vanity in all creatures, being empty and not able to support the soul. This is a vain confidence, which always slips away when we have need of it. At the very time when the FOOLISH VIRGINS needed their light, in the midnight hour when darkness came, when the voice of the bridegroom was heard saying, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," THEY HAD NO LIGHT. Therefore, THE DOOR WAS SHUT. They are "BROKEN CISTERNS." God's Word speaks of broken cisterns in Jer. 2:13, that is, they have a limited capacity. A cistern is not a spring. So all their support, at the best, will disappear as the morning dew when the heat of the sun ariseth upon it. SUCH SELF-CONFIDENCE, SELF-LOVE, AND SELF-PRAISE, IS EVIDENCE OF A FALSE REPENTANCE. A person that is always trying to promote or to produce, or to profess that everything is well, is crying, or "whistling in the graveyard," as the old saying is. That poor soul is deceived, and is certainly in a terrible state, an awful condition. You had better throw away that old profession, my friend. You had better make haste to hear the voice of the Spirit. Such repentance produces only a partial and external reformation, but TRUE REPENTANCE IS A TOTAL CHANGE OF HEART, AND A UNIVERSAL TURNING TO GOD FROM SIN. The difference then, between a false penitent and a true one, is very great. False repentance looks upon God with terror, and is moved by a fear of judgment, rather than a hatred of sin. You are scared to death every time the Gospel is preached; you are afraid you

might be discovered. You hate to even be in the presence of God's true child or his servant, because you are afraid you will be exposed. But, my dear friend, what will it mean to go on and cover up all the days of your life only to be DISCOVERED at last before the JUDGMENT BAR OF GOD? The truly repentant soul mourns his distance from God, and desires earnestly to be transformed into His likeness. But a false professor just wants enough so-called religion to keep him comfortable, to justify his own works, and to live in fearlessness before God.

The unrepentant one, in his heart, STILL LOVES HIS SINS, and mourns that there is a law to condemn him and justice to punish him for his sins. The true penitent HATES ALL HIS INIQUITIES without reserve, because they are contrary to the holy nature and law of God; he is weary under the burden of them. Yes, he is weary and heavy-laden. The obedience of the unrepentant one is by mere constraint which flows not from an inward and abiding love in the service of God but which arises from enmity against God and His holy law. True repentance produces HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS, HUMILITY, MEEKNESS, LOVE, PATIENCE, FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES, and SELF-DENIAL; and it is accompanied by all the other graces, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in Gal. 5:22. Thus THE PHARISEE DIES IN HIS SINS, WHILE THE CHILD OF GOD DIES TO HIS SINS.

Then the THIRD thing I would call your attention to is that ONE MUST KNOW GOD'S WRATH IS ABIDING ON HIM before he can know God's saving grace. In other words, he must know he is guilty before God or he cannot know he has pardon from Him. "If the sinner turn not, God will whet his sword" we are told in Psalm 7:12. Thus we see God has a sword, and He will punish man on account of his iniquities. This evil generation has labored to take away

from God the sword of His justice; they have used all their resources to prove to themselves that God will "clear the guilty," and will by no means "punish iniquity," transgression and sin. The popular "god" is not the God of the Bible. The popular "god" is a figment of their own imagination, so they believe God has no EYES to behold evil." These things hast thou done and I kept silence; THOU THOUGHTEST THAT I WAS ALTOGETHER SUCH AN ONE AS THYSELF: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes" (Psalm 50:21). Then they will see how far wrong they are. My sinner friend, you had better hear the voice of God, if you have been quarreling around trying to cover up.

THEY THINK that "God has no EARS," that He cannot hear, but as of old when He spoke to Cain saying, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground;" you may be sure my dear friend that He knows your sin. Oh sinner, hear me, your sins which are black and which you think are hidden sins, are known to Him. The hidden sins of the heart are the blackest of all sins, because the heart seeks to cover up rather than to come clean with God.

Yes THEY THINK that God has no FEET, He cannot pursue, but we read again, "Evil pursueth sinners, but to the righteous good shall be repaid"- Prov. 13:21. THEY THINK that God has no ARM, that He cannot punish, and therefore Isaiah asks, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?»

MEN THINK that God today is not at all the same as the God of the Bible who ruled with a rod of iron, and dashed to pieces sinning nations like potters vessels. The God of the Bible had iron for Sodom and Samaria, Tyre and Jerusalem, and Balaam and Belshazzar. Modern thought tells us He has sheathed the sword and sits helpless in heaven, an indulgent weakling. Sinai's thunders are hushed forever;

and the arm which used to visit vengeance, swift and dire upon impenitent sinners, now hangs paralyzed, modern thought would have you believe. God has two sides though, my friends, MERCY AND JUSTICE. At Sinai He sets forth His justice, and at Calvary, praise God, He is merciful and just. If you preach a "god" who is all mercy and not just, then it is certain he is an idiot of your own imagination. "AND THOU THOUGHTEST," He says in Psalms, "THAT I WAS ALTOGETHER LIKE UNTO THEE.' You had better take stock, my friends. You had better search the inspired Word of God, and know that you are under the wrath of God. It is only as the Holy Spirit lets you see that you are under the wrath of God and you see your guilty distance from God that you will be made to cry unto Him. It does no good for preachers to cry, "Believe, believe" untill God first makes you see the need of it. I care not what men may say in criticism of my message, or method of presentation. I know, and feel it is my duty, when men sin, to tell them they shall be punished, and so long as the world will not give up its sins I MUST NOT CEASE MY WARNING.

The cry of the age is that God is merciful, that God is love, and if you only believe Him, you will go to heaven and live with Him. You may rest assured, my dear one, that God is merciful, just, loving, and longsuffering; nevertheless this Word of God is also true when it tells us, "The Wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God; ...God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors" (Psa.9:17; 7:11-13).

YES THAT'S THE WORD OF GOD.. The Word of the ONE who says, "I am meek and lowly." But HOW FEW THERE ARE THAT WILL SOLEMNLY TELL US OF THE

JUDGMENT TO COME. They preach of God's love and mercy as they ought to do, and as God has commanded them; but such preaching falls on deaf ears unless one is quickened by the Spirit to see he is dead in trespasses and in sin, and a LAWLESS REBEL against God, and that God commands all men everywhere to REPENT.

So when the Word of God comes home in mighty power to the heart, then all of our righteousness fades away. In Isaiah the 40th chapter we read, "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: Surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."

And "Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand," God's word tells us in Isaiah 28:18. Therefore Ephraim says, "Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth" (Jer. 31:19). Yes, you must know that God's wrath is abiding upon you. THIS SCRIPTURE REVEALS THE TURNING HERE MEANT IS ACTUAL, that is the turning of Ephraim, not that which is fictitious, nor that which stops with promises, and vows, that that which deals with the real acts of life. The sinner's turning must be real before he can be saved.

Then FOURTHLY, I would call your attention to this, THERE MUST BE A TRUE AND ACTUAL ABANDONMENT OF SIN, AND A TURNING UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS IN REAL ACT AND DEED IN EVERYDAY LIFE. It s not just a little mixed-up thing that is good on the Lord's day, and then live like the devil the rest of the week. Will you bow your

heads and say "Lord, I repent," and then in a little while commit the same deeds again? If you do, your repentance is worse than nothing and shall but make your destruction yet more sure; for he that makes a vow unto God, and doth not pay, he commits another sin, that is, he has attempted to deceive the Almighty, and lie against the God who made him. Repentance to be true, must be a repentance which really AFFECTS OUR OUTWARD CONDUCT. Such a severe judgment against self will not be carried through to its finish apart from God's tempering and plying the will; holding the sinner under the law of God, that he may see the just judgment and wrath he is under; but exposing him under the light and rays of God's mercy that he may see the GOODNESS OF GOD - WHICH LEADETH HIM TO REPENTANCE.

TRUE REPENTANCE IS A TURNING OF THE HEART AS WELL AS OF THE LIFE; It is the giving of the whole soul to God, to be His forever and ever. It is the RENUNCIATION of the SINS OF THE HEART as well as the CRIMES OF THE LIFE. Our Lord in the 23rd chapter of Matthew gives a contrast of the theoretical hard-heartedness of a religious profession, with the practical and life-giving principle of the Spirit's work in repentance and regeneration. They do a great deal of talking but no practicing - "FOR THEY SAY, AND DO NOT." They are quick to lay down principles for OTHERS, but ARE UNWILLING TO ABIDE BY THE SAME. Therefore we read "But all their works they do for to be seen of men;" they love the honor that goes with an office, that is the "chief seats in the synagogues," but they will not have the labor and sacrifice that is required of them. They hang on to a false profession, and shut up the kingdom of heaven against men "for ye neither go in yourselves," says our Lord, "neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."

YOUR ASSURANCE OF SALVATION IS BASED UPON THE ABILITY OF GATHERING CONVERTS. Yea, you think because you can talk a man into a profession that is a sure sign that you are a child of God, but it is not any such thing. NOWHERE DOES THE SCRIPTURE EVEN HINT AT SUCH A THING "But within you are full of extortion and excess." "For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

Listen here, preacher friend, it will be an awful thing for you to face those converts that you have talked into a profession in hell. What an awful thing to have those eyes looking at you, turning on you, accusing you, saying, "you lied to me; you led me into a false profession. You told me I was alright when I was all wrong." Oh, my God, what an awful indictment against a man! What an awful thing to face in eternity! Yes, such people our Lord called "HYPOCRITES! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous." Such an unrepentant heart, then, must turn. "If ye turn not God will whet his sword." YOU MUST TURN OR BURN!

Our Lord gave this invitation to His ancient people: "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God' (Jer. 3:12,13). Therefore, every mercy, whether spiritual or temporal, has been forfeited by sin; thus IT IS IMPOSSIBLE EVER TO DIE TO SIN WITHOUT A TRUE SENSE OF SIN, A GODLY SORROW FOR IT, A HATRED OF IT, AND SELF-LOATHING BECAUSE OF IT. If you have never known what it is to come to experience these in your life by the power of the Holy Spirit working in you,

1. THE HEART IS TRIED AND FOUND GUILTY BEFORE GOD.
2. ALL PRETENSE TO GOODNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS DENOUNCED
3. THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDING UPON YOU AS A SINNER
4. AND THE TRUE AND ACTUAL ABANDONMENT OF SIN AND A TURNING UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS IN REAL ACT AND DEED IN EVERYDAY LIFE - then you are not saved. You do not have saving faith. I put it that way because I know it is an experimental work of grace in the heart that sinners bemoan themselves and acknowledge their undone and hopeless condition.

Therefore, if you want to know whether or not you are saved, then you must know whether or not you have repented, and you must know whether or not you have seen yourself a condemned sinner without hope in this world. You must know whether or not you are guilty and have come clean with God and cried from the depths of your heart "Guilty, Lord; Guilty, Lord! Have mercy upon me. Turn me, and I shall be turned." If this has never taken place in your life, upon the authority of God's Inerrant, infallible Word, I must say that you are without grace in saving power. To know the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to know that God's wrath abides upon sin, because He hates it. YES, GOD IS A GOD OF JUDGMENT AS WELL AS A GOD OF MERCY; THEREFORE REPENT, AND TURN TO HIM.

ELECTION

NOTHING will drive the sinner to Christ like a knowledge of his own helpless condition. The doctrine of sovereign grace which flows through mercy's door by God's sovereign choice, speaks to the sinner on this wise: "Ye have not chosen me but I have chose you." These are the words of the lowly Lord Jesus Christ. Can any stand in the face of Divine Holiness and say with any mark of truthfulness, "I have made myself holy, honorable and acceptable before God; therefore upon my own choice of Thee, O Lord, I come? That sounds like the Pharisee, doesn't it?

Now the sinner's awakening to the light of the knowledge of his own ways as wickedness before the Lord is surely a mark of Divine grace. We read in 1 Corinthians, "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not, for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." Throughout the Word of God, the household of God is called the vineyard of the Lord, whose planting it is. God the Father is spoken of as the Husbandman. All men are under the yoke and bondage of sin; born of the Adamic race - alienated from the life of God.

Christ our Redeemer, the slain Lamb of God from the foundation of the world, has come to restore a race under a new Federal Head. "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Do you have any objection to that work of Grace? Do you not see and admit that it is God's sovereign grace? Go back and take stock on your own life: Who was it that caused you to begin to think on the ways of your life and shout your own sinfulness? What GRACE did God bring about to cause your heart to see it? Wasn't it by the Word of God that was planted in your heart? Wasn't it a message of GRACE that was given you? Therefore the sinner that is coming out of bondage may be passive in one sense, and neither can nor will come off his bondage but clings to his own way until Almighty power arrest

him and draws him. Thus we read, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ... ye will not come to me, that ye might have life”. These are the words of our Lord, found in John 6:44 and 5:40.

The influence of this humbling truth they feel in their conscience, thus sovereign grace works. No, there is nothing wrong in God's election! You never would be awakened were it not by the elective merciful grace of God that calls, that quickens, that justifies, sanctifies and glorifies - GRACE from beginning to end!

Oh, praise the Lord for His enabling grace that taught my heart to fear. The amazing grace that relieved my fears! And how blessed it is to come before Him as a helpless, doomed and damned sinner, and receive His free grace. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Taken from THE PROBLEM OF ELECTION, July 1966.

MAN'S HIGHEST WISDOM

Today I would like to bring you a message on "Man's Highest Wisdom". Now when we think of wisdom, we know that according to the word of God, there are two kinds. There is a natural wisdom - or the wisdom of the world; and then there is a divine wisdom. The Apostle James makes this distinction in chapter 3, where he says "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth."

Now note "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace"-James 3:13-18.

Then we notice in the book of Proverbs, the writer tells us, "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you" (Prov. 1:20-23). So we find that knowledge, or wisdom, the wisdom from above - comes from the instruction of the Almighty and by the power of God's Holy Spirit.

I have given you the above scriptures to show you the distinction between worldly wisdom and the wisdom that comes from above, but there is a scripture in Ecclesiastes

12:1, that we will use as our text, and we will only read the first part of that verse - "Remember now thy Creator In the days of thy youth." Now there is wisdom indeed to remember. The scriptures have a lot to say concerning the memory of man. We remember (as we will show further) that the rich man in hell was told "son, remember". So it is well to "remember", and these are solemn and wise words of King Solomon. Twice in the book of Proverbs he tells us, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction... The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" (Prov.1:7; 9:10). So, what is the highest wisdom? We answer, It is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; It is the knowledge of God; it is the knowledge of our own sins, and sinfulness. It is the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Substitute, and that it is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from sin.

So then, as we think of wisdom, we remember that Paul tells us in First Corinthians, chapter 1, "The world by wisdom knew not God"- that is, by natural wisdom. In First Corinthians chapter 2, he speaks of the wisdom - or the understanding of the spirit of man, saying "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Then again in Chapter 12:3, "No man can call Jesus Christ Lord, except by the Holy Spirit." Now Solomon is the writer of our text, and is one of the most interesting and extraordinary characters mentioned in the sacred scriptures. The secret of his wisdom and piety, apart from God Himself, may be attributed to his father David. In fact the advice which this prince received from his father David a short time before his decease, is very remarkable and doubtless made a deep and lasting impression upon his mind.

Father, do you teach your son? Do you teach him the ways of the Lord? Listen to these words that David spoke, "Thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father; and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts. If thou seek Him he will be found of thee: but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever, " (I Chronicles 28:9). So let us note that, "If thou seek Him he will be found of thee." We are told in Isaiah chapter 55, "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near." So this young man (Solomon) grew in stature and in wisdom.

Soon after Solomon's ascension to the throne, the Lord being well pleased with his piety and zeal; desired him to "ask what he should give him." Humbled under the sense of the goodness of God to him, and his incapacity to govern so numerous a people, he declared that "He was but a little child:" and instead of riches and honour, and length of days, he desired that God would bestow upon him wisdom and knowledge, that he might prudently and happily rule the nation over which He had placed him. This choice was so much approved by the Almighty, that he gave him a wise and understanding, heart, and added riches and honor to the gift. Notwithstanding all these noble traits, at one period of his life, this illustrious prince so mistook the source of true happiness as to flatter himself with the hope of great enjoyment from the world. But you know the scripture tells us, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," I John 2:15-17. He then speaks of the world, and the fashion of the world passing away, in verses 16,17.

So Solomon builded, he planted; he gathered riches, servants and maidens; and increased above all that were before him in Jerusalem, and in his own words we find him saying, "When I looked on the works which my hands had

wrought, Behold! all was vanity and vexation of spirit," Ecc1.2. True wisdom from above was then given. Let us remember that the first ingredient that is found in wisdom is purity - James 3:17. So memory is a noble faculty that can bring much happiness to the heart. We store it up in our minds, as we learn. But memory is an awful and terrible accuser where a life has erred, and is made to face its ultimate fruit.

In the confessions of Augustine he declares, "I broke through all the boundaries of your law, but did not escape your chastisement. What mortal can? For you were always with me, angered against me in your mercy, scattering the bitter discontent over all my illicit pleasures, so that thus I might seek for pleasure in which there was no discontent and be unable to find such a thing except in you, Lord, except in you, who shaped sorrow to be an instructor, who gave wounds in order to heal, who kill us lest we should die away from you. Where was I, and how far was I banished from the delights of your house...when the madness of lust held complete sway over me, and to this madness I surrendered myself entirely! And those about me took no care to save me from falling...their one aim was that I should learn how to make a good speech and become an orator capable of swaying his audience." So you see there is a wisdom that brings to defeat and utter separation from God. Therefore true wisdom consists in two things; choosing a right end, and using right means to attain it. How many are there who own God to be the greatest and best of beings, and yet neglect Him and pay a greater regard to a thousand other things. They confess that heaven is better than earth, and yet they pursue the things of this life, to the neglect of the happiness of heaven. They confess that a life of sin and impenitence is very dangerous, and that it will end in everlasting misery; yet with this confession in their

mouth, and this conviction in their conscience, they will obstinately go on impenitently in sin. They believe they are sinners, worthy of punishment, and yet they are generally as unconcerned as if they were innocent.

Do you see the deadness of sin? Do you see how it works to deaden the conscience? What madness it is to entertain a belief that does no more for you but to condemn your practice, and aggravate your sins. Does not common sense tell us, that God Who does everything wisely, will bring none to heaven but those whom He hath made fit for it beforehand? He says, "Prepare to meet thy God." How absurd it is therefore, to hope for heaven when you have no heavenly disposition! But religion has been so cheapened in these days that almost anything will pass as true religion in the eyes of man. But let us remember God tells us in Romans 2:16, by the mouth of the apostle Paul, that there is coming "a day when God shall judge the secrets of men's hearts according to my gospel."

Now, my friends, enquire whether you are to be numbered among those who are called despisers who "wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. And when the Jews were gone out of the Synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God"- (Acts 13:40,43). You do not, perhaps, directly disbelieve nor professedly reject any essential doctrine of the gospel; much less the gospel itself. But does it employ your thoughts, engage your attention, Influence your heart, and govern your conduct?

Be honest with yourself my dear friends. Is it your great concern to secure the salvation, which the gospel reveals; and do you seriously enquire whether you have any lot or part in this matter? Do you give all diligence to make your calling and election sure? Are you willing to renounce everything which appears inconsistent with your eternal hope? Do you love the word, earnestly seek the will of God; delight in, and remember to keep the Sabbath day holy?

In mercy to our guilty world, God has send down His Son from heaven to make the purchase, proclaim the everlasting gospel, and state the terms of eternal salvation. You must repent and turn to God and do works meet for repentance, says John the Baptist. You must renounce all confidence in the flesh, and place your dependence on the righteousness of the Redeemer as the grounds of your justification to eternal life. It is "Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy he hath saved us" - Titus 3:5. In a word, you must with a serious and deliberate choice, yield yourselves to the government of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. You must use every God-given means of grace in an humble reliance upon Him as enabled by the Holy Spirit, without whom you can do nothing. We read in John 15:5 (Jesus speaking) "For without me ye can do nothing." If you will not do this, then you despise His gospel and all the blessings which it reveals. To despise this Gospel is to despise God's grace, even the gift of His Son, Who (Luke 19:10) came "to seek and to save that which was lost."

There are very few persons that recognize the sovereign omnipotent rule of God. Such persons are self-pleasers, having no delight in anything holy or religious, but only in the gratification of their senses and the enjoyment of earthly things. They hope to be happy in heaven, yet at the same time seek only sensual and earthly enjoyments. They want

just enough of a religious atmosphere to be considered respectable in society. Now have they a sound understanding who can entertain such absurd hopes? Does not common sense tell us, that God Who does everything wisely, will bring none to heaven but those whom He hath made fit for it beforehand? - And that none shall be sent to hell that were previously made holy? How absurd is it therefore to hope for heaven, while you have no heavenly disposition! The children of God have heavenly dispositions; we sit together in heavenly places. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,"- Colossians 3:1.

We see such a creature in contrast to Solomon and the children of God in First Samuel 25:2,3, where we read, "There was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great...Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife was Abigail: And she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings." That is the appraisal that God sets upon him. This man was placed by providence in a condition to enjoy as much happiness as the world can give. He was distinguished from all around him by extensive possessions, and success in business. In addition to all this, he was highly favored in his domestic connections. The woman whom he had chosen for his companion in life was beautiful in her person, superior in her accomplishments, sweet in her temper, soft in her manner, and engaging in her address. She was indeed a beautiful and lovely one. View the man only thus far, and you will pronounce him one of the happiest of mortals. In the sequel however, you find him quite the reverse. If the happiness of man consisted in the abundance of the things which he possesses, Nabal would have been happy. But he had riches without discretion to

use them. To a narrow and covetous soul, this is a source of jealousy, anxiety and fear; in fact it is a curse.

You read of such men as Nabal in James chapter 5, verses 1-6. You see this man was churlish and evil in his doings. Isaiah gives us a description of the character of such a churl in chapter 32, verses 5,6,- "The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villiany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." So let us never forget that the Creator of this universe, holds the title deed, for "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Riches alone can make no man happy. Worldly wealth is a curse when it falls to the share of one who knows neither how to use it, nor how to enjoy it. "And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away," Paul tells us (I Cor.7:31). Then what do you have? Where is your honor and glory; being lifted up in pride to fall into the condemnation of Satan? I Timothy 2:6.

The virtuous man may be happy without riches. Let us then have our conversation without covetousness, we are told in Hebrews 13:5; and be content with such things as we have, that we may enjoy ourselves. Let us rule our spirits; he who is a slave to his own passion is subject to perpetual torment within, and exposed to a thousand vexations from without. Are you happy? Oh, what a gift indeed - contentment! But the world is not content; only they who are lovers of God are content. They are content to be loved of God, and they are content with the love of the Lord Jesus

Christ. If you seek your enjoyment in this world that soon passes away, with its fashions and lusts thereof; then indeed you are a poor man though you may have untold riches of this world. Your riches may run into billions, but you are a poor, poor man, if Christ is not your Saviour.

The man Nabal was a victim of his own passion being a slave to his own covetous heart. (And I suppose the most miserable man is a covetous man). His soul, enfeebled by passion and Intemperance, immediately sunk under the thought of calamity. Like the wicked king Pharaoh who said, "Who is God that I should obey Him," Nabal suffered eternal defeat. And if you have any doubt - read First Samuel, chapter 25.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Keep these words in mind young man, young lady. These are words that should be indelibly written on the heart. However when this is not considered; words to this effect were spoken to the rich man in hell, - "Son, remember." You know it is very simple to go to hell. Yes, God says "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"- Psa. 9:17. Now what does it mean to forget God? It means that you go on and plan your life - work your life - live your life - "without God in this world." The Psalmist speaks of such persons - "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself", Psalm 50:21. And truly that man is poor; poor indeed, that has not Christ as his Saviour; that has not his sins covered and forgiven; that knows nothing of the love of God in the sense that he beholds Him, and that he can sit and commune with the living God, and know as did the Psalmist, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever"- Psalm 23:6.

Sinners, let your own reason determine, can there be anything more foolish than your own behaviour? Do you set yourselves up as the standard of wisdom who do not have sense to keep out of everlasting ruin? Know this; they only are wise who are wise for eternity. What astonishing condescension and grace is it, that God has not left this mad world to themselves, since they are so averse to being retained. Oh, glorious fact - He has sent His son! He has instituted the gospel and a thousand means of grace, to bring them to themselves. So, will you my friend, conclude that there is no need of faith in Christ, or submission to His gospel? Reason teaches us our obligation to obey the will of God. How then can men pretend to follow reason, when they reject the instruction of Revelation, and despise the way of salvation which this discovers to guilty sinners? The gospel has declared that "they who believe not, shall die in their sins", and "They are condemned already, because they believe not in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Obedience to God is necessary, for this is the command of God. Listen! "That ye believe on Him whom he hath sent." The distress of total despair is beyond all imagination. Cain, under the horrors of guilt anticipated a punishment greater than he could bear. He said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." If the terrors of conscience in this life be so intolerable, what will they be in those regions of darkness; those gloomy and dismal shades where peace and hope shall never enter? Go ahead, wise men; wise in your own conceits. Go ahead and end up to find the terrible inevitableness of unbelief. There all the past scenes of your life will pass before you; your contempt of offered mercy, and abuse of divine grace; all your ungodly deeds and hard and impious speeches will come full and fresh to your remembrance, and perpetually haunt your guilty souls.

What anguish will wring your hearts under the corrosions of this world which never dies - "Remember now thy Creator."

Yes, to know Christ is the highest wisdom of man. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). So if you want to know life - life that is worthwhile; then the highest wisdom is to know that your sins are pardoned; and you are not to live for time, but for eternity. Will you have Him? Will you have Christ? Let no man deceive you, "He that believeth not shall be damned" as the scriptures declare, (Mark 16:16). "If ye believe not that I am he (the Christ) ye shall die in your sins" - John 8:24. My friends, to die in your sins means to die under the wrath and judgment of a sin avenging God. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Let me beseech you by the mercies of God, and plead with you as His ambassador; look to the Lord Jesus Christ, for He died that we might live. He laid down His life that we might lay down our sins, May God bless you in the reading of this message.

GOD'S WARNING TO THE CHURCH

Take your Bible and follow me in the scripture as we bring you another message on "God's Warning to the Church". Our Lord in His ministry here on earth was constantly looking into the hearts and lives of individuals. We know the Lord can read the heart from afar off, Psalm 139;2. So I would like to read in John chapter five some words He gave to the Pharisees, which as you well know is a religious group that seemed to be predominant in the days of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. He is speaking of His testimony, that is, His place in redemption, saying "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another come in his own name, him ye will receive." And that today dear friends, is the condition, I believe, almost world wide. In a letter from a dear brother over in New Zealand, he said "the darkness is settled about us. And yet we see the world speaking of a great upheaval of religious fervency toward the things of God." But my friends, it is one thing to speak of the mercies of God, and it is another thing to be in His fellowship and under His care.

We know that in the messages to the seven churches in Revelation, to each one the Lord is warning, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit hath to say unto the churches." So he who discovered the deadness of Sardis,

and the luke-warmness of Laodicea, sees you through and through, and will expose you at the last day except you repent. Oh believe me, my friends, hypocrisy is a losing game. It will never answer to seem one thing and be another. To have the name of Christian and not the reality. Be sure my friends, if your conscience smites you and condemns you in this matter; be sure your sin will find you out. The eye that saw Achan steal the golden wedge and hide it, is upon you, The book that records the deeds of Gehazi, and Ananias and Sapphira, is recording your ways.

Jesus mercifully sends you a word of warning today. He says "I know your works". Now it is true that works are not the means of salvation, but works are what God Judges an individual by. Of course He knows His elect. He says "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal The Lord knoweth them that are His", and therefore, He said "Let every man that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." And I am persuaded, in fact I know definitely, that every child of God will cease from iniquity. He will turn away from wickedness, but yet we see in Revelation 3:1 "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." I wonder my friend, if that could be your lot this morning. Are you living just by name and not reality? Throughout the ministry of our Lord, He was confronted with religious deception under all forms, but headed up under the same arch enemy, that deceiveth the whole world. His entire ministry was given in making definite distinction between light and darkness, between the false and true, between error and truth, and heart devotion with true worship of the living God.

The message to the woman of Samaria can aptly be applied to all religious devotion destitute of the Spirit of God

- our Lord told her as He stood by the well (Jacob's well) in John 4, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship...but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipper shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Then we know the heart sickness of the apostle Paul as he stood on Mars hill, that very center of all religious activity, where all of the philosophers gathered to discuss their points and to declare their allegiance. And there are those that were of the Epicureans and also the Pharisees, and Scribes. Then there was a group, it seems, had no other god, so they just put up a sign that said "to the unknown god". Therefore Paul said "I declare this God unto you". For truly he is unknown to mankind, until the Spirit of God opens the heart like he did Lydia of Thyatira to receive the ingrafted word of God which is able to save men. So the apostle Paul warned, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" Col. 2:18. They worship not in spirit but they worship in their own fleshly zeal, "vainly puffed up", as he said, by their fleshly minds. When men take delight and are pleased in and with what they do, they are said to do it heartily, with their whole hearts. Thus when God Himself blesses His people in love and delight, He says he doeth it "with his whole heart, and with his whole soul."

Now the law of sin and death finds its citadel in the heart, for out of it issues the principle of all moral operations, of doing good or evil, as out of it proceeds good or evil - but certainly not at the same time as James tells us "a fountain cannot send forth bitter and sweet". "O generation of vipers" our Lord told the Pharisees in Matthew, "how can you being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good

treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." Here dwells our enemy, this is the fort, the citadel of this tyrant, where he maintains a rebellion against God all our days. Sometimes it has more strength, and consequently more success; but it is always in rebellion while we live. It is like an enemy in war, whose immeasurable strength and power lies within its concealed weapons to strike unexpectedly and return back to its hiding place. And such is the heart of this enemy of God and our souls - for you are God's worst enemy, and therefore your own enemy, that opposes yourself unless God peradventure "will give you repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

Men must acknowledge the truth concerning their own heart condition, and the truth concerning Jesus Christ as the only possible way of escape. As we know not the hearts of one another, neither do we know our own heart in its true concept. Therefore being unsearchable by man, it is the divine prerogative of God, as He declares "Who can know the heart? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." In this unsearchable heart dwells the law of sin; and much of its security, and even its strength, lies in this, that it is past our finding out. Ephesians 4:19 speaks of those whose feelings are past finding out...that is, whose feelings are deadened; by this we mean that the conscience is seared, and the soul is sealed up ready to be delivered into the pit of hell, unless the merciful God break through that awful wicked and deceptive heart. The soul may persuade itself all is well, when sin seems safely hidden in the darkness of the mind, where it is impossible for us to look into; for what ever makes manifest is light, says the word of God. It can lie so close in the darkened mind and so paralyze the will through its carnal

affections, that no eye can discover it. Hidden away...ah what an awful deceiver, therefore "it is deceitful above all things". Great deceit in their dealings with man (as Judas), great deceit in their own affairs, private and public; great deceit in their words and actions. "These things hast thou done" says the word of God, "and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes," (Psalm 50:21). If you will consult the 5th chapter of Isaiah, you will see six woes are pronounced upon Israel, because of this deception that was exposed, but they were unwilling to acknowledge them. It is not the deceitfulness of sin itself that we speak of here, but (get this) it is the deceitfulness of the heart where it is seated. You read Proverbs 26:23-28; which gives you something of its treachery. When one thinks his condition is good, because there is some change in him from a loose, profane life; or a change of mind about certain qualifications demanded by the word of God, I say to believe this testimony sufficient to ground the stress of one's salvation upon - to stake his destiny upon this, is very dangerous. Our Lord declares "But I received not testimony from man: but these things I say that ye might be saved,.. and ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." The group of Pharisees whom the Lord addressed here was walking in none other light than John the Baptist - "And ye were willing for a season" says he "to rejoice in his light.. Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life...and ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." Isn't that a deplorable sight? And yet that is a rule rather than the exception, sad to say.

There is the light of knowledge of the word - a natural light which bears witness to the true light - "Christ". That is that which he would have men to look into. This is that light of which the apostle Peter spake as "Corruptible things...from

your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers." Our Lord declared, "I receive not honour from men...How can ye believe...and seek not the honour that cometh from God only. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." Now, do not think there was no change in the five foolish virgins, spoken of there in Matthew 25:1-3. There was such a change, that the five wise ones could give them admittance, walking with them in the most pure way and institutions of the gospel of Christ, and yet the word of God says they were foolish, and we find them outside the door. It is a certain fact "that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Your case is not closed, my friend, until the seal of God is placed within, and upon the finished work of His hand..."and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." There are three, and only three witnesses in earth, - (1) **The Spirit of God**. "No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (2) **The Word** - "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (3) **The Blood** "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." And these three agree in one. If the regenerating power of the Spirit has effectually worked by the word, purifying your hearts by faith; it is only because the purifying blood has been effective in "that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever after the order of

Melchisedech.” You will find this in Hebrews the sixth chapter.

Now when divine grace is wrought in the heart of a sinner, delivering him from the power of darkness, and translating him into the kingdom of God, there is a godly fear - a reverential fear that makes him walk in confidence with God, and yet in fear and holiness before God. But I want you to take this into consideration, there is a fear of God that drives a man away from God. By that I mean, an ungodly fear, when one, through a sense of sin and of God's Justice flees from Him, and then seeks to return through a slavish ungodly fear. Thus ungodly fear was that which possessed Adam's heart in the day that he did eat of the tree concerning which the Lord had said unto him, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Yes, where-ever ungodly fear takes hold of a heart they run away from God rather than run to God, and it is because they are lost. God has planted confidence that he has given us, that "if we ask anything in His name He will give it to us." Then He says that he that keepeth His commandments is he that loves God. When he heard the voice of the Lord God (that is Adam) in the garden, he sought to hide himself, and covered himself with a covering of his own making. Many false professions have no other ground of comfort than that which Adam had as he hid himself among the trees. This ungodly fear, begat in him ungodly apprehensions of the true nature of grace, and thus with a sense of God's justice before him, his conscience flew to the first refuge - which was a garment of his own making. My friends, you may get scared and run ahead of the Lord, and make a profession but that is not salvation. You may reform and clean up your life, but that is not salvation. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man then he seeketh rest and findeth none. Some of you are scared to death every time anything crosses your

conscience. That is, anything that is brought about that would indicate the Judgment and wrath of God falling upon this earth, or upon you, you run in fear and trembling. You are literally scared to death. And it is because you believe that there is a God, for we find the same thing in James when It refers to this faith, that is without works. He says "the devils believe", you do well if you believe there is one God, "the devils believe, and also tremble." Now that word in its original says that they are terrified so that their hair stands on their head. My friends, if this ungodly fear has got hold of you, I would implore, I would entreat, I would beg of you, to seek the Lord while He may be found. Call ye upon Him while He is near.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord," we are asked. "Who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully". Psalm 24:3-4. Jeremiah (17:9) tells us "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" When the Holy Spirit strikes the conscience or the heart to expose the deception, pride and self-will always seek to cover over with a healing of its own - "they have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly," Jeremiah tells us, "saying peace, peace, when there is no peace." There is also a fear that stirs up the passions of the desperately wicked heart, such as anger, self-pity, malice, evil surmising; all these are exercised with many more, for the imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil continually. When this wickedness was exposed in the heart of king Saul, Samuel entreated him "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat or rams." But the pride of his heart would not let him bow to such a lowly place - "then Samuel said unto Saul, stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And Saul said unto him "Say on," Then

Samuel replied "for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

The sinner is determined to be king. If he cannot be king by sitting on God's throne, he will set up his own kingdom under a secondary notice; with a false humility, and a feigned love for God. After the ultimatum was delivered to King Saul he coughed up his sin, but like Judas, and Esau, and Cain; he wanted to continue with the same honour that he had as king. "I have sinned" cried Saul, "yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God." Seeing God's judgment fall, Samuel had no other message for Saul, nevertheless, "Samuel mourned for Saul", but God said "look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, But the Lord looketh on the heart." So take thought to these few closing words. Like the parable of the Marriage Feast, those who will one day be cast out of the wedding feast are feeding themselves without fear, as the apostle Peter speaks of, while those who have the most right to enjoy the banquet are often full of gracious anxiety. Solomon says, "Happy is the man that feareth always". Such will cling closely to the Lord, realizing their need of Him, they will not run the risks like the presumptuous. Holy fear takes care that when there is a feast, we go to it in a wedding garment. Pure gospel preaching, truly, is very discriminating. You can tell Cain from Abel as soon as the sacrifice is the subject. But the work of discrimination is not finished after the gospel has been heard and men have been brought into the church. Sad but true, even in the church, division has to be made. Therefore we read "His fan

is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor.” He will gather the tares and tie them in bundles, but He will gather his wheat into the barn.” Among the sheep there are goats, among the virgins are foolish ones, and among the guests at the wedding feast there are those who have not on the wedding garment.

As long as the temple of God stands on earth we shall always discover necessity for the work of self-examination. Judas carried on his knavery, as if to warn us that no rank in service, no honor among brethren, no length of experience can screen us from the necessity of saying "Lord, Is it I?" When His warning voice saith, "One of you shall betray me". "When the king comes in to see the guests, the light grows stronger and hidden things are revealed, "for all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Yes, the dead will remain quiet till the Lord of the harvest speaks. Mere professors will not know that they are making a false profession, but will remain at ease in our solemn feasts - but when the king comes in all things are changed. Oh my dear listener, make your calling and election sure, for it is too late when the trump sounds. When death comes and lays hold of you to chase you out of this world as Job 18:18 tells us. Hear the word of the Lord, let the spirit deal with your heart.

1963

THE FOLLY OF FOOLS

Our text this morning will be found in Proverbs 14:9, and our subject today, "The Folly of Fools." Let me read the text: "Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour." Approximately two hundred times we find in the Bible the words "Fools", "Foolishly", "Foolishness" and "folly." All of these denote an unwise personality devoid of sound judgment. They are those who, we might say, hitched their wagon to a star that brought them to nothing but dust. Some of the stars which we see fall from the heavens with spectacular show, prove to be nothing but dust. So, as we look into the Word, we find these many fools set forth.

In First Samuel 26:21, King Saul said to David, "Behold, I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly." In Luke chapter 12, verse 15, the Lord warned, saying "Beware of covetousness" etc., then in verses 16 to 21, He gives us the parable of the rich fool, who had torn down his barns and built new ones, making preparation for this life, but no preparation at all for the life to come. Therefore God spoke to him, and said - "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." In Proverbs 1:22, we are told that scorers and fools hate knowledge, (that is, the knowledge of the Lord) and that "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" Psalm 14:1. Then we find our Lord saying in Luke 24:25, to some who were slow to believe - "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." Then the Apostle Paul refers to those that perish, because to them, the preaching of the cross is foolishness - I Cor.1:18. They see no need of blood redemption, therefore they call it foolish preaching. Then, in Matthew 25, we read the parable of the five foolish virgins. So many, many examples we could give you, concerning those whom the Lord referred to as fools.

In reality, fools are those that neglect and refuse to hear the voice of God, and submit to His requirements in repentance and faith. We find the prophet Isaiah saying in chapter 53, "Who hath believed our report?" This is the bold, accusing, but plaintive cry of this prophet of God. Among those to whom the gospel is preached there are many who avowedly reject it; and of those who profess to believe it, there are many who in works deny it. Yes, "Fools make a mock at sin." To make a mock at sin is to take lightly the warnings of God. Then too, it is to take sin and play with it. You find this graphically set forth in the word of God, and especially do we see it in the lives of many today who make a mock at sin. I heard on the news the other night someone speaking about the population explosion, (you hear a great deal about the population explosion these days) and one newscaster gave this report: He said that legitimate births are on the decline, but illegitimate births are on the incline. In fact if I am not mistaken, he said sixty percent of the births now are illegitimate. This is an awful thing if it be true, and it means that fools make a mock at sin. So if you are champions of birth control, and deplore the population explosion, you had better start in on the moral side of it, and then you will have something to talk about.

The opposition of the heart to the practical design of the gospel is considered as unbelief. The Apostle says of the Jews (Rom.10:16) "They have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" To obey the gospel is to believe with the heart and receive the love of the truth. He who does not in heart receive, and in fact obey the truth, is guilty of unbelief. Now unbelief is a terrible thing. Jesus said of unbelievers, "Ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"- John 8:24; And "Whither I go, ye cannot come"-verse 21. There are some who pay little regard to the power

of godliness. They believe in general that there is such a thing as Christianity; but have very partial and superficial conceptions of it. As the Lord Jesus Christ said of the Pharisees, "they say and do not," therefore they make a mock of sin. So if sin by the commandment becomes exceeding sinful, then by the gospel it becomes exceedingly more so. If they who despised the law of Moses died without mercy, how severe will the punishment be, to those who trample underfoot the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and count it an unholy thing?

When Christ said to His disciples, "One of you shall betray me"; all were struck with astonishment. They felt a solemn anxiety, each one for himself. Thus fear took hold of their hearts, each one crying - "Lord, is it I?" Let us enquire - what is the ground of our hope. Let us examine the foundation of our hope. Does it rest wholly upon the gracious promise of God in Jesus Christ? If our hope leans on any other support it will fall. Guilty creatures have no ground but this on which they can stand. Let us examine whether we have complied with the terms of the promise. Do we feel our heart consenting to them? Do we find that hatred of sin; that tenderness of conscience; that watchfulness against temptation; that delight in duty; and that steady concern to prove ourselves to God? These are fruits of a living faith and true repentance.

A false hope makes men secure and careless; bold and presumptuous. A true hope will make them watchful and humble, attentive to themselves and charitable to others. Everyone who has this hope, says the word of God, purifies himself. But fools "make a mock of sin", and vain hypocrites glory in their shame, and are ashamed of the true glory of God (Phil.3:10). Now the scriptures represent sinners as being in a state of bondage, and under the dominion of sin; in the bond of iniquity bound over to judgment; shut up unto

the faith, and having no ways of escape but by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The sinner when awakened to the reality of his condition is convinced of his corruptions and transgressions. He knows that he is worthy of, and bound over to, eternal condemnation. He once thought himself alive, and felt secure. He had no conception of what sin is; how it abounded in him, and how God's threatenings were pointed against him. His conscience was quiet and undisturbed - or if it happened at any time to be aroused, it soon sunk down into its own apathy. Yes, "Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favor", says the word of God.

When the commandment comes home to the conscience of a sinner as to its true extent, its righteous demands, and all its threatenings, he perceives himself to be dead in trespasses and in sin. Sin now by the commandment becomes exceedingly sinful, and his soul exceedingly guilty. Were you ever guilty before God? Did you ever come as a hopeless soul? Or, do you like many others, stand there acknowledging your guilt, and that you are not perfect; but never go any further than that? Yes, my friends, open crimes kill their thousands, but neglect of Christ kills its ten thousands. No question is more solemn than this: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3). But when is salvation neglected? It is neglected when it is not the subject of our first and chief concern. Jesus told a group of people to "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."

Salvation is neglected when worldly concerns form an excuse for trifling with the interests of the deathless soul. Of such neglecters Christ said "They went their ways, one to his farm, and another to his merchandise." Neglect was the guilt of Capernaum, which exposed them to denunciations of awful woe. The Saviour was not opposed and persecuted in

Capernaum - but neglect was their sin. We read in Matthew 11, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto the heavens, shall be brought down to hell." They listened to His warnings and His threatenings; they listened to His promises and thronged to hear them; but heeded them not. "Fools make a mock at sin." It is not for the want of good news of the gospel that sinners perish. This heavenly mercy was executed by Him before whom demons trembled; at whose voice the dead arose; at whose dying cry the heavens grew dark; the earth quaked, and the rocks rent; yet this is the gospel you slight! Yes, "Fools make a mock at sin."

The eternal Spirit exerts to carry on the work of mercy; the Lord of glory came down from heaven, and labored, and died; and you neglect the blessing. Now what do you suppose is the guilt of such neglect - when "fools make a mock at sin"? The cause of this wicked neglect lies in your unwillingness to be truly His. Yes, UNWILLING to be truly His! Isn't that an awful indictment? Isn't that a terrible thing? Therefore He said to some of old, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Christ has every claim upon you sinner; and you are not willing to be His. Behold Him Who left His throne of glory, cradled in humanity - "Undefiled, and separate from sinners." He freely and gladly gave His life on Calvary - all this for you: and you are NOT WILLING to come to Him. Though the Father "spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all" according to Romans. Think of His design to save you from the wrath to come; to raise you to glory, honor, and immortality; and YOU ARE NOT WILLING! Oh, hard, hard load of guilt - such exceeding wickedness! That God is willing to receive you as a child, AND YOU ARE UNWILLING TO BECOME ONE! A Saviour willing to make you His own; and YOU UNWILLING TO BE HIS.

King David spoke concerning Abner, "And the king lamented over Abner, and said "Died Abner as a fool dieth." So we see many ways in which men become foolish - foolish and unlearned in heart; UNWILLING to submit to the promise of God's word, and its threatenings, and partake of the blessings. "But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light" we are told in Ephesians 5:13,14. "For whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." But the will of man stands opposed to the will of God, until made willing in the day of God's power; according to Psalm 110:3. A broken will is a broken heart, for the will we might say, is the iron sinew in the heart. The best way to break the will, says the beloved Samuel Rutherford, is "to offer hell, and the coals of everlasting burning to it; yea, and when the soul is humble, to humble it more."

Many think the troubled conscience should not be further humbled; but there is a vast difference between down-casting and saving humiliation. One may be terrified beyond measure under the awful curses of the law (as Cain and Judas) and yet never know true humility. God gives grace to the humble, and He gives humility to the gracious, under a sense of rich grace. Nothing will humble the heart like a true estimate and apprehension of the grace of God. It is the goodness of God that leadeth thee to repentance. And if the goodness of God does not lead you to repentance then the justice of God will cast you out, and you will have your part with the hypocrites. Christ is disposed to a sinner as a free gift; not as a wage or hire. Therefore grace reigns through righteousness by the power of mercy in Christ; "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (John 3:33).

The awakened soul views the commandment as coming from divine authority; he perceives in himself those evil imaginations, corrupt affections, and resentment of heart, of which he once had no suspicion. In his careless unawakened state he gave free indulgence to his lusts. He could sin with a high hand. But when the law comes home to his heart in the power of the Holy Spirit; when it is enlivened; when it is transferred upon the soul (or on the eye of the soul, which is the heart) then it is deeply touched; then it is that he is moved with a great conflict. But now there is a conflict between his conscience and his lusts, and his lusts seem to take the upperhand. He is pressed with new temptations. He feels the workings of pride, unbelief, impatience, and discouragement; and all those oppositions to the holy will of God to which he once seemed a stranger. But he is put on the spot like a vicious animal. He will strike back unless God makes him willing and obedient. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land"-Isaiah 1:19. The fact of the matter lies not in the corruption of the heart, but in the sinner's sense of his corruption. He now sees that the Lord God condemns him to death, and his conscience justifies the sentence. Thus he finds his soul in prison; in the bond of iniquity - under the condemnation of the law. It is said concerning Jesus in His Commission, in Isaiah 61, that he will open the prison doors and let them out. Yes, he is shut up unto the faith which the gospel reveals. He cannot - he dare not trust in himself, or rely on any works that he has done, for all these have brought nothing but confusion and hopelessness. That, my friends, is a description of a convicted soul. "But we had the sentence of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Cor.1:9,10).

The cry of the heart of a Spirit convicted sinner is "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy Name: The righteous shall compass me about, for thou hast dealt bountifully with me" (Psalm 142:7). It is here that we must look to the Saviour by faith. Let the sinner who is convinced of his guilty and helpless state, look away from himself to the merciful God through the Redeemer, Who came to save those who are lost. The Saviour Who condescended to die for sinners, will kindly embrace those who come to Him, sensible of their guilt. The sincere penitent, In the belief of these truths, will flee to God whom he has offended, relying on His mercy through the atonement of Jesus for the pardon of his sins, resolving through the grace of the Spirit to walk in newness of life. Thus being made free from sin - from its reigning power and condemning guilt, he has his fruit unto holiness.

Penitent souls, burdened with a sense of sin and guilt, are afflicted with a view of their own danger, and from this they seek deliverance. "Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour." Yes, "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." While they mourn for their sins, as committed against God, they will pray for deliverance, that they may glorify His name. Do you pray to be brought out of prison, that you may praise God's name? His Son is here to bring you out - give Him your hand.

Now false repentance leaves the sinner as it found him - with all his professions of sorrow, he still thinks well of himself. It is a terrible - an awful thing, when God has to break a sinner, but as Job says he must "hide pride from man. He MUST hide his pride. The sinner hopes and pleads for mercy on account of good that he has done; but God will not accept this. You cannot approach God upon your own goodness. He tells us in Titus 3:5, that it is "Not by works of

righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy" that he saves us. And this, he tells us, is by the regenerating work of the Spirit, and renewing of the truth in our heart.

It is true, the sinner will often acknowledge he has done wrong, but then he has often done right, says he. He has sinned, but then he has often done good. This is a false repentance in which a sinner sees only the injury sin has done himself, and the danger to which it has exposed him. But fear - in the sense of legal fear, never turned a sinner to Christ. It is when the heart is broken; and, not in fear but in hope, the sinner comes acknowledging his sinnership, that he is received by the Lord Jesus Christ. Otherwise, when danger is over, sorrow is over, with those who will not hear His voice. Then sin, instead of being forsaken and abhorred, is loved and followed. It maintains its sway over the soul, and in the miserable man's esteem, it is as sweet as ever.

When true repentance is felt, then sin is hated; and when pardoned, it is hated more than ever. The penitent forsakes his own way; resolves against, and prays against its snares; loathes the sin that may so easily beset him; thus he flees from sin, and hates it with utter hatred. Sinners somehow have the mistaken idea that Jesus Christ came to save them from hell. Of course in the last analysis this is true, but that is not the purpose for which Jesus Christ came Into the world, It is said "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people FROM their sins" (Mat.1:21). Therefore it is from SIN that men must be saved, instead of from hell. Now of course being saved from sin, will in its eventuality, save from hell. And it will save from a hell here on earth; because there is indeed a hell on earth when a sinner's heart is given full rein to its lusts.

The true penitent welcomes gospel mercy; rushes to the Saviour's invitation - "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden," and is made a partaker of God's forgiveness, The penitent publican went down to his house justified; the penitent prodigal received his father's pardon, and was restored to his father's family; but "Fools make a mock at sin." Are you one of those fools? Maybe you are one of those fools that tear down your barns and build more rooms. You place all your time, your efforts, your energy, everything that you have, upon this world's goods. You live to make money; you live for pleasure; you live to make a good name; you do everything in the world to enrich your own personal self. But, my friends, men were created that they should have as their chief end - to glorify God.

Peace of mind has been regarded as evidence of forgiveness, but this is not altogether decisive; for the hope of the hypocrite may inspire a false peace. Peace comes through the blood of Christ, springing from faith in His atonement, and connected with the experience of the sanctifying, constraining power of His love; therefore a sure evidence that the soul has regarded the gospel call. Yes, when the sinner comes to Christ, he burns all bridges behind him. He brings nothing in his hand. In the Old Testament they could not come to the Tabernacle without an offering - the offering of a blood sacrifice. Cain refused it. Many others have since that day; but he that believeth not; and does not shelter under the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, that person dies in his sins; and being under sin, God holds him in judgment. My friends, have you been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed"? (I Peter 2:24).

ACCORDING TO ITS TRUE NATURE

An officer in India had tamed a young leopard. From the time when it was quite a “kitten” he had brought it up, till it went about the house like a cat, and everybody played with it. But he was sitting in his chair one day asleep, and the leopard licked his hand — licked it in all innocence but as he licked, the skin was broken and the taste of blood came to the leopard, and from that moment it was not content to dwell with man. It rushed forth to kill, and was no more at ease till it reached the jungle. So a man, sobered by moral motives but unchanged in heart, **is a fallen man still**, and the taste of blood, I mean the taste of SIN, will reveal the tiger in him.

FOLLOWING ON TO KNOW THE LORD

The message this morning I believe will be a blessing to you as we look into the little book of Hosea, one of the minor prophets, which of course is addressed primarily to Israel - the backslidden bride; but it is also very applicable to any sinner that is being brought into the way of grace. We have put this message under the title "FOLLOWING ON TO KNOW THE LORD." Let me read the text; then we will go into it and give you some thoughts that I believe will be profitable to you, and I trust a blessing to you.

"Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." - Yes, "Following on to know the Lord." Notice again, "His going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth"- Hosea 6:1-3. Then you will notice chapter 4:1-5, gives you a condition that I think is parallel (you might say) with our present age. - "Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people are as they that strive with the priest. Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother."

These scriptures are of course prophetic; and yet they are very uptodate - in fact, to this present minute. We are living in an age my dear friends, when ministers are so anxious to get converts that they will take almost anything as a token of salvation. First of all, they do not understand an awakened sinner (if they do happen to get one) and they will stand over that sinner and brow-beat him until they drag him into a profession. They will not stop until they get him to say "Yes, I believe the word of God. I believe that Jesus died for me." Now my friends it is true that this belief is necessary to the salvation of a soul, but I want to tell you upon the authority of God's word, that a person that is brow-beaten into a profession does not get to Christ.

God pity the minister when he stands before the judgment bar of God and faces that sinner that he has browbeaten and dragged into a profession, thereby causing him to run ahead without being called. He knows nothing at all about Holy Spirit conviction. He has never tasted of the bitterness of his own sin except in that he knows that there is something wrong with him. But I am here to tell you my dear friends, that until a person is brought to taste the bitterness of sin - of HIS OWN SIN, and made to see that his sin is not so much in works of the flesh, (and certainly there are plenty of those) but the sin that God doth hold him to the fire with, is that he is an enemy of God. "Enemies in their minds by wicked works" we read in Colossians, chapter 1.

A knowledge of Christ in true repentance and faith, carries with it the highest of all blessings; but our Lord says "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"- Luke 13:3. In Ephesians, chapter 1, verses 3-7, we read "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without

blame before him in love...in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Yes, all the blessings of God come "according to the riches of His grace." The blessings of Holy Spirit conviction: the blessing of His tearing - as we read in our text - "Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn." That truly is a picture of God's taking hold of the sinner. It means that He deals with him in a severe way, and yet in a tender way. And as we go along with this message we will show you something of the dealings of the Lord. So to follow on to know the Lord is the depth of the riches of God's grace, as He tells us In Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

When Christ apprehends a man by His Spirit, he is so drawn that he comes away to Christ with his whole heart; for true believing is believing with all the heart. Philip told the Eunuch (when he asked about being baptized) "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." Terrors may break a heart of stone, but the pieces into which it is broken still continue to be stone; yet terrors may begin the work which love crowns. As in the experience of Elijah, the strong wind, the earthquake and the fire going before; then the still small voice in which the Lord is; may come after them. The first blow the seeking Saviour strikes home upon the heart, is a wound that can never be healed until mollified with the ointment of God's redeeming grace. And if a sinner does not follow on to know the Lord; if he runs ahead of the Lord and makes some kind of amendment without the regenerating power of God's Spirit, that person cannot call Jesus Christ, Lord. We read in First Corinthians that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, "But by the Holy Ghost."

Sinners will not speak with Christ till He has wounded them; made them captives, and bound them with the cords

of death. When this is done, then it is that Christ makes love to them, and wins their heart. The sinner is first driven and then drawn to Christ. The Lord sends the avenger of blood in pursuit of the criminals - thus the law comes as a mighty weapon and drives the sinner from his old acquaintances, (because he dare not stay with them), and he flees for his life to the city of refuge. We remember that the Lord, in the cool of the morning, came and spoke to Adam who had run away from Him. He said "Where art thou Adam?" Now WHERE ART THOU? Where were you this morning? You did not come in for your worship. You did not lift your heart unto Me. What has happened here? "Ye did run well, who did hinder you that you should not obey the truth. This persuasion cometh not of him that called you" Gal. 5:8. Now what was the answer that Adam gave to the Lord? He said "I heard thy voice and I was afraid." Yes, he heard God's voice and he was afraid, and he said "I was naked and I hid myself. Now that is exactly what God does to the sinner in Holy Spirit conviction. He lays bare the heart, and that sinner finds no resting place until he rests in the Lord Jesus Christ. He cannot rest eternally in a flimsy little profession, but only in the regenerating work of God.

When the Lord gets through with the sinner, he is exactly as the Psalmist says in Psalm 131, "My soul is even as a weaned child." He is weaned from the errors of the world; he is weaned from the "slop-buckets" of the world; he is weaned from the false doctrines that are so prevelant in the world. He is weaned indeed, and Christ is his altogether lovely one whom he beholds, and loves, and worships. This to him is a matter of great concern, as he is made to think soberly; and the light affairs of this world are no longer important to him, for he must know Christ. Whatever the cost may be - or whatever embarrassment the flesh may contemplate; he sees that these are trivial matters - and that

his true shame is that he has neglected his own soul, and has said, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."

A self-satisfied sinner who is a churchmember is one of the most deplorable and despicable of all sights in the eyes of the Holy God. Did not He tell the Pharisees, as he dealt with them in the story of the two sons in Matthew chapter 21, "The publicans and the harlots will enter in before you." Why? "Because ye repented not after that ye heard the truth." There is nothing so obnoxious as a religious Pharisee. A sinner that is convicted by the Holy Spirit knows that he is "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Why? Because God has stripped bare his heart. He has gone down into the very depths of it. He has gone a little further my friends, than a mere surface dealing with the sins of the flesh. And indeed the sins of the flesh are despicable in the eyes of God; but the sins of the heart; - those sins that are hidden away; those secret sins that he hides back, and thinks that no one knows of, are discerned by the omnipotent God Whose omniscient eye beholds all things.

The rich young ruler came to Jesus, and said "I have kept the commandments from my youth up", but the Lord Jesus Christ looked him in the eye and said, "But one thing thou lackest." I wonder what is lacking in your life this morning? I care not how many professions you have made, unless the Spirit of God has spoken peace to your heart, nothing has happened there. Unless your sins are covered; unless the conscience is purged from dead works to serve the living God, you have not salvation. But being in the state of mind and heart that walks in fear and trembling before God, the sinner is now ready to take heed to the invitation Christ gives - "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be

clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Yes, the word of God is "sharper than any twoedged sword piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" and "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"- Heb. 4:12,13. When Christ apprehends a soul, the heart is disengaged from, and turned against sin. He forsakes his former profane courses; though they be dear to him as right eyes that are to be plucked out; he will rather quit them than ruin his soul. The right eye of most sinners is their own self-righteousness. It is some kind of a profession that they have wrapped themselves into, and they are closed up in the womb of death. And truly it is (as it was with the apostle Paul) as a right eye that was plucked out; as a right hand that was cut off; and as a foot that was cut off; for he said "I have suffered the loss of all things for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord" Phil.3:8.

Paul, in giving his testimony in Acts, chapter 26, said "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." So, as on a ship that is sinking into the depths of the sea, he throws his goods overboard, that he himself may not perish. But too often men stop at this point and take comfort in a partial reformation; until the Spirit of God strikes home again with the words of the prophet - "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." Are you crying "peace" when there is no peace in your heart? I mean peace in the sense that you are one in reconciliation with God. Many people are ruined by clinging to a false peace. But when the Spirit of

God breaks off the sinner also from this hold by bringing home to his conscience that guilt still lies there, and the garments of his righteousness are as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6); then (Job 33:16,17) "He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." Thus we see the hidden pride of man must be uncovered, and brought down. And though the preaching of the law prepares the way of the Lord, yet it is in the word of the gospel that Christ and the sinner meets.

The gospel is good news of the sin-bearer that "taketh, away the sins of the world" - John 1:29. So there is in Christ a fulness of all sufficiency "according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" 2 Peter 1:3. Therefore it is the gospel that crowns the work; the law makes nothing perfect. The law lays open the wound, but it is the gospel that heals. The law strips a man, wounds him, and leaves him half dead: the Gospel "binds up his wounds, pouring in wine and oil," to heal them. By the law we are made to see ourselves sinners, but it is by the gospel that we find our all sufficiency in Christ.

First, there is that light in Christ that is sufficient to lead us out of - and from, all that darkness wherein we are engulfed. Paul speaks of it as "to turn them from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18). It is written also (Jesus speaking) "I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Secondly, there is life in Christ that is to be found nowhere else- (John 5:40); life as a principle in the soul, by which it shall be enlivened to do that which through Him is pleasing to God. There is no true eternal life, but that which is in Christ. "Whoso findeth me," saith the Lord, "findeth life."

That is, deliverance from everlasting death and destruction that shall surely devour all those who are without Christ.

Thirdly, it is Christ alone by Whom sinners have admittance to, and acceptance with, the Father - "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). Therefore when the sinner by faith comes to Christ "he is justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" He stands no more condemned, but justified before God as being in Christ." There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" we read in Romans 8:1. His sins are pardoned, and the guilt of them removed. The sinner out of Christ is bound over to the wrath of God; he is under the law obligated to go to the prison of hell, and there to lie till he has paid the utmost farthing. But now being united to Christ, God says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom"- Job 33:24.

Man by nature is a proud and haughty creature, and therefore "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day"- Isa.2:11. "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty"- Isa.2:10. When the Spirit of the Lord comes to deal with a person to bring him to Christ, he finds him sound asleep, contentedly bound over to Satan. Thus we read concerning this, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoils"- Luke 11:21, 22. Then (Luke 13:24) we read this solemn warning- "Strive to enter in at the straight gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Therefore He darts some beams of light into the darkened soul; and lets the man see that he is a

lost man; and in so doing the Spirit of the Lord begins to bind the sinner over to his duties as obligated to God.

At first thought, the sinner becomes a law unto himself-Rom.2:15, "which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." He becomes very zealous in religious matters; "the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it" (Mat. 13:20); thinking himself a better servant to God than many others. Luke 18:11, gives us this description of such a religious sinner - "God, I thank Thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers," etc. Like the barren figtree, he makes a beautiful appearance, and many would not suspect there is no inward purity of heart. He is not a profane person like Esau; he performs religious duties, he prays, he is very studious in searching the scriptures, strictly observes the Lord's Day, and like Herod, does many things, and hears sermons gladly. There is a mighty change upon the man which is very noticeable by all his former associates as well as the new. This step is followed by many who never get beyond it. Is that all you have? Are you just a barren figtree? You read again in Luke, chapter 13, where the Lord spoke this parable, and see that it had nothing but leaves. Leaves are a type of profession, and with many a person - many a churchmember - this is all he has - just an empty profession. One may have an outward look that is very good, but let us remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ as He rebuked the Pharisees, saying, "You make beautiful the outside of the cup" - you reform, and clean up your life outwardly - "but the inside is full of extortion and excess"- Mat.23:25. "But here" says Thomas Boston, "the Lord gives the elect branch a further stroke. Conscience flies in a man's face, for some wrong step in his conversation, the neglect of some duty, or

commission of some sin, - and then the flaming sword of the law appears again over his head; and the curse rings in his ears, for that he "continueth not in all things which are written in the law to do them" - Galatians 3:10.

The flesh is very reluctant to give up its own way, therefore it takes many a stroke of the Sword of Truth in "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" Heb. 4:12. Has your foundation been shaken? Yes, the sinner must die to all his ambitions, whether they be morally upright, or a lusting after the fleshpots of Egypt. Many times the sinner will go a great length to purge out the old heart; he mourns over the evils of his heart, and strives to rid it of the weeds which he finds growing in that neglected garden. He labors to curb his pride and passion; prays more fervently, hears attentively, and strives to get his heart affected in every religious duty he performs: and by and by, he pronounces himself good, and lives peaceably for a season. He says, "Yes, I know everything is well with my soul. All is well now - because I have made it definite. I said, Lord, I'll trust you with all my heart." But my friends, it is one thing to speak with the lips, and quite another to speak with the heart. So the husbandman turns to the dresser of his vineyard, and says, "Behold, I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" You see, He is looking for the fruit of a broken and contrite heart. He is looking for fruit in a sinner that brings forth a desire in his heart for eternal life. Such a sinner realizes (as did Jacob) that "I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies." And as others have done, he cries out, "Behold I am an unclean man." Then the dresser of the vineyard gets permission to work with it longer, and thus the mighty probing of the Spirit

sets in again to tear down the foundations that were laid upon the sand.

Although a sinner is brought to the place of a beggar at Christ's door for mercy, yet he is a proud beggar, standing on his personal worth. When they come to beg, they consider their reformation of life, their repentance, the grief and tears which sin has caused them, their prayers and wrestlings for mercy; and use all of these as a possible bribe to gain special recognition at the throne of grace. They are as Thomas Boston says, "Persons who have once had an estate of their own, but are reduced to extreme poverty, and forced to beg." But however well one may look in the eyes of men, in the sight of God he must have a deeper stroke, thus laying bare the heart whereby the sinner is made to see his repentance is no better than the repentance of Judas, and his tears are as the tears of Esau. This is a terrible blow to the sinner; but it is needful that all confidence in the creature be completely laid aside, that Christ may become all in all to him.

Christ apprehends the sinner by His Spirit and draws him to Himself. The same Spirit that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead (Rom.8:11) is communicated to His elect in due time, never to depart from them, but to abide in them - "even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you"- John 14:17. Life must be by Jesus Christ, that God may be adored and magnified in finding out this way - "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Luke 10:21). By faith the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us; but by unbelief we are shut up under the law to perish. Faith gives us peace and comfort in our soul; but

unbelief works trouble and tossings, like the restless waves of the sea. Faith makes us see preciousness in Christ; but unbelief sees no form, beauty, nor comeliness in Him. Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears; but unbelief causes fears in the midst of comforts - "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"- Luke 11:13.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

– Christian or unchristian?

Men seek to abolish capital punishment, suggesting that the Christian age has no place for the eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, concept of Christian ethics. There is a worldwide movement in every religious body today favoring the abolishment of capital punishment on the ground that it is not taught in God's Word. This reveals either a blinded ignorance on the part of religious leaders as to what is taught in the Bible, or a Lawless people described by the Psalmist as saying "let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us". In other words they do not want any restraint whatsoever; they want to believe what they believe, which certainly is a constitutional right, here in the United States of America, but it certainly is not a divine right to any man.

In the sermon on the Mount our Lord emphatically declares the divine law of capital punishment. We read in the Beatitudes, "think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law until all be fulfilled". Surely it is perfectly plain to every unbiased soul that as the same God is the author of the old and new covenant alike, there can be no vital conflict between them. The fundamental principle underlying the one and the other must be – and are, in full accord. Christ is not here pitting Himself against the Mosaic law, but instead He continues the same course as He followed in the context, namely to define that righteousness demanded by His Father which is more excellent than the one taught and practised by the scribes and Pharisees, and this He does by exposing their errors and expounding the spirituality of the moral law. It is just this simple my friends, Christ is reminding them that no man has the right to take the law into their own hands, but that every case must be handled by judicial authorities with due process of law. And every law-abiding

citizen believes this, and certainly every Bible believing man believes this.

The great enemy of God and man has ever sought to move corrupt leaders both civil and religious, by enticing the depraved inclinations and popular opinions of the people, that true piety may be overthrown. It is at this very point that true ministers of God stand out in sharp contrast with the devil's hirelings. Such false teachers are unregenerate men with no fear of God in their heart. "They are of the world," says our Lord Jesus Christ, "and the world hearers them." The apostle speaks of such – "but the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned onto fables" – 2 Timothy 4:3, 4.

The popular God who is all mercy, is not the God of this Bible. Not only has divine law being repudiated, but the divine character has been grossly misrepresented. The attributes of God have been perverted by a one-sided presentation of modern thought. The justice, the holiness, and the wrath of God have been pushed into the background, and a God that loves everybody thrust into the foreground. In consequence, the masses of church-goers no longer fear God; juvenile delinquency and adult lawlessness stalks the land. For the past 50 years the vast majority of pulpits have been conspicuous because of the absence of the doctrine of eternal punishment; so that few now have any dread of the wrath to come. the repercussions have been unmistakeably drastic and tragic. Sickly sentimentality has regulated the pulpit until it dominated the pew, and this damnable doctrine has so spread that it now permeates the whole nation. The inevitable outcome has been the overthrow of discipline in the home, and the creation of a "public opinion" which is mawkish and spineless. You tell me that there is a God that does not have wrath and judgment for sinners, and that Jesus Christ is just a sentimental being that says "now, now, that's all right"; and that

you refuse to take sides with that holy God; – I say you are an infidel then.

Wherever you find a man putting his own opinion up against God's word, and saying he does not believe in capital punishment, he always believes in salvation by works and not salvation by grace. He has a philosophy of his own making, and he has missed Christ altogether. Therefore my friends, I want to take my stand on the side of God's irrevocable and infrangible word, that God's word very clearly teaches capital punishment.

Taken from a 41 page booklet "Capital Punishment Christian or unchristian?"

**A footnote from New Zealand: Wylie Fulton sent us a few of Pastor Daniel's sermons. One was Capital Punishment which was a topic being discussed in the New Zealand Parliament in the 1950s-60s. So copies of this sermon were widely distributed throughout New Zealand at the time.*

In addition Mr Cornelius (Cor) Van Dorp who was responsible for recording Rev. William MacLean's sermons in the Free Presbyterian Church Gisborne, New Zealand also copied Pastor Daniel's sermons from Reel on Reel tapes on to cassettes for wider distribution. Hence a mutual friendship was established between Pastor Daniel and those in New Zealand who appreciated his ministry.

HELL - GOD'S ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

There are millions of people following after false prophets who are telling them that there is no hell; or that Hell is the grave; or else they are telling them there is an intermediate state to which man goes when he dies, and there he is purged and made fit for Heaven. Some of them say, "Yes, you will go to Hell, but it will be over immediately; it is merely a fire that burns until you are annihilated." But this teaching is not according to God's Holy Word. I would like to call to your attention a couple of verses of Scripture as the basis for this message on "Hell - God's Eternal Punishment."

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10). Now let us look back into the Old Testament and read a few verses in Isaiah - "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place AND YOUR COVENANT WITH DEATH SHALL BE DISANNULLED, AND YOUR AGREEMENT WITH HELL SHALL NOT STAND" (Isaiah 28:16-18).

There are some who try to pass it off as mere figures of speech, while others utterly and completely deny it, but nothing could be any clearer - "When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it." God in His divine Word sets forth this final and irrevocable fact, that your agreement with hell shall be disannulled, and God's eternal Word shall stand! I would preface this message with the fact of God's supremacy, His divine sovereign rule over all creatures. And although men may deny it, nevertheless this world owes its existence to the creative power of God, who also establishes its laws - "For by him were all things created," we read in Col. 1:16-17, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: for all things were

created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Did He then exhaust His omnipotence? And has He been inactive ever since? Did He cast it off His hand as an orphan world, deprived of His sovereign rule and left to shift for itself? Surely we must answer, No. As we were at first the creatures of His power, so are we still the subjects of His government. Isaiah tells us that "The government shall be upon his shoulders." He still supports and rules the world which He has made.

Our first text tells us that there are three distinct inhabitable places which are under the sovereign rule of Almighty God: (1) "Of things in heaven," (2) "and things in earth," and (3) "things under the earth." Here we have Heaven, Earth and Hell.

Justice is an awful and amiable attribute of God, and on whom shall He display it but on rational creatures who are capable of moral good and evil? True as it may be, the display of His justice on particular persons may be reserved (as it generally is) to another state, and Ecclesiastes 8:11 tells us, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." And the Word of God continues. "Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him, but it shall not be well with the wicked" (vs. 12-13). Therefore let none think that God is unconcerned with the affairs of His own creatures... Though He makes use of secondary causes, yet HE reserves to Himself the important character of the Ruler of the universe, and is the Supreme Disposer of all events. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee" (Psalm 139:7-12). So, my friends, you see that God controls all things, and there is no hiding place except in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The more popular theory of this age then is annihilationism - that is, "I die like my dog." I die as a sinner and will appear nowhere afterwards. The coffin that holds my body must prove the grave of my soul, and punishment of any kind in eternity must prove an impossibility. Believe this lie and be damned. Remember the text: "Your agreement with hell shall be disannulled." Now this theory denies the immortality of the soul: for when my body dies my soul dies, this theory says. But God says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell" - hell, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Be not deceived, God is not mocked.

If there is no hell, then there is no Heaven. They have the same foundation - God's truth. And if Hell is a fable, Heaven is a fable also. There is as much proof in this Bible for a Hell, as there is for a Heaven. The threatenings are as numerous as the promises. Drown the fires of Hell, and you drown the music of Heaven - and then like our dogs let us die. Oh, wicked man, why reason in your heart? Why put the lie to the infallible Word of God? I will cite the tender hearted Saviour; Three times in the ninth chapter of Mark He speaks of a worm that never dies and a fire that never shall be quenched. Answer me this: Did the Lord Jesus Christ lie when He spoke of the unquenchable and fire? Did the Son of God paint a false word picture when He showed us the rich man lifting up his eyes in torment and begging a drop of water to cool his tongue? Did He mean to stir up our souls with lying pictures or with that which never existed? If you are the least bit honest you will have to say, "It is impossible for God to lie, and He says there is a Hell."

At the day of Judgment, there will be a legal trial. God will call forth the sinner by name. "And the books were opened." we read in Revelation 20, "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works." After this legal process of trial follows the sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" that word depart is worse than the sentence itself (Chrysostom). When once this sentence is passed, it cannot be reversed.

What about divine justice, holiness and truth? Are these things not to be taken into account? To say that it is incompatible with the character of God to allow any such

thing as eternal punishment, is to make the cross of Christ nonsense. In the cross, God has set forth His perfect love to the sinner; but, mind you my friends. He also has set forth His perfect hatred of sin. God cannot let sin come into His presence. He is of purer eyes than to behold evil and He cannot look upon iniquity. So how is the sin question to be settled? it is an idle dream to say, "Annihilation," or by man perishing as a beast. How inconsistent, when "The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul " This is a most miserable subterfuge, a pitiable attempt to get rid of the awful thought of eternity. Man will never be able to erase from Holy Writ that tremendous word, eternity, Eternity, ETERNITY! Even the inner voice of conscience must tell him he cannot get rid of it, he cannot shake it off. He is shut up to the stern fact that he must live on forever.

Now the Scripture tells us that in hell there are these three things: There is darkness; there is fire; and there are chains. First, let us consider hell as a place of darkness. Jude tells us "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness." Darkness, as we all know, is the most uncomfortable thing in the world, a man that goes in the dark trembles at every step he takes. Job 18 gives us this picture: "Terror shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet... he shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world ...Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God." Is Job speaking of a condition before death or after death? "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle and his candle shall be put out with him, for he is cast into a net by his feet, the snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way." Death is this darkness, for the Psalmist speaks of the child of God as "walking in the shadow of death." There is no death, no cessation of existence in hell, you may be sure of that.

As there is darkness in hell, so there is fire. It is called a burning lake. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). The saintly Thomas Watson tells us, "I think that the fire of the damned is partly material, and partly spiritual; partly material to work on

the body, partly spiritual which is the wrath of God that torments the soul. His wrath is the lake, the burning fire."

One may ask, Is it possible for us to burn without being consumed? Does not the Word of God tell us, "Our God is a consuming fire"? Moses was an eyewitness to such a fire. "And he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed" (Exod. 3:2). The prophet Daniel tells of the three Hebrew children who were cast into the fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter, "Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished" - he jumped to his feet in haste, saying, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt: the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:19-25). It is evident that none can resist the fires of God's wrath except they be with Him. It is intolerable to endure them, and impossible to escape them.

In hell there are chains: "Chains of darkness" (II Peter 2:4). Those sinners that would not be bound by the Law of God will have chains of darkness to bind them... Now we do not know all the meanings and the punishments associated with these "chains of darkness," but we know none will be able to resist. They shall be chained down fast, so as not to stir; they shall be fastened to that stake with chains of darkness. How dreadful are the thoughts of this, but this is the condition of the wicked - forever banished in darkness, fire and chains!

Hell comes immediately after death. We read, "The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Death puts an end to all his comforts. No more indulging and pampering the flesh! No more cups of wine, no more music. "The fruits thy soul lusteth after are departed from thee" (Rev. 18:14). As death puts an end to the sinner's mirth, so it lays the foundation for all his sorrows.

These are solemn words but true words, and I warn you - believe not the lies of those who would tell you there are no sufferings, no eternal wrath in hell. God's Word is too plain. May He give you a seeking heart to escape the damnation and wrath of God, for our God is indeed a consuming fire!

Message by the late Pastor Tom L. Daniel, of Waco, Texas. He was my pastor while I was in the Army in Texas. - Wylie Fulton

THE SABBATH OR LORD'S DAY.

The eternal Sabbath state does not differ essentially from our Sabbath days here, except that we'll be free from sin and free from sorrow. There'll be no limitations then, for God shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His own glorious body. And a person who does not love God's day, that does not love God's Word nor the truths concerning the Lord Jesus Christ - you would be happier in Hell than you would be in Heaven. You just don't love the things of God.

But it should be with us as with Abraham, that even strangers residing among us should be persuaded to keep the Sabbath Day and restrained from profaning it. This day was indeed originally instituted to honor God our Creator, but redemption by Christ as completed in His resurrection is especially commemorated by Christians as they hallow the first day of the week as the Lord's Day.

THE PASTOR CALLS

Beloved ones:

The days of gross darkness, that is, spiritual darkness, has already settled upon this sin cursed earth. With such darkness it is very revealing when "the true light which lighteth every man" is manifest to the elect, these will stand out as a separated people. It is very easy to see light when it is surrounded by darkness. Sad as it is, Christ "was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men," John 1:4,9,10.

Truly, it is a felt sense of one's ignorance that makes us prize the Lord as our wisdom. Our vileness and sinfulness makes us value His righteousness. "Unto you that believe, he is precious." Yes, Christ is all in all to them who feel themselves nothing at all. He is the altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand, when by faith we get a view of Him in any of His glorious characters, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the rich man glory in his riches; let not the strong man glory in his strength, but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord"- Jeremiah 9:23,24. There-fore, the child of God walks by faith and not by sight; in fact, faith thrives only in the absence of sight.

Faith is a very different thing from what many In this our day, suppose. Real faith stands In God's power, and what we believe quickens us to feel - will any deny that faith is the gift of God, and a very essential grace? The scriptures speak of several kinds of faith, yet only one

that is saving. I have heard some say, "If one trust his parents, husband, or wife, they can trust the Lord". This is not so at all; a faith that puts its confidence in sight is only a natural faith; for example - in the parable of the sower, "some believed for awhile, but in time of temptation fell away; and the cause was, there was no deepness of earth.

If one is going to sow seed in the ground one should plough the ground well, and put the seed properly in, not throw it on the top - or surface; and God acts the same. Therefore He ploughs up the fallow ground of the heart; and this terrifies us. The ploughing of God's law, soon cuts away the roots of bitterness, and our carnal security. Otherwise there is a slight healing and one cries "Peace; peace, when there is no peace" - "For the earth which drinketh in the rains that cometh oft upon it, bringeth forth herbs meet (fit) for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned"- Heb. 6:7,8.

Before the breaking up of this fallow ground of the heart, we were carnally secure; but now everything is wrong, and we get worse and worse. All the hidden evils of the heart now stand in array to accuse, "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me...But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin,"- Rom. 7:11-14. Thus God brings to light the hidden things of darkness- 1 Cor. 4:5, "And will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God." And this life which we now feel, and resurrection of our sins, is attended with light, 2 Cor.4:6 -

and we can see nothing but destruction for soul and body. We see all our former pretenses to religion the worst of sin; and the harder we labor, to deliver ourselves, the faster are we bound - ah, a mere scripture quoting, high-pressure convert getter, will not do. We will have none but the real physician, for now we are sick of sin, and our "wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores: they have never been closed neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment"- Isa.1:6.

Now, in this state sometimes God appears as a sin-avenging God, arrayed in terrible Majesty. We see His justice, and we tremble; His holiness and our filthiness; His righteousness and our condemned state, and His immutability, that our prayer, reading the Bible, or sermons (though they may instruct us in the way) yet all these cannot save - and now we see that all the world is divided into two parts, elect and reprobate; and we conclude that if ever a person was reprobated - surely it is I. It takes many probings of the heart ere one will believe this about himself. Like righteous Job he abhors himself - it is easy to abhor others - but now I am convinced that anyone is much better than I. Now would you conclude from all this that this is real faith? Yes; and the full assurance of faith too. The world says no, but you know better, for you now believe with full assurance that you are the chief of sinners. Yes, that is what the apostle says, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief"- I Tim.1:15. This is believing God's commandments. This is being taught out of His law. Thus being taught the exceeding sinfulness of my sin - we labor and are heavy laden, little thinking the real love of God toward us in all this painful work.

When you get to this distressing place sinner, you better pray for submission to God. This is the place where many will turn back. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For we have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him"- Hebrews 10:35-39.

Elihu asks Job this question: "Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, and hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?"- Job 38:17. So you see my sinner friend, there is more to this "so great salvation" than a mere intellectual assent to the word - "By the law is the knowledge of sin," therefore, we know feelingly that we are a sinner. There is Indeed, a vast difference in someone saying you are a sinner because God's word says so, than one feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit- John 16:8-11. If the Holy Spirit by the Holy law of God brings one to desperation, In this state we are helped by the Holy Spirit to cry for mercy from the heart; we come after the Lord in chains - Isa.45:14. Despair working hard against us, we know the real worth of a good hope.

The soul under Holy Spirit conviction keeps himself at a distance from the world, both carnal professors and profane, and we like much to be alone. Poor, frail humanity cannot comfort us. Like the man who fell among thieves which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. So the self-styled soulwinner knows not what to do with him. Oh! but the Good Samaritan does. Here we find that we are wounded, bruised, broken, lost sinners, in captivity; slaves to Satan, sin, and death, while others with all their

towering notions are whole, full, righteous, strong, wise, and full of light, in their own imaginations; pure in their own eyes, though not washed from their filthiness. So you see dear friend; this modern day method of "trusting Christ the best you know how, savors unto death- "But the sorrow of the world worketh death"- 2 Cor.7:10,11. Therefore, faith looks just to our depraved and lost condition and produces a godly sorrow - "for behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what Indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge. In all these things ye have proved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

Now, full remission of all our sins is felt and enjoyed by faith in the Saviour's blood. The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and draws faith - the same faith as we had in our sin and God's law; to Christ Jesus and enables us, after many hard struggles, to rest in His finished work - even Christ our Saviour; "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." This faith puts on the righteousness of Christ. Before this, we hungered and thirsted after righteousness; (we loved this more than to be saved from hell) - but now we are filled, Mat.5:6, for faith brings In this fulness of Christ. "He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away"-Luke 1:53. This faith means first our adoption, and is attended with the Spirit's witness, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father,"-Gal. 4:5,6. "Behold, now are we the sons of God." This is all realized by faith, for it is an "evidence of things not seen," with the natural eye. With the finished

work, God does the sealing - "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory"- Eph.1:13,14.

I have given you the true nature of the grace of God In working faith in the heart, "wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls"- James 1:21. "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. ...Beware of dogs (spiritual), beware of evil workers, beware of the concision; for we are the circumcision (of the heart-Rom.2:29), which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" Phil. 3:2,3.

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God our Father,"- I Thes.1:3. Perhaps there are many who read "The Pastor Calls," that do not know the scope of this ministry the Lord has given us.

The Lord has enlarged our borders beyond our fondest hopes. Our Radio Missions consist of a tape lending library; a tract ministry; and our radio broadcasts. Our tapes are being received in many homes in the USA, Canada, and in New Zealand, Scotland, and Nigeria, Africa. We have a school teacher in California, Bro. John Byrd, and a missionary there Rev.S.D. Andino - who have distributed hundreds of our messages.

Two very dear friends, brothers - Jan and Cornelius Van Dorp of Gisborne, New Zealand receive our tapes and booklets monthly. Our tapes are received and copies

made, and sent to Scotland and Nigeria, Africa. The Lord is using them effectively in reaching lost souls.

In our own city we have twenty or more tract racks strategically located where hundreds of our messages are picked up and read. It has caused a deep stirring among the people. This, I believe, is God's way in preparing hearts for a revival. Men and Women boys and girls are made to think more soberly. They are beginning to see that salvation of a soul is more than a mere religious romance, or social function. Indeed one must see he is lost and in desperate need before he gets saved. God has enabled us through these mediums to draw the line between a mere profession and a true experience of grace in the heart. If you feel this work is worthy of your support, I will be deeply grateful. The more we receive the more we can do. Surely, the night cometh, when no man can work.

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