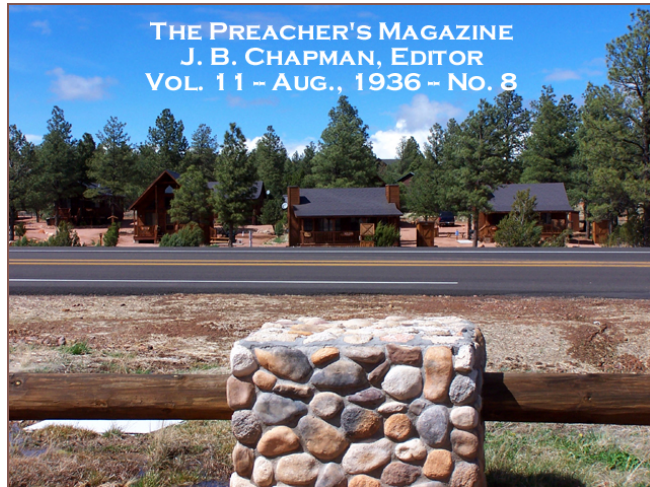


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J. B. Chapman, Editor

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01 -- A MAN WITHOUT A MESSAGE -- By J. B. Chapman

That is a strange story in 2 Samuel 18:22 which tells about a man who insisted on running, although he had no message to bear. Perhaps he was excusable for wanting to run, for running was his regular vocation. But it is pathetic to see him running, and running well, but arriving without any tidings to announce.

Perhaps this man foreshadows the preacher who comes to the hour for the sermon to find that he has no message for the people there assembled. He may run and rant and foam and say words. He may even preach a well prepared sermon; but there is a distinction between the sermon and the message, and if he has no message, his running is vain.

The content of the message of the gospel is adapted to all men. It is a message of salvation, and all men are sinners: it is a message of life, and all men need life. It is therefore foolish for any preacher to allow barriers to be built up between him and any members of Adam's race. Suppose the people are educated or illiterate, the gospel is their only hope. Suppose they are either rich or poor, Christ is yet the only value that is real. Race, color, language, politics, religion, sin - - none of these nor all of these can substitute for the gospel of Jesus Christ nor make anyone immune to its appeal. We hear, "Nothing can be done here: the people are all foreigners and Roman Catholics." "Nothing can be done here; the people, are all mad after pleasure." But there is nothing that can satisfy but Jesus, and no barrier should be allowed to keep us from bringing Him to people and from bringing people to Him.

But there is a timeliness about preaching that cannot be ignored, and yet no one can say in advance when a certain sermon should be preached-only the preacher can know this and he must find it out from the Author of the gospel. That which is but a sermon or a lecture at one time may be a message from the Lord at another time. But only the preacher who waits patiently upon God and comes from the place of prayer with a heart that is tender to "mind the checks of the Spirit" can know what the message is.

A leader in a great denomination wailed, "We no longer have either men or message for the common people." But that spells doom to any church, for most of the people are common people. Abraham Lincoln said, "The Lord must have loved the common people:He made so many of them." But when there is scarcity of men to run, there is usually a scarcity of message to bear; for many men are not willing to run unless there is "tidings." But what shall we say of the small towns and country communities? Shall they be forsaken by the church? What shall we say of any lack of zeal that may come to light among us? Is it not the result of want of tidings to bear?

It seems that the ready runner in the story might at least have insisted on being given some message to deliver. There is no sure proof that he would not have been successful if he had made an earnest plea. But, no, he was so anxious to run that he ran for nothing. It is possible that a preacher can become a professional preacher and preach just because it is his business to do so, even when his heart knows no burden and his soul is weak from emptiness? What sight could he sadder than that of a preacher without a message?

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02 -- EXPOSITORY MESSAGES ON CHRISTIAN PURITY -- Olive M. Winchester

A Death To Sin

"Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body o] sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6).

In dealing with the believer's relation to sin the apostle had to Contend with certain questions of casuistry. The human mind operates ever the same down through the history of the ages. It has developed no new traits and has never lost any undesirable ones. Its tendency to hide out and shield itself and sin in the heart has been ever one and the same. This seems to be what lies in the background of two questions asked in the sixth chapter of Romans, the first of which stands as a basis for the proclamation laid down in our text. Someone would inquire whether or not we should continue in sin that grace may abound, a line of thought suggested by the preceding chapter which dealt with the super-abounding of grace. This receives its answer by an emphatic negation, then by the explanation which reveals the impossibility of such a procedure because of the fact that there is a death to sin.

A Death By Crucifixion

In depicting the details of the believer's relation to sin, the apostle bases it on the fundamental fact that it is indeed like unto the relation that Christ bore to sin. He died to sin, yet moreover He arose in newness of life. So the believer being united with Christ dies to sin and moreover also comes forth in a new and resurrected life. Further the manner of this death is clearly set forth; herein also it is like unto that borne by the Savior, it is a crucifixion or rather through his crucifixion the believer enters this experience.

But our special interest in this text is the series of statements made with the purport of each. Herein we have first, "Our old man is crucified with him."

In this instance the designation "old man" needs special study. We would approach this first from the standpoint of Scripture. We read in a companion epistle to Romans the statement, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live" (Gal. 2:20).

From this parallel passage we would say that the "old man" is the self, the ego, the ego in that it centers all of life in and about itself diverting love and devotion from Christ. Such an ego must necessarily die before Christ can become supreme in the soul.

In the same companion epistle we have another passage that should enter into the discussion. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Here we have the term flesh used as an equivalent for the "old man" in our text. The term flesh has many connotations in Scripture, indicating humanity as a whole, indicating kindred and other general ideas, and then it becomes more special when it seems to have close kinship to sin. One writer dealing with it in this phase, states that it is the "locus classicus of sin's manifestation," that is, in the appetites and propensities of human nature sin finds its greatest foothold, and its sphere of activity. This seems to be clearly set forth in the following chapter in Romans, namely, chapter seven. But the container can easily be used for the thing contained, as we so frequently do in every day language when we say that the kettle boils. We mean the contents of the kettle not the kettle itself. Thus we have here the container, that part of human nature which lends itself to the operation of the selfish principle, the self-centered force, for the thing contained. As Paul says in chapter seven, "It is no longer I, but sin that dwelleth in me."

From these parallel passages then we would conclude that the "old man" is the term used for the ego or self dominated by the operative principle of sin and which produces all the works of sin. Professor Orr takes the catalog of sins as depicted in Galatians as the work of the flesh and shows how each one springs forth from selfishness or the egoistic principle.

Leaving for the time being the Scripture we will turn our thoughts to the current terminology of the day in which the Apostle Paul wrote. We find in the literature of that time, that is, in the philosophical literature, that the term man was used for the inner being, that is, the self. This again is borne out by Scripture for we read of the "inner man," and the "new man."

In this connection we would call to mind also a hymn that used to be sung some twenty-five years ago to indicate this experience of death and crucifixion which had at the end of each verse the refrain, "Let me die." Some lines of this hymn ran thus:

So dead that no desire shall rise
To pass for good or great or wise,
In any but our Savior's eyes.

The "old man" is the self dominated by the principle of sin, and the message brought to us in this passage of Scripture is that the atoning work of Christ availed to deal with sin at its very fountain head, the fundamental principle of sin.

A Death To Sin's Desires

The next statement in our text is that of the immediate purpose of the foregoing, "that the body of sin might be destroyed." The body is the self or ego through which the ego or self expresses itself. Therefore the body possessed by sin would be the avenues through which sin finds expression.

For a more complete understanding of this statement we would turn again to that passage in the companion epistle that we have already used. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." This last word means in the Greek "desires."

The egoistic principle in the soul dominated by the sin propensity develops around about itself affections and desires which express its own inherent nature. These are especially noted in the epistle to the Galatians previous to the passage just noted. They might be classified under two major heads the appetites of an abnormal physical being and the propensities of a perverted spirit.

Man under the dominion of sin gives way to the indulgence of his physical appetites, such indulgences that do not befit the children of God. He finds himself after such indulgences a slave and this organism of sin which winds itself about him must be broken. What is true of the sins of the physical being is true also of the spirit-being. There is the outgoing of sinful desire. There are sinful drives and urges, a host seems to throng the heart that is self-centered with sin ever directing all the activities of life inward toward the ego instead of upward toward Christ and outward toward our fellowman.

But the work of the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross which dealt with sin in the center of the being of man was for this very purpose that this organism of sin might be destroyed. The word destroyed used here calls for interpretation. It signifies when analyzed "to thoroughly render inoperative," that is, these desires are dealt with in such a manner as to preclude their further activity. They are not suppressed, but their operation has been brought to an end. We see this very plainly in the case of wrong physical appetites but not so often in the case of the propensities of the spirit being. We recognize the fact that the man who is an inebriate must be delivered from the appetite for alcohol, but it is also true that the man beset with pride or anger must be delivered, and if such tendencies are to be eradicated, there must be a destruction of all the springings forth of sin which calls for the destruction of the organism which sin has woven about itself.

In passing we should note that the verbs used of the crucifixion of the old self in the center of man's being and of the destruction of the organism of sin indicate a crisis experience, an instantaneous work. This is to be borne in mind over against the tense of the verb in the following clause which denotes continuity

of experience. Christian nurture while effective in building the Christian life does not nullify sin, that must be done by a single stroke.

A Life Free From Sin

As we have seen the immediate end of the crucifixion of self is the destruction of the organism of sin, but there is also an ulterior end, and that is a life free from sin, "that we might not any longer serve sin." All operations of grace within the heart are to produce life, life as an element and life as a mode of conduct.

Under the dominion of sin man is a bondservant. Its solicitations are so strong that despite the dictums of the will, man is overpowered. He may bring himself under control so that he does not give way to the more outstanding vices of sin, but he finds some besetting sin in his life which springs up and seizes his inner being and carries him on despite all his good resolutions and resistance built up against it.

As long as there is this fundamental weakness at the root of man's being it is impossible to build up a sound moral character of the first order, let alone a sound Christian character. There are men who live moral lives, but the inner citadel of their hearts no doubt often feels the surgings of the foe within, and God looks on the inner as well as the outer. Moreover we are arraigned before the court of heaven for the defilement of our spirit as well as the sins of the flesh. Hatred to our brother is condemned as well as the outbreak of that hatred.

In the regenerated experience there is still the presence of the principle of sin within, and thereby the individual must walk in his Christian life under a handicap. He has general triumph and conquest and yet there is always a lurking fear lest this enemy arise suddenly with an attack and overthrow. But when sin with its organism is destroyed, then may one walk in freedom, he need not any longer serve this evil principle. He is not its slave but free.

When we survey this privilege that is ours to enjoy and note on the other hand the tragic consequences of sin, is it not a wonder that people cling so fondly to some remnant of sin in their lives? Would not one rather rejoice that there is the possibility of deliverance from such sordid bondage, deliverance from such a foe to all that is good and holy? Instead of delaying to accept the overtures of mercy in our behalf for the destruction of this principle within, should we not rather eagerly accept this grace and feel the security of a heart cleansed and purified, that the new life within might reign without a deterrent? Should there not be a reaching forth for this blessing rather than a shrinking? Should we not with the psalmist pray:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God;
And renew a right spirit within me."
(Psa. 51:10).

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03 -- MAKING A MINISTER -- Paul S. Hill

Ministerial Support

We do not refer to what is usually spoken of as ministerial support. We refer to the kind that Paul had during the storm at sea while he was on his way to Rome. The situation certainly was not of Paul's choosing. It was a time of discouragement and even great danger. The sun had not shone for many days, nor the stars for many nights. The men in whose company he was thrown during the voyage were discouraged to the point of hopelessness. The outlook was only dark and tempestuous. And that was the time that Paul needed some ministerial support. And he got it. God did not fail him. An angel of the Lord stood by him and strengthened him so that he was able to say, "Sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God."

Not many ministers are called upon to pass through such severe testings of faith or physical endurance, and yet all have felt the need of ministerial support which would do more for them than an increase of salary.

And even when there is no seeming difficulty to overcome or severe test to go through, this kind of ministerial support is necessary. It is this visitation of God to the soul that goes a long way toward making a minister. These supernatural and heavenly messengers of God to the ministerial soul are always a source of strength and assurance. Without them the minister will fail even in the most pleasing and satisfactory conditions.

A minister's life apart from the presence of God in supporting power is a Strange and dwarfed affair. To be unhelped and unsupported by the Lord is a tragedy much more serious than can be measured by a small salary or any other difficulty. With God all things are possible, but without Him there can be no success in the vineyard. In the final analysis God's plan for His ministers is a soul filled with the Holy Spirit. Books are valuable. Money is helpful, and friends and churches are great factors in a minister's life, but after all the main ministerial support comes from the heavenly visitations.

The Ministerial Process

Some years ago a minister mentioned to me that the system of calling ministers to the pastorate of the church was helpful in maintaining a good standard of ministers, for the churches will refuse to call a minister who is not qualified to do the work that is demanded by the church. Since that time we have thought of it quite a lot, and have noticed this process by which a minister is either accepted or rejected by the churches, and as a consequence (at least in some cases) is

encouraged to do his best or discouraged and lost to the ministry of the church. We have thought of this method as one of elimination rather than addition, and yet we should be fair to ourselves and recognize that if we receive no call to the pastorate of a church because the church thinks we are unfitted for the task, if we will take ourselves in hand and honestly try to measure up to the demands of the church we will benefit by the system instead of being hurt by it. And not only that but the church will also be benefited because of our development.

We are quite a long way from the opinion that every church has called a pastor who was fitted for the task and that those who were not called to be pastors were not qualified. We are rather of the opinion that some churches have called ministers who were not qualified to do the work of the church as well as it could have been done, and we are also sure that some who could have done the church a great service have not been even thought of; but the system as a whole seems to be one that gives the suitable ministers a job and eliminates the unfit. This may seem hard. And it is hard. There is a lot of good in the poorest minister there ever was if he is God's man and has a call to preach. But the truth is none the less evident just the same. The good and strong in the ministry have a better chance of getting the calls to the pastorate.

If this system of calling ministers to the pastorate of churches is one of elimination for some it is also a system of entrance into the biggest and best churches for others. The system has a front door as well as a back door. After all it depends in a large degree upon the man. Some are always going ahead and some are on the way out. A few think they are settled and fixed forever. To such we would urge attention to the words of the colored preacher who quoted from "The great prophet Henry Shakespeare, 'Watch yo step.'"

What Could I Do?

We drove down a narrow and poorly lighted street to the little church. Though we had been there before, we had to look for the church, and we drove slowly lest we should miss it. The city lay all around us with actually thousands of people within gettable distance from that little church building, but we were pretty sure that there would not be enough there to fill its approximately eighty chairs. We thought of the loyal Christians who had been worshiping there for many years, and the money they had invested in the church that they might some way be able to reach the neighborhood. We believe that nearly all of that membership would be considered good workers in any church and by any pastor. Their number considered, one could not wish for more devoted people. But the church has never made progress. There it stood, a fair sample of: many others that have stayed small in spite of the efforts of many pastors to get it going.

As we drove down the street to the meeting we got to thinking, -- at least I did, of what it would take to get that church, as well as hundreds of, others like it, to impress itself on the city. The first thing that came to my mind was preaching. Good

preaching. And I knew that I was no better preacher than those men who had preached in the pulpit of that little church. But of course I wondered if the people would come to that church to hear me preach. And I knew they would not. If I were to depend on preaching ability to get a crowd in that church I would be whipped before I began. And not only that, so far as the matter concerned me, I could not think of one preacher that I had ever heard preach that I thought could get a crowd there to hear him preach, if he depended on preaching ability alone. I tried hard to imagine the most powerful preachers I ever knew preaching in that little church, and honestly I do not know of one that I thought would get a following by preaching twice on Sunday and conducting a prayermeeting during the week. That would give an opportunity three times each week to try the preaching ability of the best preachers I ever heard preach. And I think I have heard some good ones. At least they are known from coast to coast as great preachers, and some of them are known across the oceans. I am not speaking now of some of the other things they might do beside preach. I am speaking of their preaching ability as being, alone and unaided by something else, not enough to get a crowd down that poorly lighted street and into that little church that was so hard to find. And I gave those men the big end of their reputation to help draw their crowds to that church. I was sure that some would come for a few times, but I was just as sure that they would stay only a few Sundays.

But I want to say a good word for that little church. So far as I know it has never had a scandal. Its members are respectable and respected people. The ministers who have labored there are above reproach. And I think the people are really anxious to grow, and would welcome any suitable person into the membership. But the church just does not grow.

The more I thought about the matter the more serious it became. I do not like to think that the church can never be a success. I refuse to accept that verdict. It is not true. That church can grow, and so also can the hundreds of other small churches that have been in existence for years, and never impressed their community enough so that the people know where it is.

The very fact that that church was there was a challenge to me. Frankly, I do not want to try to make that church go. That is, I do not want to be the one that is responsible for its success. I take my hat off to the loyal men who have labored there. I am sure that, like the prophet of old, I would find that "I am no better than my fathers." But when I thought of that struggling church, and the others that are in the same boat, I felt that it was a challenge to the whole ministry. And I began to wonder what there was that I, or anybody else, could do that would help. That was the question, "What could I do?"

Of course I thought of moving the church. There were better streets for a church than the one this church was located on. And a better location might be a help. But there were conditions that would have to be met and overcome before the church could be moved. There were finances involved, as well as the sentiment of a

group of consecrated people who have worked for that church in that place for years. And then I thought of changing the church by making it larger, so that it would be more attractive inside and out. But why do that unless there is a crowd to need it bigger? And then I thought of a sign that might help. But though a sign might help a little, I am sure it would not solve the problem. What could I do?

Well, I think for one thing I could go to the city fathers and ask them for a better light in that section of the city. I am sure that I could get a good talking point, a good many of them, in fact, for better lights. I might make repeated visits to the office where these men meet, and it might be necessary to take a petition with me bearing the names of all the people on that street. But I could at least let the city know that I was down there working for the betterment of men and women, and that I would like their co-operation in better living conditions, including lights so that people could find the church.

Also I think I would try to supplement my preaching with as good a form of service, without being formal, as I could. I would try to have a service so excellent in character that if the city fathers should happen to drop in for divine worship they would be impressed with the dignity and seriousness of it all, and would feel the friendship that the Nazarenes have. I would try to correct anything in the service that tended to drive away a spirit of genuine worship of God. How well I could succeed I do not know, but I could try.

And then I would call on the people of the neighborhood. I think I would pray a lot before I started. I would want to feel that I was doing a great work, and forget that I was the pastor of that little church where only a few had attended for so many years. I would try to be truly humble, but I would hold my head as high as I naturally do. I would knock at every door, and attempt to make a pastoral call. I could call, and call, and call, and then call some more in between calls. And if I found anybody that was "anybody" I would not feel afraid to tell them just what I was trying to do, and ask them to stand by me for a little while and see if we could not do something for that part of the city. I don't mean that I would ask them for money. I would rather tell them that I did not want money, but I wanted a little friendly help to pull up over the hill. I might find a cultured person or a person of good sense, or a real estate man who wanted a better community, and was willing to put himself out a little to see it accomplished. I could call.

I would say "Hello" to the children on the street, and call them Jim, or Susie, or Pete, or I would make up a face at them, or do something. I would tell them that I was going to preach a sermon just for them and ask them to bring the whole bunch along.

I would fight sin, and the devil, and the world. I would ask God to give me a Pentecost in the community. I would refrain from making so many personal friends that they would take up all my time (the poor dears). I would get up before breakfast and work hard at my job.

Getting The Preacher Located

It may be that the above caption may at first be understood as getting a minister and a church in touch with each other in order that the church may have a pastor and the minister may have a preaching place; but it seems to us that there is more to getting a minister placed than just finding a church for him to preach in. There is a greater and more important locating of a minister than this. We do not for one minute underrate the necessity of a minister finding his proper place in a church, but we are thinking now of the bigger and broader matter of getting a minister placed and located in his relations to the gospel. To have a church, even a good one, and have a congregation to preach to, and have a good degree of financial security, does not always mean that the minister is fully settled and placed in his relationship to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Ministers prove that there is a relation to the church, but there is also a greater relationship to the gospel.

The Apostle Paul gives us a fine example of getting fitted and located in reference to the gospel of Christ in his introduction to the Epistle to the Romans. First he names himself. Here is Paul, the man, a person, a personality. And when we consider the personality of Paul we have to think of him as personality almost in the extreme. The characteristics of his personality are shown in his educational and logical grasp of the issues of his day. Though he seemed to major in religious subjects even before his conversion, he evidently roamed the entire field of thought and philosophy. His persecution of the Christians reveals his energy as a man of action. He was not asleep. Others might have believed as he did and done nothing about it, but Paul got into action. We mention this to show the personality of the man Paul.

After mentioning himself he terms himself a servant, or bond slave. Here we have a personality in servitude. There surely is a story here. Who knows the awful struggle of soul that Paul went through before he finally yielded to Christ? We do not believe that he was easily brought into bondage. It was only the masterful personality of the Christ himself that could accomplish the capture of a personality such as was possessed by the man Saul of Tarsus. But in his first words in the epistle he most surely tells us the story of himself and his capture by the Master of his soul.

Next he mentions his "call." It was the call of the Master to His servant. Paul the servant was called. His Master called him. It was not the church that called him first. It was the Master of his soul. It was Jesus Christ the Son of God. Who can describe this? Can anybody measure the solemnity and the thrill of this call? Can any shallow, make-believe professor of religion wade through these deep waters? Can anybody enlarge on the depth of emotion and honesty that accompanied his response to that call? Think of what he is saying, Paul, a personality sublime and extreme; a servant subdued, captured, engaged in service of another Person; called, Called, CALLED.

Called to be an apostle. The first one to tell the story of the cross to some who never heard it before; an officer in the church, and, even more, an ambassador of heaven. A proclaimer of revealed truth and an expounder of the doctrines of God's religion. Here we have the case of the man Paul. But the next word is really the one we have been waiting for. "Separated unto the gospel of God." This is Paul's location as a minister. Can we not plainly see the process and progress of this man from Paul, the man, to his ministerial location in reference to the gospel? This is surely more than the relation between pastor and church. It is a relation of the preacher to the gospel. And, brethren, this means about all there is in a ministerial career. To serve God in the gospel of His Son is our location and our place. To get out of joint here is to miss all we are trying to do as ministers. If we have no gospel to preach we are indeed a sorry lot.

It is quite usually understood that a minister has got himself located so far as his relation to the gospel of Christ is concerned, but even at that the minister must see to it that his relation here is not affected by some of the other relationships that the ministry would thrust upon him. The church that calls a pastor should feel secure in their thought that the minister has settled his relationship with the gospel. They take it for granted that the minister has settled his call to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. They have a right to believe that, and about one of the greatest misfits there is in the world is a minister who does not believe, or is not fully reconciled, to the gospel that he preaches. It seems almost impossible that a minister should continue to presume to a place of leadership in matters of the gospel program, when he is doubtful of his own relation toward it. And yet it sometimes happens. We recall a young minister who came to our altar some years ago who had got out of proper relation with the gospel he was called to preach. He was a manly man. One whom his people would enjoy. But the course of study required "for his ordination (he was not a member of the Church of the Nazarene) was so modernistic, and so destructive to his faith in the gospel, that he hardly knew where he was in his relation to it. What a pitiable case! We tried to help him by telling him that just as surely as God had called him to preach, just so surely had He called him to preach something, and that something was the gospel of Jesus Christ which is the power of God unto salvation. We have lost track of that splendid young man and frequently wonder about his ministerial life. Did he get adjusted to the gospel? Did he get located? Did he get fitted into the plan of God for him? We have no doubt that he could get a church to preach in, and he would have people to preach to, but did he get properly located? We do not know.

Sometimes we have thought that the "overcoming" spoken of in Revelation refers to the great mass of ministerial and church matters that have a tendency to alter the relationship between the minister and the gospel just as much as it refers to the overcoming of the sin of the world and the devil.

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04 -- WHY I BELIEVE IN THE POSSIBILITY OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE -- C. B. Strang

I believe in the possibility of religious knowledge because I believe that man is endowed with a religious nature. There has been much conjecture as to how God reveals Himself to man, and men have been so busy debating the method that they have very often overlooked the fact that there is a present revelation. Because of this they have missed the results of the revelation.

That man is religious by nature cannot well be questioned. Almost all men worship something or someone. It may be the native of Africa bowing down to a god of wood or stone, or the native of Asia bowing down to the sun, but at all events man will find something to worship. This desire to worship seems to be inherent in the human family, and I believe it is one of the strongest arguments for religion. The fact that man has a religious nature which longs for something to worship cannot be set aside without giving some consideration to the idea that someone higher than man has instilled such a desire into him.

But aside from this, I believe in the possibility of religious knowledge because of the testimony of so many to the fact that they have experienced a revelation of the Infinite, and that they have become satisfied with such a revelation. I believe that we should at least put religious desires on as high a plane as mental or physical desires. And just as we have mental and physical desires with ways of satisfying them, just so we have religious desires with a way of satisfying them.

Religion has an autonomous validity. It stands in its own right. There is a religious a priori in man which is as legitimate, and as well defined, as any other part of his makeup. It is not reasonable to suppose that the Creator has given him this to mock him, but we may well suppose that it is capable of being satisfied, and that it has possibilities of enlargement and development. All the arguing that unbelievers can do need not destroy or unsettle religious men with regard to this. Religion justifies itself and is its own defense. We often speak of defending religion, and some have spent so much time in defending it that they have failed to appreciate it or enjoy it while doing so.

Back of all religion there is faith. Not an illogical or unreasonable faith, but a faith built on intellectual respectability. Faith exercised brings knowledge. Faith is the foundation of all religious belief. It is built on a faith that need not shrink.

Some religious people have been afraid of the findings of science, but without reason. We are sure of the possibility of scientific knowledge because we have seen demonstrations of it, but one with religious knowledge, or better still with religious experience, may demonstrate the workings of that experience as effectively. Scientific knowledge may build us a gun with which to wage war on other nations, but religious knowledge will bring us a love that will make us wish to

help them rather than injure them. Religious knowledge is more powerful, and will do more than scientific knowledge.

I believe in the possibility of religious knowledge and experience because I have experienced it myself. I am religious, and God reveals Himself to me in many ways. I gain religious knowledge through prayer, faith, nature, the Bible, and through contact with other people. Therefore, I believe not only in the possibility of religious knowledge, but also in the fact of it.

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05 -- A PAGE OR TWO OF ODDS AND ENDS -- Selected By J. B. Chapman

The following is a poetic "take-off" of Elizabeth Akers' poem, "Rock Me To Sleep," with its oft repeated lines,

"Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight,
Make me a child again, just for tonight."

The poetic "take-off" (by A. T. Shearer, and titled "Backward, Turn Backward") refers to the curses brought upon the U.S. with the repeal of Prohibition. The poem appears in this August, 1936 issue of The Preacher's Magazine. Three years earlier, "in 1933, the state conventions ratified the Twenty-first Amendment, which repealed Amendment XVIII. Federal Prohibitionary laws were then repealed. The amendment was fully ratified on December 5, 1933. Some States, however, continued Prohibition within their jurisdictions. Almost two-thirds of all states adopted some form of local option which enabled residents in political subdivisions to vote for or against local Prohibition; therefore, for a time, 38% of Americans lived in areas with Prohibition. By 1966, however, all states had fully repealed their state-level Prohibition laws, with Mississippi the last state to do so." - Wikipedia Therefore, when the poem below was published in 1936, Prohibition had been repealed nationally, but, for a long while thereafter, "38% of Americans lived in areas with Prohibition," and, Prohibition was still a hot issue when this poem was published. -- Duane V. Maxey

Backward, Turn Backward -- A. T. Shearer

Backward! Turn backward, O Time, in your flight.
Bring back the saloon again! Bring it tonight!
O bring back the bum, with his torpor and filth;
The pompous proprietor, rolling in wealth;
The rum politician; the unfiltered talk;
The row of "dead" beer-kegs that cluttered the walk !
O bring back the jugs and the bottles to drain!
Give us our bed in the gutter again!
Backward! Turn backward! Restore us again

The dreary, dark hovel that stood in the lane!
O fill up the yard with old bottles and bags,
And break out the windows and stuff them with rags!
O bring back the nakedness! Bring back the fright
That once took the place of the children's "Good night!"
The wood-box make empty! The cupboard make bare!
Hooray for the misery! What do we care?
For the heart-broken mother, the wife in despair;
The son in the jail and the daughter in worse,
Backward, O Time! Bring back the old curse.
Backward! Turn backward! What care we for light!
Away with the sunshine, and bring in the night!
Away with the hope and the Sabbath school song!
Away with the right: O give us the wrong!
O bring back the whisky, the beer and the gin;
Kids "rushing the growler," and learning to sin!
Backward! Backward! O bring, we implore,
The old-time saloon, with its horrors, once more!

* * *

The One Decisive Evidence That The Holy Ghost Abides

Is it to be a mere sentiment, a feeling, an impression upon the mind, a vague hope; or is it to be something more decisive, emphatic, and incontrovertible?

What is the one unmistakable evidence that one has the Holy Ghost? May we approach the answer with some other questions? Have you received the poetic spirit? How do you prove it? Not by prose, but by poetry. Have you received the heroic spirit? How do you prove it? Not by cowardice, not by craven heartedness, but by adventure and deeds of bravery.

Have you received the Holy Ghost? The decisive sign is, "Love of holiness -- not power of theological debate, not only contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, not only outward clean character, but by "Love of holiness." "Not reputation, but reality." A heart that pants after "the holiness of God" life centered into one burning prayer to be sanctified, body, soul and spirit, life a sacrifice on God's altar. This is what we mean by saying that holiness is the one decisive test of having received the "Holy Ghost." Do you love holiness?

* * *

Where Hell Is

A young man, converted during special evangelistic meetings held in a mining village, desirous of doing something for God, bought some tracts. He was

distributing these one day when he met some of his old companions, who derided him, as he spoke to them of Jesus.

"Here," said one of his companions, "can you tell me where hell is?"

After a moment's hesitation, the young man looked up and said, "Yes; it's at the end of a Christless life."

"There is a way that seemeth right unto: a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25).

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Famous Firsts

The first ambulance service was started in the Bellevue Hospital in New York City in 1869. The first-aid kit contained a one-gallon flask of whisky, one-half dozen small sponges, and two ounces of iodine.

The first book published in America was Steeven Daye's "The Whole Booke of Psalmes," printed in 1640, by the Cambridge Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The first anthracite coal was discovered in 1791 by Philip Ginter, a hunter, in Carbon County, Pennsylvania. For twenty-one years afterward, it was thought to be only black stone and without any value. It was late in 1812 when some hunters happened to build a fire near a few broken pieces of coal, and to their surprise they turned a fiery red.

* * *

He Will Bring You Together Again

You have walked in the shadow, and walked in the light,
You have traveled the vale and the hill,
In the days that were stormy, and the days that were bright.
Together you met good and ill.
But now you are walking so strangely alone,
You hark for a step, but in vain;
And yet the good Father who loveth His own
Will bring you together again!

You are not forgotten, however you miss
The voice that once gladly you heard;
The lips that no longer will stoop for a kiss,
Or whisper a comforting word.
You are not forgotten, and still you can smile

**That blessings were given, and then
That He, who now lets you be lonely a while,
Will bring you together again.**

-- Author Unknown

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Don't Bark

Fault-finding is not difficult. Isaac McCurry illustrates this: A dog hitched to a lawn mower stopped to bark at a passer-by. The boy who was guiding the mower said, "Don't mind the dog; he is just barking for an excuse to rest. It is easier to bark than to pull the machine." It is easier to be critical than correct. It is easier to hinder than to help. Easier to destroy reputation than to construct character. Fault-finding is as dangerous as easy. Anybody can grumble, criticize or censure like the Pharisees, but it takes a soul to go on working faithfully and lovingly, and rise superior to all, as the Lord Jesus did. -- Selected.

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The Convictions Of Great Men

We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy. I find more sure marks of authority in the Bible than in any profane history whatever. -- Isaac Newton

Any individual or any institution that could take the Bible to every home in this country would do more for the country than all the armies from the beginning of our history to the present time. -- Chief Justice Brewer

The only hope of human progress is suspended on the ever growing influence of the Bible. -- William H. Seward

All that I have taught of art, everything that I have written, every greatness that there has been in any thought of mine, whatever I have done in my life, has been simply due to the fact that when I was a child my mother daily read with me a part of the Bible. -- John Ruskin

Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet-anchor of your liberties; write its precepts in your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this Book we are indebted for all progress made in our true civilization and to this we must look for our guide in the future. -- General Grant

In the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being,

and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit. -- Coleridge

It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible. -- George Washington

The Bible is the best gift God has given to man. All things most desirable for man's welfare here and hereafter are to be found portrayed in it. -- Abraham Lincoln

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Winning Financial Freedom

The unusual partnership proposition described in pamphlet No. 38, "Winning Financial Freedom," is proving so popular and effective that we are again offering to furnish any minister, without charge, postage paid, a sufficient quantity of the pamphlet to supply one copy to each member of his official church board.

A steady, intelligent, month-by month distribution of common-sense truth about the tithe, kept up through at least one year, will revolutionize the finances of your church.

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Smiles

Be generous with smiles and kindly words, if with nothing else. That which costs the least is often most valuable in this strange world. And kind words and gentle acts of sympathy have a way of reflecting that many and many a time has rewarded the giver a thousandfold. It is a great thing to remember peacefully at eventide that some burdened heart has blessed you during the day for a timely word of cheer or glint of encouragement. -- Christian Work.

"A merry heart doeth good like medicine, and a cheerful spirit is a benediction both to its possessor and all others whom its possessor meets. Good people are too careless with regard to their manner and spirit. Gladness of heart can be cultivated. To be content in whatsoever state we are is a lesson that must be learned. Cultivate the habit of looking on the bright side. Smile and the world will smile back at you. There are burdened hearts everywhere, and just a little word of encouragement works wonders. Keep on smiling."

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THE END