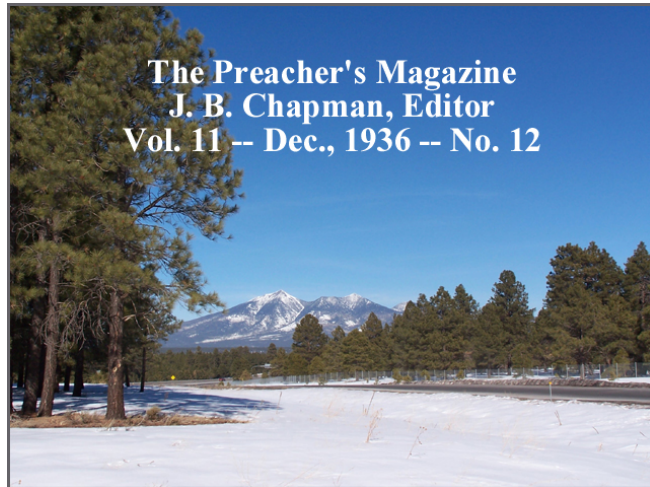


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**THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE**  
J. B. Chapman, Editor

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#### 01 -- DO WE BELIEVE IN PREACHING? -- J. B. Chapman

An Episcopalian rector in New York suggested a two-year moratorium on preaching. He would continue all other services of the pastoral office, and all other items of the public worship service in the same order as at present, only he would just leave off the sermon. From the religious press in general came a storm of protest, and I judge the rector's idea was pretty well snowed under.

But I have been thinking about the suggestion apart from the sentiment which it violates, which I think is the main cause for the instant protests which the suggestion aroused. From earliest times there has been preaching at church, and so we do not want it said that we do not have preaching. Our ecclesiastical pride would be hurt if it should get noised abroad that we do not have preaching in our church. However the change would not be very noticeable in many churches, for already the time allotted for the sermon has been reduced from the three hours which "our Pilgrim fathers" are said to have required, to a bare twenty minutes. And still you never hear it complained that the preacher preaches for too short a time.

But the amount of time is not the only indication of our tendency to crowd out preaching. Even in churches which make high claims to spirituality there is a tendency to "go to seed" on singing and other activities aside from the sermon. Some months ago General Superintendent Williams of the Church of the Nazarene published an article in the Herald of Holiness under the title "After Which." In this article he described an instance in which the preacher had come a long distance to be the special speaker in a special service. But the service began with "a rousing song service," and there were many "preliminaries." Then a place had to be made for a special "number by the choir," a quartet of amateur singers, and a duet. Then, after the people had been literally "run ragged" as though in an endurance contest, the preacher in charge announced that there would be a "special song" by a young lady, "after which" the visiting preacher would preach. And it was "after which" in more ways than one. Everything had been done to make the service complete before the preacher stood up. The people were worn out by religious entertainment. There had been created a general feeling that the preaching was just "tacked on." In a case of that kind I am not sure but that the rector's suggestion would be in place. It might even be better to just omit the preaching. The leaders of such a service do not believe in it any way.

But there is a better way. E.O. Chalfant noticed that the bishops at the General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, spent a good many minutes

together before the opening of the devotional services selecting the hymns and the scripture portions. The hymns and the scripture portions led right up to the devotional address and the service was a unit. That is the way to hold a religious service.

In a Protestant church the service is supposed to center around the sermon. If the people want to gather at some convenient time and have a "song feast," that is perfectly all right. But when they meet for one of the regular services of the church, the subject, and, most of all, the purpose, of the sermon should be the nucleus of the whole period. If there is a special leader of song, then there should be a conference between him and the minister in charge, and the singing should be adapted to the sermon. The offering and the announcements and everything that goes to make up the service should come in place and be subject "to the spirit of the prophet." Then when the preacher stands up it should be as though the climax had come. The people should be in such a frame of heart and mind that they would seem to say, "the hour has come." If we do not give the preaching some such prominence, no matter what we may say, it is doubtful whether we believe in preaching or not.

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## 02 -- THE NATIONAL PREACHING MISSION

The Federal Council of Churches, in collaboration with certain other organizations, recently carried out what was called a "National Preaching Mission." They secured a number of outstanding preachers and held a series of short conventions, majoring on preaching, in the various cities of the country. My opportunity to observe was quite limited and my analysis is purely my own.

There are a few things, however, which seem to be quite apparent. In the first place the heads of the organizations which undertook this "Mission" are, for the most part, modernistic, if not simply Modernists. Therefore their part in this matter is a tacit confession of the inadequacy of their program. At the same time the "gentle" manner in which they have proceeded testifies that there has been no definite change of heart, but just a sort of supplementing of their "social gospel" with concessions to the conventional. This preaching mission is a type of modern and modernistic revival. It is about what the newspaper notables mean when they say what we need in this country is more old-time religion -- they mean a modern shadow of what our fathers had.

In the second place, I am witness that there is still something subtle about this proposition. I heard one of the principal speakers in this "Preaching Mission" give one of the principal addresses in one city. He spoke on "The Voice from the Cloud," taking the subject from the Transfiguration on the Mount. He said the voice from the cloud, that is the fact that it was from a cloud, came because of the divided allegiance of the disciples, and the cloud was lifted when they learned to hear

"Jesus only." From this he went off to speak of international clouds, and his remedy was that all Christians should decide definitely not to take part in any war. Then there are economic clouds, and his remedy was to diminish or even dismiss capital and just learn to live up all we can produce -- a complicated economic problem that has about as much to do with Christianity as drinking buttermilk. Then there are ecclesiastical clouds. His remedy was to do away with denominations in Protestantism and just all be one denomination or no denomination, or whatever it would be. His last point was individual clouds, and his remedy was to sign a card and vow to follow Christ. Five-sixths of the time and three fourths of the material had reference to the first three of the four propositions. The language was so akin to the chatter of Modernists that one could conclude only that the preacher was either checkered with Modernism himself or else, like old dog Tray, he has been running with bad company.

I am not suggesting opposition to such movements as this "National Preaching Mission." Perhaps we should welcome any semblance of a return to more vital things on the part of anyone at all. But I am suggesting that there is nothing to get excited about and nothing to inspire any special hope. It is just another passing incident in the nonvital religious movements of the time. We must go right on preaching full salvation, warning men of hell and judgment, calling to repentance and to consecration, quoting promises of new birth and entire sanctification, making the old-fashioned mourner's bench the most important item of church furniture in the Lord's house, encouraging the people to pray and expect spiritual and physical miracles, and singing without fear, "I do believe without a doubt that Christians have a right to shout." The old way is the good way -- so far it seems to be the only way.

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### 03 -- THE POET DANTE

Aside from the Bible, the original source, our idea of hell is derived from Dante, Milton and Pollock more than from any other writings. These men gave in poetic description what the Bible gives in sober prose. And while their theme is tragic, their art is peerless. It often requires persistence to follow them through their sustained periods, but every preacher will find in them a veritable gold mine which he can ill afford to miss.

Beginning with this issue we are giving E. Wayne Stahl's rendering of Dante's "Inferno." There are two reasons why we do this. The first is that good renderings of the "Inferno" are not current among present day preachers, and I believe there is need of such. And the second is that Brother Stahl has given aft unusually fine rendering which merits a reading even by those who are more or less familiar with this great work. Brother Stahl has bestowed tremendous labor upon this task and I asked him to let me run the Cantos in The Preacher's Magazine before he commits it -- to permanent book form. I suggest that it will be worth while to keep a file of the

**copies of the magazine which have this series in them. At the end you will thus have the complete work.**

**Crossing the Pacific last December we found ourselves on the same ship with Kagawa, and through him we made the acquaintance with a Japanese professor in the University of Tokyo. I asked the professor what his field was and he replied "Dante. I study Dante." Then I learned that he was to spend a few months in America and in Italy just studying Dante -- and this after he had been a student and a teacher in this apparently narrow field in a great university. This suggests how rich the field is if one but knows how to dig in it.**

**Well, at any rate, I hope you will read Brother Stahl's "Man Who Explored Hell," and after a few issues have appeared I shall be glad if you will drop me a line and tell me whether you have found this sort of thing profitable. I have read the copy quite carefully and I think with great profit to myself -- and later it may be, "to them that hear me."**

**\* \* \* \* \***

#### **04 -- EXPOSITORY MESSAGES ON CHRISTIAN PURITY -- Olive M. Winchester**

##### **The Purging of Unclean Lips**

**Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged (Isa. 6:6, 7).**

**In the Scripture there are many exhortations and commands to obtain and to walk in the experience of holiness, but it is not so frequent that we see the soul passing through the various stages that lead up to the experience. Here in this passage we see a great prophet, yea the greatest prophet in the Judean kingdom, as he comes to the realization of his need and as he experiences the purging of his sin. We feel privileged to look in upon the movings of this soul and see, as near as it is possible to see, the divine workings whereby the glorious result is obtained.**

##### **A Vision**

**The prophet who had grown up in the court life of Jerusalem and under the pious King Uzziah receives in the year of the king's death a vision. The scene is in the temple, that is, the setting of the vision as it appears to him. It may be that Isaiah had gone thither to worship. Being borne down with grief at the loss of a great and noble ruler, he had sought the sanctuary of God there to pour out his heart in prayer. While tarrying here he receives a vision. As one has said, "The earthly king has passed away, and now Isaiah sees the true King in His glory."**

We have several theophanies or manifestations of God in the Old Testament, some of which are quite outstanding, especially the appearance of Jehovah to Moses after the sin and transgression of the Israelites, but none surpasses this appearance unto Isaiah. He sees the Lord sitting upon a throne and His vesture filled the space around about. Above him stand the seraphim. We do not have the seraphim mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, but we do have reference to the cherubim; both belong to the angelic realm of beings and would seem to have the same thought associations attached. We note that they are ever present when there is a special manifestation of the glory of God. As says Skinner, "They are the attendants of Jehovah and His court and are the ministers of the invisible sanctuary; they reflect the glory of God, and by their presence and actions suggest new and fuller conceptions of His ineffable majesty."

But more notable than the presence of these heavenly beings is the theme of their song:

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts:  
The whole earth is full of his glory."

The significance of the ascription of the attribute of holiness unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, has different lines of meaning. First there is the thought of exaltation, the wide gulf between the human and the divine. This is one of the primary meanings of the word holiness. Then there is the idea of majesty and sublimity which evokes from man reverence and worship. But more than these is the idea of moral purity. From the first this thought seems to have associated itself with the word. We have in Leviticus the command repeated, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Preceding these commands there is practically only one passage which refers to this attribute of Deity. That carries the idea of exaltation, but here in Leviticus, there must need be some thought of moral purity for man could not be like unto God in His attributes of sovereignty and others of similar nature; he can be like unto Deity only in His moral and religious nature. Moreover the sense of uncleanness that crept over Isaiah in the presence of the divine holiness would seem to indicate this thought. Therefore we would conclude that here the vision that Isaiah had, while it revealed the glory of Jehovah and His universal rule and dominion, yet above all it set forth His ineffable moral purity and holiness.

### **The Sense Of Need**

With the manifestation of the divine holiness the prophet comes into new experiences, From every standpoint were he to claim acceptance from the aspect of personal worth, he might claim merit, were such a thing possible. As we have said he no doubt belonged to the royal family, so his station in life would give him prestige, then also he was a worshiper of Jehovah. There were always two parties at court, one who worshiped idols and the other who worshiped the Lord. These had come down from early days especially from the days of Solomon when idolatrous worship had been made so outstanding an element in the court life. Thus

from noble birth and religious belief he might claim recognition, but these all vanish in the presence of the holiness of God. He exclaims, "I am undone."

This sense of being undone is a prerequisite to the obtainment of any religious experience. There must ever be the recognition that our righteousness is as filthy rags and without avail in the presence of God. There is nothing in any one of us whereby we can claim the heritage of divine grace; it is all of mercy, and man must come to the recognition of this fact, that he has nothing to bring, but all to receive. He even needs prevenient grace to bring his will to the point of decision to choose the things of God instead of the things of the world. This is true very especially in the first work of grace, and also is true in the seeking of the experience of holiness.

This sense of need is requisite also as motivation for seeking. As long as one walks in the glow and fervor of his first love without any stirrings of sin within the heart, he does not come to a realization of the need of cleansing, but when once there is the awakening to the fact that within there is still the inbeing of sin, then there comes to the honest, truth-loving heart the desire for further grace.

Concomitant with the realization of his own unworthiness Isaiah also feels his own uncleanness. He exclaims, "I am a man of unclean lips." The lips are used here symbolically to indicate the inner nature and condition of heart. It may be that as the song of praise sounded forth from the seraphim, that Isaiah would fain have joined in the hymn, but suddenly he felt this impurity within and thereby was restrained. When this sense of moral defilement springs into the field of consciousness in the heart of man, his expressions of worship are for the time checked; his attention is turned to his own condition and the need of purity. Before he can join the pæan of praise, he must be purged from sin. Thus in the light of the glorious holiness of Jehovah Isaiah receives a new valuation of himself and his personal experience. If he had ever been tempted to pride because of his religious standing, he now loses it all and finds himself helpless and unclean.

But the prophet's vision was not limited to himself, what he realized in himself he also realized in the people as a whole. Not only might it be possible that Isaiah had personal pride, but he might have had national pride. When compared with the northern kingdom with its worship of Jehovah ever degenerated through the fact that it was offered at strange sanctuaries and not at Jerusalem, and that it was deeply embedded with idolatry, Judah stood forth as a righteous kingdom especially in the reign of Uzziah who had served the Lord faithfully and had led the nation on in the ways of Jehovah. But when he has this vision of his own uncleanness, he realizes that the people also were unclean. It is true that they kept the rites and the ceremonies, but their heart was far from Jehovah. Their religion was formal and not born in the heart; it was ritualistic and not ethical.

It is one of the characteristics of true religion that one does not only feel a concern for his own personal salvation, but he also feels the burden for his

fellowman. No man who has felt the real touch of divine grace can rest in the security of his hope of salvation and not desire to extend it to others and carry a burden that they may be made partakers of this hope.

This revaluation of himself and his people had come to the prophet, for he had seen "the King, the Lord of hosts." A vision of God causes man to recognize his own unworthiness and natural defilement and also the sin that besets mankind as a whole. A vision of God in all of His majesty and holiness is fundamental. If more people could have a vision of God, if they would place themselves where such a vision could come to them, more would cry out because of sin and seek for its cleansing.

### **Purging**

In his helplessness man is not left alone. Straightway as this sense of need comes to the prophet, the angelic seraphim comes unto him. There is never delay on the part of the divine agencies. Delay arises from the unpreparedness of man to receive the needed blessing. Whenever the heart is in full readiness, then is there the corresponding response from divine grace.

We see the angel bringing in his hand a live coal. We have two symbols of cleansing used in Scripture, one is water and the other is fire. "Fire and water," says W. Robertson Smith, "the pure and lifelike elements, man's chief aids in combating physical corruption, are the main agents in ceremonies of ritual sanctification (Num. 31:23). But fire is a more searching principle than water. Fiery brightness is of old the highest symbol of Jehovah's holiness, and purification by fire the most perfect image of the total destruction of impurity. To Isaiah, of course, the fire of Jehovah's holiness is a mere symbol. That which cannot endure the fire, which is burned up and consumed before it, is moral impurity. 'Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire, who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?' That which can endure the fire is that which is fit to enter into communion with Jehovah's holiness, and nothing which cannot stand this test can abide in His sanctuary of Israel. Thus the fire which touches Isaiah's lips and consecrates him to prophetic communion with God has its counterpart in the fiery judgment through which impure Israel must pass till only the holy seed, the vital and indestructible elements of right national life, remain."

We note that the fire is taken from the altar. Any purging of sin must come through the divine atonement. Outside of the atonement of Jesus Christ there is no cleansing and no hope for the malady of sin. From the altar must come the cleansing power and at the altar will this grace be received.

The angel comes with the living coal and touches the lips of the prophet, symbolical of the inward touch which purges the heart. We can see in vision the outward act, but we cannot see the inward; we know it in its effects and results, not in its actual transaction. With this cleansing the iniquity of his heart is taken away,



that twist within the makeup that turns everything toward self instead of toward God is now done away with and the fiery purging of grace cleanses the perverted love in the heart and centers the affection upon God alone.

Thus we see the inward experiences of Isaiah as he approaches this great climax in his life. We see him in the place of worship beholding a vision of God and coming to a sense of need, not only for himself, but for the people. Then we see the angel seraph coming with a living coal from the altar to purge and cleanse the inner defilement and with the assurance that his sin is cleansed. From this we see the great need of mankind is a vision of the divine glory and then will convicting power seize him. Whenever God is magnified and His glory fills the temple then does the sense of sin make itself felt among those who still have it within their hearts, and then does there spring up the longing for cleansing that they become pure and holy even as God is holy, in accordance with the vision vouchsafed unto them. Moreover whenever this need comes over the soul and the heart answers in longing response then do the divine agencies apply the atoning coals of fire from the altar and a personal experience of cleansing is received.

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## **05 -- GOD HATH SPOKEN -- Paul S. Hill**

### **An Outline Study Of The Book Of Hebrews**

#### **Introduction -- Concluded**

Passing now from the events of the Old Testament, which have a time relation to this epistle, we go to events of the New Testament.

#### **7. The Book of Hebrews was written after the birth of John the Baptist.**

John was the forerunner of Jesus the Christ, and was so mentioned in Old Testament prophecy. Any epistle, arguing for Jesus as the Messiah, that cannot place the forerunner in the picture will have a puzzle unanswerable. The birth of John the Baptist, as well as his ministry, stood out in a very prominent way in the history of the Hebrews before the epistle was written. As one of the events, the "time" element of which casts its influence on the Epistle, the birth of John the Baptist, mighty preacher of repentance, and forerunner of the Messiah, is not the least important. Without John the Baptist there could have been no Epistle to the Hebrews.

#### **8. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written a/ter the birth of Jesus Christ.**

The need of the historical Christ, the Christ who takes His place in the history of the world, is clearly seen as an event absolutely necessary before any epistle defending His Person, His teaching, and His Church could be written, it is not Christ

typified but Christ revealed in human flesh, "whom we have seen and heard" that is in the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is Christ the God-man whose virgin birth was announced to the world by worshipping, singing angels, and whose birth created such a stir that Herod's army sought to slay Him, that called the Wise Men from the East to worship Him. The Christ of this epistle is the Christ whose birth shook the world, and the historical person whose birth fitted every demand of the Hebrew prophets, and let it be remembered that the prophecies demanded Bethlehem as the birthplace, a virgin for a mother, Judah for a tribe, a star for a sign, angels to adore, poverty of human parentage, turtle doves for His offering, an identifying trip to Egypt, a settlement in Nazareth. Any historical figure who did not comply with the voices of the prophets would, if made the subject of an epistle to the Hebrew people, bring only contempt and ridicule to the writer, and to the Christianity represented. But here is Christ, the historical Christ. Not a myth or delicate dreamer, whose air castles will crumble with the slightest breath of opposing criticism, but a rugged, towering, massive, historical Person, who fills every demand of the Hebrew prophets, the Hebrew promises, the Hebrew law, the Hebrew types, the Hebrew national objective, and who is given a name above every other name, and a kingdom whose scepter is a scepter of righteousness, and whose throne is forever and ever. Without such a Person, historically presented to the world, the Epistle to the Hebrews could not have been written.

9. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written after the earthly life and ministry of Jesus had been completed.

The chronological events of the life of Jesus are not necessary to us here, as we are speaking only of the life and ministry of Jesus in its "time" relation to the Book of Hebrews. The only things which concern us are the life He lived, the things He taught, the claims He made, the foundation He laid.

The life of Jesus was sinless. His conduct, as He made contact with the world, was holy, above reproach. True He was condemned and hated, but the very source of opposition to Him was a compliment to the rightfulness of His position on the issues of His day. He "Loved righteousness, and hated iniquity." No one of his opposers convinced Him of sin.

The teachings of Jesus were fundamental to human life. He did not advocate a social veneer, nor a useless striving to overcome by a process of reasoning or culture. He said plainly, "Ye must be born again," "born from above," "born of the Spirit." There was no backing down from that statement.

He taught that "Out of the heart proceedeth evil things." He dealt with sin as a fundamental question, not to be cured by covering it over, but by cleansing from it through the atonement of blood.

He claimed to be the Son of God, with "all power" given unto Him. He claimed power to "forgive sin." He claimed to "have life in himself," and to be the Life Giver

of the world. We might go through a long list of His claims, but regardless of their character, or number, every one of them is also a claim of the Old Testament for Him, and these claims are carried into the argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Without these claims being true to fact, or even if there had been the facts without the claims, there could have been no Book of Hebrews. If Jesus had been silent on His divinity, or on any other element entering into His saviorhood, then the reader of the epistle would have said, "You are claiming more than He claimed, and your claim is not sustained by His teaching or His life." It is well to remember, as we study the Epistle to the Hebrews, that every claim that the epistle makes for Jesus the Christ was also made before the writing of the epistle, by Jesus Christ himself, and those claims were sanctioned by all the contents of the Old Testament. The claims of salvation by grace through faith, as contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the claims of Jesus himself as the Author of salvation, and the claims of the Old Testament for the Messiah, are harmonized and arrayed in the form of an army of irresistible logic in the Book of Hebrews.

10. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written after Jesus, through His teachings, had laid the foundation for ethical conduct, and through His death the foundation for all the manifold graces of salvation.

The foundation that Jesus laid is the foundation of New Testament Christianity. There is no other foundation laid. Neither is there salvation in any other. What tremendous emphasis the Epistle to the Hebrews places on the death of Christ! All through the book is carried the crimson stream, the "blood of the everlasting covenant." And it must be noticed that this doctrine of the cleansing blood is not some new idea or religious proposition, neither is it the gathering together of various heathen religious ideas, with respect to some of their sacrifices of blood, but the blood of Christ alone, the one and only and all sufficient offering for sin. And this teaching is borne out by all the types, laws, ceremonies and history of the Old Testament, and by all the teachings of Christ himself, and by all the fundamental needs of a sinning humanity, and by all the inner experiences of the New Testament Christian Church. The foundation laid by Jesus in His life and death is the foundation of the salvation through faith submitted in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

11. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written after the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

This event, based as it was, on the blood of the everlasting covenant (see Hebrews 13:20), not only sealed the future resurrection of humanity, but proved the power and genuineness of every phase of the revealed religion of the Hebrews, the truthfulness of the claims of Christ, and the soundness of all New Testament hope and expectancy. There is no grave containing a dead body at the end of Old Testament law and ritual. The massive structure, of religious faith, built up from the beginning under the direction of the God of the Old Testament, and received by the

Hebrew people by the ministration of angels, does not end in a tomb of lifelessness and disappointment, with the mourners going about the streets, carrying forever a question mark in their minds. This whole matter of Old Testament religion, with its types, ceremonies, laws, ritual, prophecies, history, hopes and forward look, is not destined to die because of its falseness and fundamental weakness. It is the true religion. It is what God himself says about the matter. The only thing that can possibly happen is that the glorious expectancy promised in the Old Testament Scriptures shall blossom in the New, and that the whole substance of the Old shall crystallize in the Person of the Messiah who shall fulfill every detail of that expectancy, and through His death and resurrection carry the whole matter of revealed religion through everything earthly, and into everything heavenly, even into the "heavenly Jerusalem," "whose builder and maker is God." The time element of the resurrection in its relation to the Epistle to the Hebrews is what we are trying to emphasize. Without the resurrection of Christ from the dead there could have been no Epistle to the Hebrews. The whole argument of the book for Christ as the Son of God would end in a puzzle unexplainable, and inexplicable in its confusion. But with the resurrection of Christ a fact in religion and in history, the Epistle to the Hebrews carries on with a certainty that ever enlarges in its scope, and in its grandeur of eternal things.

## 12. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written after the ascension of Jesus.

The resurrection emptied His grave, but the ascension located Him in the heaven at the Father's right hand. In the earthly history of the life of Jesus this is the closing miracle "till he come again." If we exclude the Old Testament miracle of prophecy concerning Christ, and confine ourselves to His life as contained in the Gospels we can see six miraculous sides to His life, as follows. His birth, His sinless life, His teachings, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension. And this Person, Jesus Christ is the greatest miracle of the universe. Why quibble over one of the miracles He performed while He was on earth? Why look at the healings of the sick, or the stilling of the tempest of wind, as though they were the farthest reaches of the miraculous, when He who performed them stands as the greatest miracle of all? Why hesitate at the "virgin birth" when that is only a portion of the greater miracle? The miracle of His death is as great as the miracle of His birth. The miracle of His death is not that he was put on the cross and by wicked men slain. The miracle of His death is in the fact of the atonement for sin successfully negotiated on the cross. The miracle of His birth is not in the virgin's part of it, but in the fact that His birth accomplished the incarnation of the Son of God.

Look at the accomplishments of Jesus in the realm of the supernatural; His birth accomplished the incarnation, His sinless life supplied a worthy sacrifice, a Lamb without blemish, His teachings shook the whole religious question till there fell off all the superficial and only Christ was seen. His death accomplished the atonement for sin, His resurrection accomplished the victory over death, and assures all of a resurrection, and eternal life to His own, His ascension locates Him at the right hand of God, with a name that is above every other name, and because

he has conquered in every field that He entered in the battle for man's redemption, therefore He is able to save to the uttermost all who will come unto Him. Not looking at one of the miraculous phases of the Person and the work of Christ, but at Him, as much as we can understand of Him, He is the great miracle of the universe. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews not one question is raised on any point of the fact of this Person Jesus Christ, but the whole Person, the entire Christ, the Old Testament fulfilling Christ, the historical Christ, the resurrected and everliving Christ, steps in the dignity and majesty of what He IS through this Epistle, and at its close, in the Apostolic benediction, has a place of "Glory for ever and ever, Amen."

13. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written after the Early Church had received the Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

He mentions this event, which happened on the day of Pentecost, to show the time element of this event on the Book of Hebrews. This gracious work of grace in the hearts of the disciples is viewed from a threefold viewpoint. First it was a thing of prophecy, and connected with the ministration of the Messiah. If this event had not taken place, and the New Testament Church had been left powerless and comfortless, with no glory upon them, nor any inward peace within them, then the student of the Old Testament would have asked, "Where is the increase of the Messiah's kingdom over the Old Testament forms of worship? Where is your Christianity without this part of prophecy fulfilled in it?"

We will not urge this point, but to us it seems that the gift of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost marked the first lasting and enduring thing that characterized the increase of His kingdom. Anyway we are safe in saying that without this promise fulfilled, so that Peter and the rest of the disciples could lay one hand on their hearts, and the other on the prophecy of Joel, and say, "This [the blessing that is in my heart] is that" (the prophecy of Joel), then the Epistle to the Hebrews could not have been written. But this event did take place. The prophecy of Joel was fulfilled. The disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, and the Book of Hebrews not only carried the picture of the Person of Christ, but also the picture of His Church, washed in the blood of the everlasting covenant, indwelt by the Spirit, part of the kingdom that cannot be moved.

Secondly, the baptism of the New Testament Church with the Holy Ghost was an historical fact. The "Day of Pentecost was fully come" and all the teaching of the Old Testament in reference to that feast had come into the world as a matter of history. The event in the upper room had fulfilled the Old Testament teaching of Pentecost just as truly as the death of Christ had fulfilled the feast of the Passover. We need not here discuss the teaching of the Old Testament in reference to this feast, what we need to see is the historical Pentecost as a fulfillment of the Old Testament type. This enlargement of the kingdom of the Messiah was certainly a matter of Old Testament prophecies as well as the teaching of Old Testament types, and here it was in historic fulfillment. It had come exactly as was taught by type and prophecy. Pentecost was in the world historically and full size. It was not a weak or

small affair that concerned only a few weak minded men for a few minutes of ecstasy, but a mighty, pulsating, throbbing endowment of power and cleansing that had been publicly bestowed on the rugged individuals who were the first disciples of Jesus Christ. Its very bigness and power, its open and far reaching influence, its well advertised proportions, made it a historical fact that must carry weight. It had a momentum irresistible. It was history.

Thirdly, the baptism of the New Testament Church was of such a character that it became a personal religious experience to each of those who received it, and as such an experience it carried a purity and power that nowhere else is duplicated. It was a cleansing and an empowering baptism. Without it the New Testament Christian Church would not have been equipped to carry out the commission of their Master and "Go to all the world," but with this mighty equipment it is recorded that they went "everywhere preaching."

And thus we have the New Testament Church baptized with the Holy Ghost and view this event in its threefold aspect. It was prophecy, history and religious experience.

14. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written after the New Testament Church had been tested, and had stood the test.

This testing of the Christian Church was the last thing necessary to the writing of this epistle. We mention it because after all the product of a system of religion, entered into in its fullest sense, must result in an experience of the heart, and unless that heart experience can bear out the claims of the religious belief and system, it is a failure all the way through, from the top to the bottom. Not only does the religionist fail, but the religion fails. One of the best proofs that a certain type of factory is a shoe factory is that it makes shoes. If it makes stoves, or aprons, it is not a shoe factory. So the best proof of the genuineness of Christianity is a Christian. What a colossal failure the whole system of religion, built up in the Old Testament, proclaimed in the New, all based on the death of Christ. and standing alone in its claim to give peace and strength to the heart, what a failure it would be if it could show no results in the form of a Christianity that could stand the test of heart experience. Therefore the testing of the New Testament Church has a time relation to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The Church was tested from its exterior. A persecution, strong and relentless, overtook it. It did not fail. Stephen, the first martyr, prayed in his death for the Church's greatest persecutor, Saul of Tarsus. That was the spirit of the Church. It was the spirit of Jesus, dwelling in them by the Holy Ghost.

The Church was tested internally, about money, and cleansed herself. Ananias lied to God about money and land, and under the pronouncement of the Church, this man died. His wife also died under the same condition. There was the internal strife about the welfare of the widows. On both occasions the Church stood

the test. What mockery to place a weak, spineless sinning Church against the background of the expectancy of the Old Testament, and then plead for it in an Epistle to the Hebrews! No, it must be a victorious New Testament Christian Church that is in this epistle, and before such a church can be presented as an answer to the Old Testament, it must be tested, and stand the test, in the spirit of godliness and holiness.

### **Conclusions Of The Introduction To The Epistle To The Hebrews**

From the foregoing it will be gathered that the only possible future for the Hebrew people, if they had regard for their laws and prophets, was to go ahead, with full bigness, into the New Testament development of their religion. The Epistle to the Hebrews opens, and stipulates that program for them, and is written in the tone of expectancy that they will move in this direction. The writer of the epistle himself has taken this forward bound, and entered into the fullness of New Testament grace. With his feet planted squarely on the teachings of the Old Testament, his arms around the cross of Christ, his heart full of the sweetness and power of the grace of God, revealed and attested by the Holy Spirit, he stands victorious amid the clash of empires, and shouts his victorious position to all the world, shouts the contents of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "God hath spoken by his Son" -- "who ever liveth" and "is able to save to the uttermost, all who will come unto him."

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### **06 -- PLAIN WORDS TO PREACHERS -- General Superintendent Goodwin**

#### **The Preacher's Divine Call**

The preacher's divine call is all important. The success of the preacher is due largely to the depths of the conviction of his call. If he is not conscious of a divine call, the temptations which will come to him concerning money in these days will be almost overwhelming. A man who can make a success in the ministry can generally make a success financially; and unless his conviction is very clear he may be moved from the hope of his calling.

There must be leadership in the church as well as in social and political life. God has given to us the ministry as the leadership of the church. To emphasize the necessity of a true call, we may go back to the prophets. Jeremiah said, "The hand of the Lord is heavy upon me." Jonah was called by a direct voice which he tried to evade, but was led to obedience through his experience in that renowned whale story.

Leaving the Old Testament times and coming to the New Testament you will find that Christ himself was called to His priestly office. "No man taketh this office unto himself," he must be called. Christ said, "As my Father hath sent me." He

again said, "I am come down from heaven and am come into the world." In His own interpretation in the first sermon which He preached, He declared, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for he hath anointed me to preach." Paul, before he entered upon his call, came by "the will of God." It is said of Christ when He ascended on high He "led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." He gave some apostles, some prophets, some pastors, some teachers, some evangelists -- "for the work of the ministry."

When ministers as missionaries were to be set apart to the work, it is written, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." With these evidences before us it is clearly demonstrated that a preacher must have a divine call to the ministry as preacher, pastor, evangelist, missionary, or teacher.

What constitutes the foundation for a call -- Doubtless there is a general duty imposed upon every disciple of Jesus Christ to tell the news of saving grace to others, but that in a general way is no evidence in itself of a divine call to the ministry. All who have been saved from sin have an impulse to tell others about Christ. If there is not that divine impulse, evidently his salvation is not complete. Before the call of the disciples they were converted, changed men. They had been sent forth to lead the lost sheep of the house of Israel. They went forth to preach, but it was not until Pentecost that they were commissioned by Christ to go everywhere and preach the gospel. To be Scripturally sent forth in this dispensation, one must be clearly converted and definitely sanctified. When Jesus left the disciples he emphasized that they must wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. Hence our position: Only converted and sanctified persons are qualified to enter the ministry.

What are the evidences of a call? We may name three underlying principles: First, a strong conviction of duty. This comes in the inward being, the Spirit's consciousness. Many people have felt that they were called by the Holy Ghost. That conviction of duty must be distinguished from the desire to tell the gospel story. When the Holy Ghost comes, He always creates a desire to witness for Christ. This is not what I mean when I speak of a conviction to preach. There must be a strong conviction of life work, of life duty -- that this is to be your vocation in life, your calling. Everybody who has had a divine call knows what I am speaking about at this point. It may come like a tidal wave. It may come as an inspiration. It may come with increasing conviction like Jeremiah when he says, "The hand of the Lord is heavy upon me." In any, event, there will be a strong conviction that this is to be your calling in life.

In the second place, there must be the approval of the church -- If the church does not recognize a call to preach, we should most assuredly hesitate to announce our call to this sacred office. We should seriously question and wait for divine providence. One of the evidences that a young man may expect when feeling a call to preach is the conviction of the leading men of the church -- the preachers -- that this is the call of God. The call must be evidenced by outside convictions.



**Some young men have said that it made no difference what the people or church thought about their call. But it does make a difference. Paul not only received the vision, heard the voice from heaven, but he had the approval of Ananias. He had the approval of the church.**

**In the third place, there will be success attending his efforts -- One of the strongest evidences that a man is called to preach is the fact that he can preach, and the people want to hear his message and results follow. He wins men to Jesus Christ. If I had not seen people seeking God at my altar, if I had not been able to win someone to Jesus, I should say there is a question as to my divine call. You may say, "Oh, well, there is Bud Robinson the church did not approve his call." God did, and though he says he could not preach and could not get out what he had to say, yet he had so much of the glory of God that it was evidenced in his experience. At the first services he held many were seeking God. Success must crown the ministry, Jesus said He would call men to the work of the ministry, but He also said, "Ye shall catch men."**

**There are some collateral evidences of the call to the ministry:**

**First, a good, healthy physique is always a help. God could not reasonably call a consumptive, or a man on his sick bed, unless He healed him.**

**Second, there are intellectual evidences-A man should be capable of thinking, of making intellectual progress. I do not say that he must be a genius, but there must be some intellectual strength. There must be a thirst for knowledge, even if intellectual development is not much in evidence. Any person who does not appreciate knowledge has not been called to preach. Any young man who does not have a thirst to know must have mistaken his call.**

**In the third place, he must have "a good report of them which are without." It would be absolutely unthinkable that God should call a man who had no standing with the people or in the church. He must be of good report. St. Paul places that as one of the collateral evidences.**

**Fourth, over and above all, he must have a soul burden All must have a soul burden for the lost when called to the ministry. They must have a passion for souls, a desire to win men to God.**

**Fifth, there should be ready speech -- He must be a man who can talk or converse -- a conversationalist. I know Moses is quoted as being slow of speech, but there is no evidence that Moses was ever excused. A man who is slow of speech never knows what he can do until he gets started.**

**There is one thing more every young preacher should consider carefully if he is going to make a life work of preaching, Every young man Who has a conviction to enter the ministry or go to the mission field must be exceedingly careful in his**

choice of a companion in life. He must be exceedingly careful in his consideration of marriage, There must be the most serious consideration as to whom I should seek to stand by my side in the battles of life, Many men unhappily married have been ruined in their ministry. It has been stated that the devil nearly ruined the life of John Wesley through an unhappy marriage. Evidently the enemy tried hard enough, thank God he failed.

What grave responsibility, then rests upon us as preachers, We enter upon the most solemn duties which carry with them the gravest responsibilities. When i think of my relationship to heaven and lost men around me, I frequently weep. Beloved, We are dealing with the most important question in the universe; the value of a human soul and the destiny of immortal beings. We carry with us that which is going to turn the life of men and women into channels of usefulness or possibly into the broad road of destruction. I cannot look upon the ministry as a trifling affair. I look upon it as an awful business. I look upon it as a work which almost tears to pieces the human soul. It is not to be coveted, it is not to be sought after, although I would prefer one of my children: would be called to the ministry than to reach the highest worldly honors. Nevertheless, preaching is to be a savor of life unto life and death unto death. What the preacher says influences men and women in their course. By a mistake or a wrong conception or false teaching you might turn some soul from heaven to hell. What did Christ mean when He said to Peter, "I am going to deliver to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven?" He did not mean that Peter had the power to forgive sins, although some try to do that. He knew Peter understood that no man could forgive sins, but God. He meant to impress upon Peter's mind that He would give to him the keys that would unlock heaven to men's souls and thus close the door to hell, or by neglect he might shut heaven to some souls and open the door to hell. When a man feels an inspiration as he enters the pulpit, it will give him great consolation as he stands before God.

We should think carefully in making preparation for such a high and holy calling. The most careful preparation and research for information is all too small. I do not know how to speak of it but there is such a responsibility upon a human soul that a man who has a conception of the work of the ministry can never come to the end of his preparation. He is always standing on the shore looking out on the ocean depths of possibility, staring at the sands of the shore, looking for other sources to gain knowledge that he may be able to discharge the great duties which fall upon him. I was impressed during the last years of Dr. Bresee. He was on the threshold of eternity, on the very borderland of heaven. His feet would soon tread the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem. Yet the last days of Dr. Bresee were busy days, not only in the work of the church, but in reading the most profound books. In the last two years of his life he digested those five great books of Dr. William Ramsey, the English archæologist, in his great researches, such as "Cities of St. Paul," "Luke the Physician," etc. I thought of some who might be preachers, saying, "Why is he digging into those things, he is about to go to heaven? Why is he trying to store away information as to the ancient conditions of Antioch, Ephesus, etc.?" But

a man who has the responsibility of preaching feels it so deeply that his preparation never comes an an end.

The preacher must use great care not to entangle himself with the cares of this life. Paul says the man who is toiling to be a soldier does not entangle himself with the cares of this life. He divorces himself from everything else to make a success of this high and holy calling. You cannot do a thousand things about you and make a success of the ministry. Paul said, "This one thing I do." You cannot make a success as a preacher and a success as a business man. One should not go into business and dabble with business and look after business problems and expect to make a success of preaching the gospel of the Son of God at the same time. The time has come for a new race of Christian preachers who can walk in the steps of the fathers, like Augustine or the Wesleys, who will divorce themselves from every unworthy thing and devote themselves entirely to this one work of preaching. We need a class of young men and young women called of God with such tremendous convictions of the call that all they will do is preach -- not in the pulpit only; but on the street corners, wherever man's voice can be heard. We must use every opportunity to reach the masses. They want somebody who has the experience, who can tell them about the experience and pour it forth from a heart that is warm, on street corners, in hotels, in depots. The impulse has been coming to me more and more, and if it were not for the multitude of duties, and continuous talking every day and several times a day, I would borrow a soap box and preach to the people on the street corners. Oh, that our Nazarene preachers may get the impulse! One year's experience on a soap box, on the corner, would be a source of much education and inspiration to many of our preachers. It would give that Wesleyan inspiration that the world is so much in need of at the present time.

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**07 -- LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF A PREACHER'S LIFE -- General Superintendent Emeritus H. F. Reynolds**

**Part Two -- The Call To Preach**

It is generally believed by evangelical Christians that God calls some people, men and women, to preach His gospel to others. We are unable to say at what age in life this divine call is likely to be heard, although our judgment is that as a rule it comes in the years approaching maturity. And yet there are exceptions to this rule. Samuel was called while quite young, and yet his call was so evident that "All Israel from Dan even unto Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." Moses was forty when the call came to him. Isaiah was apparently a mature man when his call came. The apostles of our Lord seemed to all be men who were "of age" according to the Roman law, and Paul was also a man well established in judgment when he was converted on the Damascus road and heard his call to the work of God. But it may be, as some authors say, that God begins generations before to prepare those whom He will later call to the work.

From the experience of Jonah we may gather that in the plan of God there is a specific work for every person, and that when one refuses to do that work a portion of the Master's purpose is Unfulfilled. Nineveh remained in darkness and sin until Jonah obeyed God. And just as God has no other plan for saving men except through Jesus Christ, so He has no other plan for the accomplishment of certain tasks except through the particular person He has called for that task. What would have been the terrible results if Moses or Samuel or Isaiah had failed God? There was no "second best" for Jonah, and there may be no choice for us except obedience or disobedience.

The second year of my Christian experience found me working for a farmer near to the home of my mother. In the early part of that summer several representatives came from a small village, located in one of Vermont's many beautiful valleys, about five miles from where I was working, and three miles beyond where I attended the Methodist church and Sunday school, and earnestly requested me to become the Sunday school superintendent of their summer Sunday school. To this I very reluctantly consented, having never served either church or Sunday school in any official capacity.

I usually walked to and from the village. This, with the addition of my walking to and from the church where I attended Sunday school and preaching service each forenoon and evening, made me an eighteen-mile walk each Sunday. Sometimes I was very weary, but as there were many beautiful trees on the way, frequently I would turn aside and rest by a singing brook. Not infrequently I would, consider my Sunday school lesson while going back and forth, and while resting by the brook. And not a few times I would find myself in deep and serious thought about preaching. And I soon became assured that God was really calling me to preach. But being ignorant of God's dealing with His saved people, I began to debate the question, always arguing that I could not. The summer soon ended, and so did my summer Sunday school trips, but God did not let up on me. The autumn nights would find me walking my garret room or studying my Bible, with the aid of the limited light of a tallow candle, or by my bed or on my knees in my vain effort to get rid of what had become almost my constant thought, about preaching.

About this time the thought found its way into my mind (which thought I now know came from the devil) that I was not called to preach, but rather that I had been to church and Sunday school and other religious services so much that I just imagined that I was called to preach, and that all I needed was to get away from the church and Sunday schools and such religious gatherings. In my eagerness to be rid of the idea of preaching, I took readily the seductive bait. Consequently I began to seek employment at a good distance from any church or Sunday school. I soon engaged to cut one hundred cords of four-foot wood on a distant mountain. But I, like Jonah, had a hard time, and in a short time my daily six-mile walk to the mountain, and the hard work of chopping and cording the wood, caused a serious lameness in my right side. This caused me to give up my job and lose the pay due

me. But the urge to preach followed me by day and by night, and stronger than in any previous time. But believing what proved to be lies of the devil, I sought and obtained another mountain job, even farther from any church than before, and contracted at a good remuneration for a year in a lumber camp. But all of the time, though far from church, I felt the urge to preach stronger than ever before. One early morning I received a severe jolt to my thinking. While going to the mill, sitting on a loose box on the front bobsled, my sled dove into a deep hole gouged out by the heavy log team. I was thrown forward, landing on my head and shoulders above the front beam of the sled, and my legs and hips and back were underneath another beam, and my team running away. I had no control over the spirited horses, and at any moment was liable to be smashed into shreds. I cried to God to stop the runaways and almost instantly they began to slow down. Soon they stood trembling, and I also was all of a tremble. As soon as I could collect my bruised self, I patted my lovely but frightened beasts. However I was frightened, and continued to tremble, and said to God, "If Thou dost really want me to preach, make it clear to me."

Soon it was my Sunday off, as we teamsters used to call it. As a rule the man off would go down the mountain, get changes of clothing, go to church or anywhere he might choose. But he must return to the mountain lumber camp ready to go to work at five o'clock in the morning Monday.

On Sunday I went to Sunday school and church. To my surprise I found the same urge to preach as I had before fleeing, not to Tarshish, but to the high mountains. The urge to preach was clearer and stronger than at any previous time. I left the home of the man for whom I was working to climb the mountain. Starting about one o'clock Monday morning, I wallowed through the newly fallen deep snow. But as I passed through the dining room, I left a note safely tucked under the edge of the dining room lamp with the brief but urgent request that the man, wife, and aged mother pray for me, "That I may know by next Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. whether or not God wants me to preach." I reached the mountain lumber camp and with the other teamsters was off to work about five o'clock in the morning. Much to my surprise, about 9:00 a.m., an exceedingly bright light shone all about me, and continued to shine all the day long; and with it the urge, "Preach My Word." Continually my heart kept saying, "Lord, I will." That very night I asked the man with whom I still had an eleven-month contract to please release me from my job. Much surprised, he said, "Why do you want to quit? Am I not paying you enough for your services? Are you not getting good food?" etc. Then I told him that I must preach or go to hell. To this the man replied, "I, too, claim to be a Christian, and if I hinder you from preaching, God will not bless me."

I completed satisfactory arrangements, and left the mountain lumber camp that Saturday night and began to tell my nearest friends that I was called of God to preach.

The following spring months found me wrestling with the English, Latin, and Greek "roots" in the "Bur and Burton" Seminary at Manchester, Vermont. In the autumn of that year I entered the Montpelier Methodist Seminary located in the capital city of Vermont. I was a boarding student, working my way at ten cents an hour. The principal diet was composed of pork and beans and broken crackers. Notwithstanding, the Lord and the faculty were good to me. The strenuous work and hard and interrupted studies brought a serious break in my health the second year at Montpelier, and I had to abandon further studies at the seminary. At the time of the Vermont Conference I was assigned to a small village church at Bondville, Vermont, where God demonstrated to me and others that He had called me to preach by giving a very precious revival. My call of God to preach was so clear that I have never doubted it during the past sixty years.

When God calls one to preach that person must obey. In common parlance, the soldier must obey orders or be shot, Paul told Timothy, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Timothy 2:4).

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## **08 -- THE BOUNDLESS GRACE OF HOLINESS -- Basil Miller**

### **Our God Is A Consuming Fire**

The manifestations of God to the soul have been manifestations of fire. The first voice of God sounds thrillingly across the dead universe in tones of power and authority. "Let there be light" -- fire, the glimmering burning of His majestic presence, the glorious crown of His attributes, the consuming blaze of His essence, the electrifying brilliance of His wondrous power, the luminous and glowing radiance of himself. This was holy light -- consuming fire -- for the death of lightless night, when the universe was dead, for the obscurity and eclipse of material chaos, beclouded with dense darkness.

The shekinah light of heaven dispelled the dark night of hell. Sunbeams of glory chased away the clouds of the primal murkiness. "For our God is a consuming fire."

The cherubim presence of God at the portal entrance to Eden stood with a fiery, flaming, dazzling, irradiating sword -- God's angelic presence was thus revealed. This heavenly personage remained a burning sign, a blazing signal, a scintillating warning, a brilliant burst of light, reminding the sinful Adam and Eve of the absolute holiness of God, the fire, brightness, sparkling gleam of His nature. "For our God is a consuming fire."

The manifestations of God to Abraham were in numerous cases those of fire. In a vision there appeared the burning furnace and the glowing sheets of flame from

**the torch, the furnace aflame signifying the presence of God to purify, and the gleaming aurora of the torch, to guide through the morass of the world. These were unquenchable foregleams of the holy manifestations of God in sin-blasting through the incoming of His Spirit. His presence was also made known in the smoldering, white-heat-sheets, billows of consuming flame that brightly blazed and flashed and devoured as a maelstrom of hell the cities of the plain. This was a holy manifestation of His heated indignation at the uncontrollable presence of sin. His holiness utterly consumed the sacrifice of the kid on the lone mountain when Isaac was to have been the offering. He is fire, light, holiness. His being is noonday brightness and the glimmer of holy radiance. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**To Jacob, asleep under the star-studded heavens, with the golden ladder where white-robed angels ascended and descended from the lowly earth to the lofty vaults of heaven, God came with His fiery manifestations of holiness. This dazzled the natural eye, and the might and majesty moved and warmed in his soul so much so that he proclaimed, "This is the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." It was the glowing, blazing, flaming light of God's divine irradiation, the sweeping floodtide of His holiness, luminous with fire. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**On the distant side of the desert Moses, being alone, communing, speaking to and waiting for God to converse with him, meditating on the greatness of God's handiwork, the bush burned, glowed, with the manifestory light of God, which burning did not consume, glowed but did not fire. God spoke thus through the fire of His presence, the holiness of His being. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**God showed His presence to the Hebrews coming out of Egypt in the form of a cloud of fire, lighting the way, leading safely through the devious paths of the wilderness. On Sinai thunders of His august being rolled and, re-echoed, beams of His love and justice burst forth, and heavenly rays beshimmered the sky. The glory and shekinah fire with great splendor and brightness so filled the mountain that when Moses came before the Children of Israel his face beamed with the radiant flash of the Orient Sun of righteousness, bedazzling with the brightness of God. God's holiness, lighting presence, holy essence, had saturated Moses, covered, ensphered him. He had been with God. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**At the dedication of Solomon's temple the glow fire filled the building with such radiance that the priests were unable to carry out their sacred duties. On Carmel's heights, with the constructed altar, the fire of God fell. It came hissing, roaring in streamers, licking tongues; the burning manifestations of God fired the sacrifice. When the lucid glory fell no longer did the people question who was God. The chariot of fire, in a blazing, sweeping, rushing whirlwind from the celestial regions, encircled the old prophet and carried him through the gates of glory. Isaiah heard the angels sing, "Holy, holy, holy," in the temple and suddenly an angel flew with a live coal of fire from the throne of God, and his sins were burned away, and his being was purified. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**On the Mountain of Transfiguration the person of Jesus became radiant with celestial light, glowing with the gleams of heavenly shekinah, fiery with the rays of God's holiness. On that longed-for day of Pentecost, tongues of cloven fire -- burning, sizzling, crackling, consuming, resplendent, glaring with noontide light and power -- filled the room, and entered within all present. This was the Pentecostal manifestation of God to man, purifying by fire. This was the coming of the Holy Spirit to baptize with fire. This was the refiner and purifier of God's presence abiding with the disciples, "For our God is a consuming fire."**

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**God's consuming fire burns sin from the soul! In the blazing incoming of the Holy Spirit to the heart -- conditioned by the forgiveness of sins, complete consecration and appropriating faith -- God's fiery presence, His consuming manifestations and flaming indwellings burn every particle of sin from the soul. As the fire of God utterly consumed the sacrifice on the altar, so the fire of the Holy Spirit consumes sin. It unabatedly burns out every moral defilement. The sink of corruption within the heart is cleansed, and it becomes immeasurably purified. The sewage of evil years spent in abject defilement, in hellish corruption, and the scum and spawn of adultery are eliminated, unequivocally consumed. The decay of the soul, the putrefaction of evil thoughts and heart ambitions are essentially made whole and spotlessly white by the Holy Spirit's fire in sanctification.**

**The inky mark and stain of evil thoughts, the scars on the soul and the indelible taint and tarnish of evil associations, the stamp of lust and satiated passions, the wounds of helps imprint, the delineations of sin and the lines of hell, every iota of evil, all are incurably consumed, destroyed, abundantly subverted, dispelled, exceedingly dissipated, tattered beyond comparison -- infinitely nullified.**

**Words fail to describe the action of the Spirit in purifying the effects of sin in the soul -- they are all made spotless, notably untarnished, crumpled, crushed, laid waste, amazingly stamped out, eradicated, absolutely, eternally consumed. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**Ambitions that lead to evil, affections that are rooted in passion, fired by lusts, emotions unhallowed by God, when the fire of God enters the soul, are consumed, and the heart is pristinely pure, hallowed, set apart for holy living and godly service. The worthless dross of wasted years is burned out. The warp and crookedness of sinning ways, the innate tendency to sin, the root of evil and rank bitterness, the old man of carnality, the ever-flowing spring of iniquity, the source of all pollution, are cleansed, fire-purified. The old man is crucified, burned at the stake, for the fire of God consumed the dross of the heart.**

**Depravity, the source of all evil, is eradicated, completely consumed. Where once was a degrading tendency to evil, a warp to sin, now there is a holy bent to do the will of God, to abide under the victorious shadow of the Almighty. Adultery,**



putrid lust, stenchy lies, rotten thefts, every crime of the life -- small or great, insignificant or mighty, social, individual or private, hidden or proclaimed from the house-top, discovered or undiscovered is consumed when the Holy Spirit ineffably sanctified, purified with the glorious presence of the fiery God. "For our God is a consuming fire."

II

However dark and murky the past might have been, the future is bright and blessed with the sin-consuming fire entering, flooding, baptizing the soul. However unfathomably deep the dye of hell or full the sink of iniquity, they shall be made spotlessly white and divinely clean by the fire of the Spirit. This fire will burn and flame in the soul until the man is made pure, and sweet-scented with holy perfume.

Let the past be that of an adulterer, with passions aflame and unsatiated; let the mind have the walls of its chambers covered with images of sin and degrading nudity; let every thought be that of a foul crime; and every ambition to wreck the morals of someone else, or to rob a mother of her chastity or to wreck a home by immorality; let every holy spark of purity be burnt out, every glowing twinkle of the divine within be lightless, every voice calling even slightly to rectitude in the soul be dead; let pure emotions be petrified, and that to which God can appeal be extinct and soulless; let an exhilarant song fail to touch, unctuous prayer to move, godliness to stir; let every soul ambition be to fill up the cup of God's wrath with dregs, the sink of the soul with hellish thoughts -- if the sin against the Holy Ghost be not committed -- when the holy liquid fire of our God enters the heart -- subsequent to regeneration -- it will utterly burn out the sin, completely consume it, thoroughly purify the soul, make it spotlessly white and infinitely dean, untainted, unstained.

It is the same fire which comes into the soul in sanctification, that encircles the worlds when God cried out, "Let there be light" -- the blazing fire which shone in shekinah at the temple's dedication -- the consuming fire that licked up the sacrifice on Carmel's heights -- the flaming fire on the Mount of Transfiguration, the throne-circling fire of the Pentecostal day, the God-sent fire shining around Paul on the Damascus road.

No depth of hell is too low, no sin too great, no life too evil, no soul too degraded, no mind too impure, but God will raise it from the depths of sin, elevate the soul to the glory heights of holiness and divine manifestations, and utterly cleanse it with His fiery manifestations. "For our God is a consuming fire."

Let one be a worthless outcast of the dregs of humanity, a blood-thirsty pirate on the seas of life, an incendiary of the codes of morals, an iron-souled outlaw against purity and right, a harlot with perfumed tresses selling herself for gold, a derelict without guiding hope, but he has not drunk too deeply from the sink of sin for God to reach him with the heaven-born fire of His presence. This divine

fire will burn in the soul and cleanse him, though he might have fed on the morally inflamed tissues of society. He might have been putrid, rancid, dirty with the smoke of lusts, stained with evil's sooty breath, stenchy with moral decay, and impure with the smudge of doom, a stink pot of moral and social impurity -- but when converted and consecrated, the fire of God will consume the sin, purify the soul and make it as white as an angel's wing, through this sin-eradicating, evil-consuming experience of sanctification. This is a fiery baptism of the soul with the consuming presence of God. "For our God is a consuming fire."

### III

This experience is a positive one as well as negative. It not only burns out, but it fills in-not only eradicates, but plants anew. Purity fills the blank, aching void where once carnality dwelt. Nobility and holiness, the essence of the heavenly, celestial, other-worldly nature become the heritage of the cleansed child of God. The heart becomes as pure as an innocent babe, as completely unstained by sin as an unfallen angel, as ultimately holy as the love of a glowing maiden. The inner man is recreated by the fire of God, in the consummate image of God, made entirely holy. One is refashioned by the fire of God's consumption after the image and likeness of the Savior. He is effectually remodeled by the consuming fire until the fashion of Christ's stature is placed in the soul. He is metamorphosed by this sin-consuming fire until he is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The new life is joyously ambrosial, divinely blessed, balmy with the aroma of Beulah, gloriously fragrant with the sweet perfume of happiness and purity, sweet-scented by associations with God. Consuming fire has made him a new creature, a heavenly man. The crowning touch of Deity has reached him, and not a trace of the old man and the old life remains. He is reformed, recreated a son of God, an heir with Christ to the regal thrones of the ages, a dweller in Beulah, a member of the kingdom of heaven, and a ruler of celestial empires. He has been redeemed as by fire, purified in the crucible of the celestial Refiner, stamped with the heavenly image of the Redeemer, bought with the price of fire. "For our God is a consuming fire."

The heart is now turned toward tight and holy rectitude and purity. The thoughts are pleasant in the sight of God. The imaginations, sanctified and fire-cleansed, tend toward heavenly activities and godliness. On the eternal law of the Lord, on the wondrous commandments and holy promises, and life-inspiring precepts of the Bible, the mind delights to dwell. Its joys in musing on the lives of God's great men, their triumphs and victories and conquests in holiness. The mind is holy; the imaginations are exalted and holy; the thoughts and ideals are holy. For the consuming fire of God has entered into its capacities and burned out the dross. "For our God is a consuming fire."

The emotions are renewed, the hopes are recreated. Abounding happiness abides. The soul is absorbed in the reveries of purity and loves the actualized ideals

of holiness. The formerly wandering and erratic desires are attuned to the will and desires of God. This holy soul is engrossed with and intensely passionate for and ardent in love with the communion of the Holy Spirit. It is filled with rapture, unlimited and absolute, and extremely delighted, in living and abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. It is glowing with holy passion and fervent with zeal. to please God and to have the afflatus of the Spirit unctioing the soul.

This fire-baptized soul is exhilarant, and filled with holy trust and abounds in the expression of ineffable joys that come from the touch of the divine shekinah. The emotional capacities and powers are transformed entirely until they are intensely deep in feelings as moved by the outpourings of the Holy Spirit. The heart is divinely imbued with the majesty of God, and is devoted and zealous in the Worship of holiness. The loves are holy; the passions are permeated with holiness; the desires are thrilled and electric with holiness; and the ambitions are controlled by holiness. "For our God is a consuming fire."

#### IV

The entire being is submerged in the flushing, glowing fiery presence of holiness. Holiness is the ever-mastering, overruling triumphing passion of the sanctified man who has felt the sin-consuming fire of God. The music of holiness, anthems glorious and hosannas divine, delight this soul, Holiness is the exultant inspiration, the tender pathos, the triumphant unction of God's man when this fire-baptism of the Spirit comes into the soul. The exuberant fullness of the soul is holiness; the rejoicing delight is holiness and the thrilling joy is holiness. In battle or sorrow, in pain or elation, in victories and labors more abundant, in trials or conquests, in glory or suffering, it is holiness.

The entire life, the outward walk, the deeds, of this man, whom God meets in this holy baptism of the Spirit, this fiery presence is made anew. Old manners are burned out. The clanking chains of entwining habits, the meshes of customs of wrong and cankerous passions are broken in their entirety and the soul is set free by the flood tides of holy glory. The thorough-going enthrallment, the sweeping enslavement and constraints of sin over the soul are absolved, broken asunder.

This life is now unassailed, unbiased, unbound by hell; unbridled by dooming lusts; unchained, unconditioned, uncompelled, unconfined by theimps and hosts of soul-death. The heart through holiness is unlimited, unfeigned, unconstrained by sin, or the power of hell or the devil. There is not a shackle to holy actions remaining. "For our God is a consuming fire."

The holy baptism of this fiery essence of God, with a full charge of heavenly dynamite, recures, reclaims, reanimates, rejuvenates, rebuilds the soul in the original likeness of God. In holiness the heart is restated with God, at all points rehabilitated with the pristine purity of the life, and revived with the original immortal life, and reinvigorated with this holy pulsating life of the Spirit. From the

**grave of hell, from the ashes of a burnt out nature, holiness through God's fiery immersion in sanctification raises the soul to the mountain tops of celestial life.**

**From the alpha to the omega, the beginning to the end, holiness is the only sin remedy. It is the only curative for depravity. The fire root is the only lasting manner in which original sin may be treated, and this bent toward damnation may be cured. Holiness fully breaks the prison bars of every sin, extricates the soul from the meshes of the devil, It liberates outrightly the life from the entanglements of corruption and throughout all the capacities releases one from all that binds and chains. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**Sin is constraint; holiness through God's fiery baptism is liberty. Sin subdues, checks, captivates; holiness disentangles, releases, enlarges the soul. Sin is an arrest of the highest capacities of the soul, repression of nobility, enthrallment of the latent powers of right; holiness adds :power to rectitude, gives wings to joy and brings glorious peace. Sin burns out the power of right; holiness burns out the drag to wrong. Sin consumes the tendency toward righteousness and clogs the path to God; holiness, fiery, sin-consuming holiness, through the Spirit in sanctification, fires the soul with a desire to live eternally in the soul nourishing atmosphere of God's presence.**

**V**

**Holiness is the soul-land of light. The night is never too dark but it shines and glows and lights the pathway of the saint with heavenly resplendence. Let this amplitude of shekinah light, coming through holiness, dispel the dark clouds of the soul, and then the full-orbed, beaming rays of God's light will break on the life and brighten the pathway home. Holiness is a plentitude of light for the soul which shines eternally, and is always refulgent and sparkling with a divine illumination. Holiness is an inner light, an abiding light for the darkest night. It becomes copious light that beams from the New Jerusalem on the weary soul. It is the shekinah glory-light of the transfiguration mountain where God is present to speak. It is the plenteous homeland of the soul. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

**Once the soul is ensphered in this fiery glory-presence of the divine, then it also reflects, and reglows with a radiant light throughout the world. Holiness is the lavish light of God on the earth, beaming rays of glory on the pathway of the saint, and illuminating the darkness of the ages. Heaven's unmeasured light, this luminosity of the Spirit, splendors of glory, radiance of faith, transplendence of God, this illumination which marks celestial beings, this irradiation of shekinah light, breaks forth from the sanctified soul, and lights others to the Sun of righteousness.**

**God's man is a lighthouse to shine across the streams of time immense rays of heaven's light. This guides the shipwrecked pilgrim home, and points the prodigal to his Father's mansion. "For our God is a consuming fire."**

From the battles of God's children holiness glows, glitters, flashes, glistens and bedazzles. From their joys holiness gleams and shoots out fabulous streams of light to move the souls of unconverted to lives of purity. Holiness is the land of the cloudless sky, lightsome, lucent, luciferous -- where always the indescribable sunshine of divine blessings illuminates the soul. It is the ineffable light of the mountain top, the twinkle of the celestial stars of the Beulah land, the glory light of the soul.

Let the fiery manifestations of God burn in the soul, purify the heart, sanctify the nature and refine the dross. Then you will shine with the unapproachable refulgence and undiminished irradiance and unlimited brilliance of God's glory. You will beam with luster and sparkle with divinely inspired anointings. You will be aglow with the heavenly power of spirituality. With the brilliant flame of moral power you will lead men to the Light of the world. You will reflect "the peace of God that passeth understanding." Your joys will be unspeakable, that will scintillate and shine with an unwavering tide of glory. Your life will cast forth brilliant flashes of the luster of divine "love that passeth knowledge."

With this fiery baptism you will be radiant in holiness, luminous in holiness, lightsome and effulgent and cloudless, lustrous and resplendent and vivid in holiness. If you submit to His power you will sparkle and shoot out beaming rays, and dazzle and glow in the divine experience of holiness. You will glisten and effulge and lighten with the presence of God, coming through the fiery baptism of His sin-consuming glory.  
"For our God is a consuming fire!"

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## 09 -- GOD'S OWNERSHIP AND MAN'S STEWARDSHIP -- H. C. Hathcoat

Lesson Reading: Matt. 25:14-30

A prize was once offered for the shortest and most complete essay on "Why the Spanish Navy Made Such a Poor Showing in the Spanish-American War." The winning paper contained these few terse lines: "The Spanish navy failed because it lacked three ships. They were disciplinship, battleships and marksmanship." We might paraphrase this and say that the Church today is making too little progress because of a lack of three ships. They are discipleship to Christ, fellowship with one another and stewardship to God. We will consider the last one.

The Christian life is twofold in its nature. First, it is experience or what God does for us. Second, it is service or what we do for God and others. And stewardship in its fullest sense includes our lives, time, talents, finance and all. Our purpose in this article, however, is to deal with the stewardship of our money.

**There are two ways of looking at stewardship of money or gospel giving. Some people feel that it is a tax on their religion and the preacher's way of raising money. In reality it is a means of grace to the giver and one of God's ways of raising us to a higher level of spiritual living. May we say here that giving does not make one a steward but determines the kind of steward he is. Gospel giving to be of permanent value must get deeper than drives and pledges; it should be the outgrowth of love and devotion to God.**

## **I. God's Place Is That Of Absolute Ownership**

**David declares in Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein." And in Psalm 50:10-12 he quotes God as saying, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the fields are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine and the fulness thereof." The Prophet Haggai wrote, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." These scriptures teach that ownership is with God alone and man is very dependent on Him for everything in life. God has a threefold claim on everything and we will now notice them from a scriptural standpoint.**

**1. First, all things are God's by virtue of creation. "In the beginning 'God created the heaven and earth." Yea, "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." Since God only can create, then "all things are of God," and the creator has a right to that which He created. It is not in the power of man to create anything, hence man owns nothing. In the lesson before us, the man traveling into a far country (Christ), delivered unto His servants (us) His goods.**

**2. Second, all things are God's by virtue of redemption. "Ye are bought with a price," says Paul in 1 Cor. 6:20. The story is told of a young Negro slave who was once bought by a Christian gentleman from the North. Upon being told that he was free to do as he pleased, now, since he was redeemed, the young man broke into tears and pleaded to be allowed to go home with the white gentleman and "make you the very best servant I can be." Since Christ has redeemed us from Satan's bondage and delivered us from the power of sin with His own blood, it ought to be our desire to make Him the best servant we can. He doesn't say we have to do this, but He says "if ye love me ye will keep (do) my commandments." This includes giving of our means (See Acts 20:35).**

**3. God has a right to our money by virtue of control. He "maketh his sun to rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust" (Matt. 5:45). Christ asked the question, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" Again He says we "cannot make one hair white or black." All these statements prove that man has no power over the natural elements or even his own life. The government may regulate the acreage but it cannot regulate the seasons. Just a bolt of lightning, a puff of wind, a flood or a drought and all that man calls**

"mine" is swept away. Surely, since God controls our possessions, He has a right to use them.

## II. Man's Place Is That Or A Steward

When God placed man in the world, He instructed him to replenish the earth, have dominion over it, subdue it, dress, till, and keep (guard) it, but never was man told to own the earth or any of its possessions. As Bud Robinson quaintly says, "Everything we have is second-handed. The shoes we wear were on some old cow's back before we got them as leather. The woolen sweater we wear was the property of some old sheep before man took it from him. The silk people wear belonged to a silkworm before we got it." Come to think about it, Uncle Bud is right. Man is very dependent on God for "every good and perfect gift." This position of man's stewardship enjoins certain obligations on him which we shall consider.

1. First, it shows that God has confidence in us and that we are to be faithful to that trust (1 Cor. 4:1-2). This fact ought to encourage us -- that God has made us stewards of His mysteries. What a noble calling for every saint!

2. Second, we are to make as much money as we can for the rightful use of the owner. It is not a sin to be wealthy so long as we use our wealth to God's glory and do not rob Him of His tithe. The servants who increased their talents (money) were commended by their master. Some people have the ability to make money and they owe it to the giver of this gift to use the increase to His glory. In Rom. 12:8 giving is classed as one of the gifts of the Spirit. This gift would be a greater benefit to the Church than the gift of tongues.

3. Third, we must give an account of our stewardship at some time to God.

Those who had used their money well received the reward, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," while the one who buried (kept) his heard the awful sentence, "Depart from me." Before me are some statistics as to how the American public spends its money annually. \$750,000,000 is spent annually for cosmetics \$350,000,000 is spent for soft drinks, \$300,000,000 for "beautiful" furs, \$500,000,000 for jewels, \$800,000,000 for cigarettes, \$250,000,000 for ice cream and cakes, \$100,000,000 for candies, \$200,000,000 for chewing gum, and from each dollar people have, .75 of one per cent goes for the Lord's work.

"Less than a cent, O keepers of gold,  
With houses and lands and riches untold;  
Less than a cent -- it cannot be  
That is the way you divide with me."

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THE END