

"BIBLE CHRISTIANITY"

"THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET"

VOLUME 1—NUMBER I.

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NO ROOM FOR THE CHRIST CHILD

Luke 2:7, "And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

There are many incidents that surround the birth of Jesus which touch the hearts of the young and old. Among such incidents was the fact that there was no room in the inn for the Saviour of the world to be born. The King of kings was born in a stable. His crib was a manger. Surely our Lord humbled himself in order to become our Saviour. Our praise to him deepens as we think of the fact of His humble birth. It has become the theme of our hymns. We seem to see a wondrous beauty even in that stable. However, it could not have been a very pleasant experience for Joseph and Mary to be refused a room in the inn. How disappointed they must have been. Let us again bring that old, old story before our minds.

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." It was this decree that caused Joseph and Mary to leave the town of Nazareth to journey to Bethlehem. Little did Caesar Augustus dream that his decree was responsible for the fulfilment of the prophecy that Christ was to be born in Bethlehem. It gives us a wonderful insight in the providence of God in that He controls the events of history in such a way that they fulfill His will. Quirinius also had his part in the fulfilment of prophecy. He was the governor of Syria. Palestine was under his jurisdiction. He saw to it that the decree of the Emperor was fulfilled. He ordered every man to go to his own city in order to be properly enrolled for the tax. They were enrolled according to families. Joseph was of the family of David. Bethlehem was the city of David. Therefore it was necessary for the house and lineage of David to go to Bethlehem in order to be enrolled. It was necessary for many who had moved away from Bethlehem to make the journey back to the place of their nativity. Among such were Joseph and Mary who lived a three days journey away from Bethlehem. Unfortunately this journey had to be taken during the coldest season of the year in the month of December. How weary the travellers would be on the third day of their travels. Perhaps we can hear them as they converse together.

Mary says to her husband, "Art thou sure, Joseph, that we are nearing the city of our father David?"

"Yes, Mary, for the road becomes more and more familiar. In a few hours we will find rest and shelter in Bethlehem."

"Rest and shelter will surely be welcome because I am becoming very weary and tired. How cold the wind is."

"The wind is indeed cold. But be of good cheer. Soon we will be in the inn where a warm fire and a warm meal awaits us."

"Yes, Joseph, the welcome that we will receive should certainly sustain

us for the few more hours of travel. When I think that soon we will be in Bethlehem my heart just thrills. It is in Bethlehem that the prophet Micah said the Messiah is to be born. Why I have been chosen to bear Him mystifies me for surely I am the least of all women. And yet the angel said to me, 'Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom shall be no end.' These are the very words of the angel. Again and again I repeat them in my heart."

"Surely, Mary, thou art blessed among women. Many times have I pondered over the words of the angel to me at the time I was minded to put thee away privily. He said, 'Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.' When I think of these words I wonder why God has blessed me with such a wife as thee, for after all I am but a humble carpenter."

"It is I who are not worthy of thee for thou art a very just and noble man."

"But behold, Mary, there is Bethlehem."

"Oh, how still it seems to lie."

"It does seem peaceful. Soon we will be in the warmth of the inn. It cannot be soon enough for I know, Mary, that thou art almost overcome with weariness and cold. But all that will soon be forgotten when once we are in the protection of the inn."

We follow the travelers into the court of the inn. When the keeper of the inn learns that there are some in the court that are inquiring for room he goes out to them.

He says to Joseph, "I am very sorry, sir, but there is no room in the inn. If thou had been a day earlier we might have provided for thee. Every room is now taken."

"But my wife is weary and sick. We have travelled from Nazareth. Surely there is some room where we could stay. It matters not how small."

"Far be it for me to refuse room to a son of David. But you see, the Romans and tax-collectors have taken every room. In fact every inch of room has been hired."

"Perhaps then I can obtain room in one of the homes of the townsmen."

"I am very much afraid that you

will be disappointed if you try. Three or four have come back already and informed me that all the homes are filled up. Our town is but small to house so many strangers."

"But what are we to do? My wife is too sick to sleep in the cold night air."

"Well, I do not like to suggest it. But if you were agreeable to sleep in the stable we will turn one of the beasts out of its stall. We could put some clean straw in it and make it as comfortable as possible."

Joseph turned his disappointed face towards Mary. "There is no room for us in the inn or in the town. It breaks my heart to take you into a stable."

"Never mind, Joseph. God will take care of us. The stable will protect us from the wind. It will, at least, be warm. I am so cold and weary that any place will be welcome."

And as we read in Luke, "She brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

Surely it touches all of our hearts to know that there was no room in the inn for our Saviour to be born. There was room for the Roman soldiers. There was room for the tax-collectors. But there was no room for the Lord of lords and King of kings. The only place that could be found for Him was a stable. His crib was a manger. What a humble birth for Him who was to be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

But such a humble birth is enshrined in a beautiful truth. That truth is the willingness of our Saviour to dwell in any place regardless of how poor or humble it may be. This, indeed, is the hope of the poor, the humble, and the sinful. Today Jesus does not first of all search for an abiding place in the hearts of the rich, the proud, and the righteous. But His search seems first of all for the poor, the humble, and the sinful. Jesus is present more in the dwellings of the poor than in the mansions of the rich. He finds no lodgement in the hearts of the proud but He abides in the hearts of the humble. The righteous pass Him by but the sinful are found at His feet weeping. What a wonderful truth that is to the contrite of heart. It is a truth that was beautifully illustrated by His birth in a stable. Surely since Jesus was willing to leave heaven to be born in such humble surroundings, He is willing to dwell in the hearts of any one regardless how poor, how humble, or how sinful.

Do we realize that Jesus is seeking a dwelling place in our hearts

just as Joseph and Mary were seeking a place in the inn? Do we realize that Jesus is knocking at the door of our hearts waiting for us to open the door and let Him in? It was a hard and difficult journey for Joseph and Mary to the inn of Bethlehem. But it cannot be compared to the journey which Christ undertook in order to reach the door of your heart. He was born to suffer. He was born to suffer in our stead. The last part of His journey was sprinkled with blood. The Garden of Gethsemane, the betrayal of Judas, Pilate's Hall, the scourging, the crown of thorns, the carrying of the cross, the nails, the spear thrust, the tomb were all experienced on the way to the door of your heart. What is the reception?

As you hear the gentle knocking of the Saviour at the door of your heart do you say as the keeper of the inn, "I am sorry but there is no room in my heart. It is filled with the cares of the day. It is filled with the joys of the moment. It is filled with getting and spending. There is no room in my heart. Every inch of space is filled. I realize that your journey has been hard and difficult. I realize that you have suffered the agonies of the cross. But there isn't any room. Next week, next month, next year there may be room. But not now."

Sometimes we wonder why the keeper of the inn could not have done something to provide room in the inn for Joseph and Mary who were in such desperate need. But should we not wonder more at the human heart that refused to let the Saviour in? The inn-keeper did not know that the Saviour of the world was at hand. We do!

Sometimes we wonder why the keeper of the inn did not turn out a Tax-collector or a soldier for those who needed shelter more. Should we not wonder more that the human heart will sometimes refuse to turn out some trivial pleasure for Him who died upon the cross.

It was a tragic and pitiful fact that there was no room in the inn for the Saviour to be born. Will it not be a more tragic and pitiful fact if this Christmas season there will be no room in your heart for the Saviour? Why not let the Saviour in?

"Bible Christianity"

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Our Policy

It is the policy of this paper to present Bible truth. There is altogether too much effort in the church of today to present the wisdom of man. Preachers and teachers instead of searching the Scriptures are searching the wisdom of man. They are more interested in man's books than in God's Book. They have become superior to the Christianity of the Bible. But we know that the wisdom of men will come to nought. He who builds his faith on the wisdom of man is building on sinking sand. He who builds his faith on the Word of God is building upon a rock. Such faith will not be destroyed by the rain of depression, the floods of temptation, and the wind of false doctrine.

In a humble way this paper seeks to ground the faith of its readers in the fundamentals of the Scriptures. Although the material of this paper is presented by a group of Presbyterian ministers, it is the hope that it will be of help to Bible believing Christians of all denominations. Surely in a time of danger there should be more co-operation between the various regiments of God's people. Ignorance and modernism are the two common foes of all Bible believing Christians. The spirit of worldliness that is in the world has caused a great deal of ignorance of the Bible. The creeds of the churches which are based on the Scriptures are ignored today. Young people are more interested in learning the names and characters of movie heroes than in learning the names and characters of Bible heroes.

Modernism in the final analysis destroys faith in the Bible as the Word of God. This has often been denied. But you can tell a tree by its fruits. Neglect of the Bible has always been one of the fruits which attend modernistic preaching. Doctrinal preaching and teaching has been conspicuous by its absence.

Sincere Christians of all denominations are greatly concerned over the deadening influence of ignorance and modernism. We cannot sit back calmly and watch the enemy take citadel after citadel. Surely it is a time to war against these foes. Every means should be employed to fight them. The Bible is the most effective weapon. It is the sword of the Spirit. It is therefore the policy of this paper to use that sword in combating the enemies of Christianity.

"The Gospel is the glad annunciation which God makes to men of the pardon of sin, of restoration to his favour, of the renovation of their nature, of the resurrection of the body, and of eternal life."

Let no man think error in doctrine a slight practical evil. No road to perdition has ever been more thronged than that of false doctrine. Error is a shield over the conscience, and a bandage over the eyes.—Hodge.

Why "Bible Christianity"?

A question may arise as to why this paper is called by the name of "Bible Christianity". The answer is simply that it is an effort to point out effectively that much of that which is called Christianity today is not "Bible" Christianity. Many people feel that as long as they are in a church the message that they hear is a Christian message. Whereas it may be directly opposed to the whole spirit of Christianity. For instance the deity of Christ has been denied from the pulpit and people have not been offended by such a teaching. The Virgin birth of our Lord has been scoffed at and people have seen nothing hideous about such a scoffing. A preacher who preached on the danger of worshipping Jesus has been called one of the outstanding Christian preachers of the world. The Bible upholds in no uncertain terms the deity of Christ and proclaims His virgin birth. Any one who preaches differently is not preaching the Christianity of the Bible. He is preaching a different religion and falsely calling it Christianity.

Different Gods

It has been stated that the God of the modernist is different from the God of the Bible. That is very true. The modernist preaches a God who winks at sin. His God will not punish sin either in this life or in the life to come. His God will not take the blood of His Son as an atonement. Now that is an entirely different conception of God than we have in the Bible. It is not the God that Christ revealed.

Many men are being deceived to-

day. What they need is a discerning spirit. They need to discern what is false. They need to distinguish the Christianity which emanates from the Bible and the so called Christianity which emanates from the mind of man. This can only be done through a knowledge of the Bible.

Another Danger

There is also another danger. And that comes from certain sects and groups that claim to give the full Gospel. In reality they are giving only part of the Gospel. They emphasize certain teachings of the Scriptures and disregard others. For instance, their emphasis may be on the Holy Spirit. There is no doubt but that there should be a greater emphasis on the fact of the Holy Spirit in the church today. But some have emphasized this teaching and have left out the atonement of Jesus Christ. Others emphasize the healing of the body more than the healing of the soul. A proper antidote to wrong emphasis is a proper and sincere searching of the Scriptures.

We do not, of course, claim that we are infallible in presenting the truth of the Scriptures. But we do claim that the Bible is infallible in its teachings. We do not claim to have a "corner" on Bible Christianity. But we do claim that it is our duty to present the Christianity of the Bible with all our hearts, souls, and minds. We do not claim that our presentation of the truth is the best possible presentation of the truth of the Gospel. But we do claim that it is our God given duty to present the Gospel with whatever talents God has given us.

Fools For Christ's Sake

It may seem strange that any one would seek to launch a religious paper during a time of depression. Many religious journals are struggling to keep up their circulation and in fact struggling for their very existence. So this may seem to be a foolhardy venture. However, God has placed a burden on the souls of a group of Christian men and women for the spiritual welfare of the church at large. There is no doubt that we are living in an age of spiritual poverty. There is a declining interest in the things which pertain to God. It is not necessary to spend much time in proving this. It is evident in every community in which you live. The majority of churches are half empty. Real prayer meetings are a thing of the past. Those who go by the name of Christians spend most of their time in the things of the world. Family altars have broken down. Few make a consistent study of God's Word. Many churches are just social clubs. They are spiritually dead. All this spiritual declining is grievous to the hearts of many earnest Christians of all denominations. Many are becoming discouraged.

The hope in many hearts is that a great revival may come. We know that a revival can only come through the grace and mercy of God. So our constant prayer should be to God for an outpouring of His Holy Spirit. We know that God always uses His Holy

Word in the bringing about a revival. His Word is power. So in a humble way we hope to bring the Word of God before the people through means of this religious paper. In so doing we trust that God may use it to bring about a renewed interest on the part of the people in His marvelous revelation which He has made to man in the Scriptures. So although we may be "fools" for starting such a venture during these days, remember that we are fools for Christ's sake.

"EXAMPLE" OR "SUBSTITUTE"

At the close of a service in Germantown, Pa, some time ago, a stranger accosted the late Dr. D. M. Stearns as follows: "I don't like your preaching. I do not care for the cross. I think that instead of preaching the death of Christ on the cross, it would be far better to preach Jesus, the Teacher and Example." "Would you then be willing to follow Him if I preach Christ, the Example?" asked Dr. Stearns. "I would," said the stranger; "I will follow in His steps." "Then," said Dr. Stearns, "let us take the first step. WHO DID NOT SIN?. Can you take this step?" The stranger looked confused. "No," he said, "I

do sin, and I acknowledge it." "Well, then," said Dr. Stearns, "your first need of Christ is not as an Example, but as a Saviour. And this is every man's need."—Witness.

For what is more consistent with faith than to acknowledge ourselves naked of all virtue, that we may be clothed by God; empty of all good, that we may be filled by him; slaves to sin, that we may be liberated by him; bland, that we may be enlightened by Him; lame, that we may be guided; weak, that we may be supported by Him; to divest ourselves of all ground of glorying, that he alone may be eminently glorious, and that we may glory in him? Calvin.

ALMA MATER

By Priscilla Leonard

The oldest university
Was not on India's strand,
Nor in the valley of the Nile,
Nor on Arabia's sand;
From time's beginning it has taught
And still it teaches free
Its learning mild to every child—
The school of Mother's Knee.
The oldest school to teach the law,
And teach it deeply, too,
Dividing what should not be done
From what each one should do,
Was not in Rome nor Ispahan
Nor by the Euxine Sea;
It held its sway ere history's day—
The school of Mother's Knee.
The oldest seminary, where
Theology was taught,
When love to God, and reverent
prayer,
And the Eternal Ought
Were deep impressed on youthful
hearts
In pure sincerity
Came to the earth with Abel's
birth—
The school of Mother's Knee.
The oldest—and the newest, too—
It still maintains its place,
And from its classes, ever-full,
It graduates the race.
Without its teaching, where would all
The best of living be?
'Twas planned by heaven, this earth
to leaven—
The school of Mother's Knee.
Y. C., Apr. 20, 1911.

"A definite conversion, a clear commission, and constant communion with Christ were the great factors in Paul's phenomenal career."

"To be disobedient through temptation, is human sin, but to be disobedient for the sake of disobedience, fiendish sin. To be obedient for the sake of success in conduct, is human virtue; but to be obedient for the sake of obedience, angelic virtue."—Buskin.

The Family - - The Divine Order

Thoughtful people deplore the present day decay of the family life. This decay is due, in part, to the distractions brought in by the vast changes that have taken place in our industrial and social life,—changes that are still in progress, with what ultimate consequences no one can tell. These onward movements have been inevitable, perhaps, but the old family life has not been able to keep the pace and adjust itself to the rapidly changing conditions. Besides there has been infiltration of the influence of theories which hold that the fixity of the family unit is a barrier in the way of the reorganization of society on a better basis, and should be eliminated in the reconstructed world that is to be, and that the training of children should be carried on by the State, rather than the parents. And all the time there is with many people a vague resentment, that parents, in the present order, must be tied down, for long years, with the care of a family, and so are ready to turn over their children to hired helpers, and as early as possible to the kindergarten and the public school, which, great as their values may be, can never take the place of the devotion of faithful and self-denying parents.

When men think of the passing of the family life, with many other things of the past, they tend to overlook two great biological facts of life that are unchanged and unchanging. First, there is the fact that today, as ever in the past, every child is born of two parents. Imaginative writers may dream of a different order of life, but as yet no change in this respect is in sight. Then there is the unchanged order of life that for many years the child is helpless and dependent on others. Until it is thirteen or fourteen years old it is unable to provide itself with even the barest necessities of life. Authorities indicate that this "period of Infancy", as it is called, tends to lengthen out, as life becomes more complex, with the greater call for more adequate preparation for the needs of life as it is likely to be. Here, then, are two basal facts of life, the necessary relation of every child to its parents, and the long period, beginning with absolute helplessness, of dependence upon others for the maintenance of its life. The presumption is overwhelming, then, that the Divine order of the family is the ideal for all time.

It is a strange and wonderful thing, that character is most largely determined for life in the plastic period of childhood, and that the influence of the parents is the most potent of all human factors in the making of that character, for good or for ill. All other influences are relatively casual and uncertain. Let us not be misled by the occasional delinquency and failure of some parents, to forget the vast multitude of others who are conscious of the trust given to them, and are doing something, what seems their best, for the upbringing of their little ones. It may be that loving, though unenlightened parents are doing more for the training of their children in character, than institutions and professional teachers can ever do. There is no responsibility

like that taught by parental love.

The responsibility, then, of parents is great. They are the Divinely appointed guardians and teachers of the child. The child can do little for itself, or for the family support, for years. Its time is free for training. Its nature is plastic, and in its earlier years to an almost unlimited degree. The period of childhood is spent in closest intimacy with the two, out of all the world, who, either unconsciously or with design, have appalling influence to mould its future. Other members of the family, brothers and sisters, have their relative part, but in minor degree, only.

The thought of the home as the nursery of character should make us seek to appreciate fully its opportunity for doing its appointed work, to weigh all the difficulties in the way of maintaining a proper family life, and to do everything possible to assist parents in their work of training their children. The responsibility of the parents is great, but it is the order of nature and of God. Vast as is the care and burden, it is like all other care and burden, when rightly accepted, full of blessing to the parents themselves, and for their children after them.

Never are we to forget the Divine help in the work. The very element of necessity that enters into the family life should assure us that the burden is of the gift of God, and carries with it the assurance of His grace to guide, correct, and make efficient their work of love for their little ones. This is promised in answer to our constant prayer.
November 9, 1935.

TOPICS OF THE DAY

Discovery Upsets Chemical Texts

Under this heading it was announced in the daily papers that a discovery had been made which will require the changing of every textbook of chemistry in the world. The accepted theory has been that gases, such as helium, used in airships; neon, used in electric signs, and argon, which is used in electric lamps, would not enter into chemical compounds. Now Prof. H. S. Booth of Western Reserve University, has succeeded in accomplishing the apparently impossible by making six different chemical compounds of argon.

How wonderful it is that our faith is not built upon the changing textbooks of human science! Our faith would have to change with every changing theory. And yet there are preachers who would rather build their faith on the theories of science than on the unchanging Word of God. They would rather accept the evolutionary theory of creation than the story of creation as found in Genesis. Because science is skeptical of the Virgin Birth they are skeptical of the Virgin Birth of our Saviour. Because science scoffs at the miracles of the Bible they scoff

at the miracles of the Bible. However, the textbooks of science soon outlive their usefulness. The Word of God abides forever. The wisdom of men is temporal; the wisdom of God is eternal.

Is The World Getting Better?

A preacher lecturing in the city of Montreal maintains that the world is getting better. We would that this were true! But one must indeed be wearing rose colored spectacles to see that the world is getting better. If the world is getting better it certainly is not from a religious standpoint. There is no doubt but that there is a great apostasy from the true faith in the world today. Members of the church are very worldly. One must almost conduct a restaurant and a show in order to keep them all interested in the church. The majority of churches are half empty on the Sabbath day.

The Steven's investigation showed that there was a great deal of dishonesty in the business world. Gambling and drinking are on the increase. Crime is not decreasing. How then can one state that the world is getting better?

The Ethiopian Situation

One wonders how any nation that has gone through the horrors of the last World War would deliberately inaugurate another war. But that is exactly what Italy has done. Without any provocation it has gone about to steal Ethiopia away from the Ethiopians. At the present time Italy is but making slow headway in its attempt to conquer. We cannot help but hope that they will not be successful in their attempt.

Is it not strange that the Pope has made no great efforts to stop Italy from warring against a smaller nation? It makes one doubt his sincerity in asking for world wide prayers for peace. Or is it that his influence is waning in Italy as it has in other Roman Catholic countries?

MAN PLUS GOD

There is no limit to what God can do with us and through us if we are willing. It is quite true that there is little we can do of ourselves. Our resources are limited, His are not. Alone, Dwight L. Moody is a shoe clerk, struggling to make a bare living. With God, Dwight L. Moody touches millions of lives and changes the spiritual atmosphere of two continents. Alone, one is insignificant and all but useless in the world. With God, one's life becomes a power for good, how great only eternity can reveal. "Wait for the promise of the Father," said Jesus to the disciples, "and ye shall receive power." Let us wait upon God and He will show how great things He can accomplish through our lives.—The Christian Observer.

THE RANSOM

Matthew 20:28, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered to, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

During His earthly life Jesus was greatly misunderstood. Few understood His real mission in life. He was misunderstood by His Mother and by His brothers. As He preached to great multitudes they attempted to stop Him, saying that He was beside Himself. In other words, that He was out of His right mind. And, of course, He was misunderstood by the religious leaders of the day. Everything which He did was construed by the Scribes and Pharisees to be the work of the Devil. His marvelous wisdom, His miraculous power, His charity were said to show that He was under Satanic power. They misunderstood Him to the extent that they caused Him to be crucified upon the cross. His great love brought only their bitter hate. His healing brought only their desire to kill. Such action on their part showed only their stupendous ignorance of the character and work of Christ. Such ignorance of His true mission must have increased the sorrow of the heart of Christ. It would, then, be natural for Him to turn to His disciples for comfort. Every human heart desires to be understood. It would seem that the disciples would be the very ones to fulfil such a longing. They were with Him daily. They saw His great works. They heard His words of wisdom. If anyone would understand the true purpose for Jesus coming upon earth, it should be they. If anyone would realize that He preached a spiritual kingdom it should be they. But alas, they also misunderstood. They also were blind to the real mission of Christ. This misunderstanding is vividly illustrated by the action of Salome and her two sons, John and James, in our Scripture lesson.

Salome and her two sons came unto Christ and desired certain things from Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. This woman had a vision of a vast earthly kingdom. She had this in common with the great multitudes to whom Christ preached. They all expected that God would send the Messiah in order to establish an earthly kingdom. Such a Messiah, they thought, would release them from the yoke of the Romans. You can very well see how Jesus would at first capture the imagination of the people. He could feed multitudes miraculously. What a great advantage that would be in a war! The commander would have no difficulty in feeding his armies. He could heal the afflicted. So they figured He could also heal the wounded in battle. There would be many other occasions in the course of a war that He could use His miraculous power. It would be but a little while that He would free them from Rome and establish His own Kingdom. That such was His mission was the sincere belief of Salome and her two sons. With a Mother's ambition she desired that her two sons would have a prominent place in such a Kingdom. Jesus answered and said, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized

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not want Him! But is that all that He came for,—just to give impetus and add zeal to efforts toward general well being? Certainly not. He came to give His life a ransom for many (Mt. 20:28). Behind that word "ransom" lurks the dark picture of slavery, of chains, of helplessness and hopelessness. It brings before our minds slave ships that were human pest-holes, unspeakable French gallows, miserable African dhows—all the misery of the worst forms of human dejection is implicit in this word "ransom". In applying this figure to the lesson before us, the conditions are infinitely worse. The whole world is guilty before God (Rom. 3:19), held captive by Satan at his will (2 Tim. 2:26). There is no such thing as a free will until Christ sets it free (Jn. 8:36). There was passed upon the whole race the sentence of death because of sin (Ezek. 18:20). It was to liberate us from this sentence that Jesus Christ came, taking upon Himself a nature which was subject to death, and Himself bearing our guilt in His Own body on the tree. The Eternal Son of God in heaven could never die. In order to experience death He must take upon Himself a nature to which this experience were possible. This is the reason for the Incarnation. Many Scriptures show this, notably the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the writer shows plainly that Jesus "took part" in flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). We love to linger at the rude cradle of the babe, but we must not stop there, for the reason He became a babe of earth was that He might die, so we must go on to Calvary. In those words uttered there, "It is finished", do we see the consummation of an act purposed in the secret counsels of eternity before He became flesh and dwelt among us.

Lesson for December 29

Developed by H. Wilson Sieber

Significance of the Exile and the Restoration

Throughout this quarter we have been studying the prophecies and the events of the exile and the restoration. The Kingdom of Israel and Judah had ceased to render due allegiance to the true God. For the sins of Israel which led to their exile see II Kings 17:7-18; 22-23, and for Judah see II Chronicles 36: 14-17. We see that they were guilty of two great sins. Their first sin was that they had forsaken the law of God. We can very readily see that by reading their history. All of the commandments and the various and sundry laws given to them were broken. It was a sin indeed which led to their exile. God gave them the laws to keep, they were told the consequences if they would fail, (Deut. 28: 15-68, and they failed.

God has given to us laws in the Bible. We are instructed to obey them. We are foretold our condition if we fail (Rom. 1:32). Let us notice what happened to Israel and Judah when they failed and then be diligent to see that we do not do likewise.

Their other great sin was in turning away from worshipping the true God and bowing down to heathen gods. Their duty was made plain to them in the first commandment. Punishment was threatened if they failed (Deut. 6: 13-15). Yet they failed

and the exile was their lot.

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Service to others is the measure of greatness. How unlike that is to the measure of the world. So often that man is considered the greatest who has the most of worldly goods. A prize fighter, a baseball player, or a great hockey player is considered great in the eyes of the world. They receive the headlines of the papers. But according to the principle announced by Jesus the sacrificing Mother, the patient teacher, and the helpful neighbour are considered as the great. Service to others is the keynote to a great life. Of this the

finest example is Christ our Saviour. He uses his life as an example to the disciples. We read in our text: "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

That Jesus came to minister rather than to be ministered unto is shown in every moment of His life. He was the servant at all times. He washed the feet of his disciples. He sought every opportunity to help others. When the multitude was famished He provided food. He gave rest to the weary and comfort to the sorrowing. What was His purpose? To win the popularity of the crowd and thus make way to a kingly crown? ah no. His only purpose was to help. His only desire was to minister. The supreme example of this was when He laid down his life as a ransom for many.

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Now to every ransom there are three parties. There is the one who is ransomed, the giver of the ransom, and the receiver of the ransom. In regard to the one who is ransomed the question comes up, What is he ransomed from? It is the clear Biblical teaching that Christ came to ransom men from death. This death is not physical but it is the death of the soul. Death is the penalty for sin. "The wages of sin is death." Have you ever seriously thought about that fact? Some day you will have to pay the price for sin. Are you willing to pay the price? Do you want to pay the price? After all it is not a question of willing. The price must be paid. There is no way by which you can escape the penalty of sin. The price or penalty is eternal damnation. You are guilty. Knowing that you are guilty how do you figure to escape? You cannot bribe the judge with any of your wealth or by good works. On earth here people do not always receive the penalty for the crime which they commit. If they have the money they can hire clever lawyers who will get them out of any scrape from stealing a loaf of bread to murder. Judges have been known to accept bribes. Our juries have not always been honest. Many crimes do not even appear before court. We do not have to go far away from home to find an illustration of someone who is seemingly getting away with all manner of wickedness and licentiousness without receiving the penalty of the law. But this is sure. He nor any one else will get away with anything at the last judgment. He cannot bribe the

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There is only one such. And that is Jesus Christ.

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

Do you catch the significance of that song? Only Jesus was good enough to pay the price of sin. No one could unlock the gate of heaven but He. His life was worthy to redeem not hundreds, not thousands, but millions. He alone could be so precious in the eyes of God. For was He not His only begotten Son? Was He not the only one who has taken on human nature who has lived in perfect obedience to His will? Ah yes His life alone could be considered worthy by God as a ransom for many. In the text notice the word "came". He came to minister and to give his life a ransom. That was His purpose upon earth. That was His mission in this world. It was not for glory or praise that He descended from His heavenly home. It was not for the establishing of an earthly kingdom that He left His Father. It was solely to ransom sinners who are in bondage to sin. It was to receive their penalty that He came. Notice also that He said He came to "give" his life. "Give" is another key word of the text. His action was a voluntary act. Think not that He was forced to give His life. Long before He came upon earth He told His Father that He would bestow his life to free sinners from the punishment of their sins. He offered to take upon himself our punishment. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

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not want Him! But is that all that He came for,—just to give impetus and add zeal to efforts toward general well being? Certainly not. He came to give His life a ransom for many (Mt. 20:28). Behind that word "ransom" lurks the dark picture of slavery, of chains, of helplessness and hopelessness. It brings before our minds slave ships that were human pest-holes, unspeakable French gallows, miserable African dhows—all the misery of the worst forms of human dejection is implicit in this word "ransom". In applying this figure to the lesson before us, the conditions are infinitely worse. The whole world is guilty before God (Rom. 3:19), held captive by Satan at his will (2 Tim. 2:26). There is no such thing as a free will until Christ sets it free (Jn. 8:36). There was passed upon the whole race the sentence of death because of sin (Ezek. 18:20). It was to liberate us from this sentence that Jesus Christ came, taking upon Himself a nature which was subject to death, and Himself bearing our guilt in His Own body on the tree. The Eternal Son of God in heaven could never die. In order to experience death He must take upon Himself a nature to which this experience were possible. This is the reason for the Incarnation. Many Scriptures show this, notably the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the writer shows plainly that Jesus "took part" in flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). We love to linger at the rude cradle of the babe, but we must not stop there, for the reason He became a babe of earth was that He might die, so we must go on to Calvary. In those words uttered there, "It is finished", do we see the consummation of an act purposed in the secret counsels of eternity before He became flesh and dwelt among us.

Lesson for December 29

Developed by H. Wilson Sieber

Significance of the Exile and the Restoration

Throughout this quarter we have been studying the prophecies and the events of the exile and the restoration. The Kingdom of Israel and Judah had ceased to render due allegiance to the true God. For the sins of Israel which led to their exile see II Kings 17:7-18; 22-23, and for Judah see II Chronicles 36: 14-17. We see that they were guilty of two great sins. Their first sin was that they had forsaken the law of God. We can very readily see that by reading their history. All of the commandments and the various and sundry laws given to them were broken. It was a sin indeed which led to their exile. God gave them the laws to keep, they were told the consequences if they would fail, (Deut. 28: 15-68, and they failed.

God has given to us laws in the Bible. We are instructed to obey them. We are foretold our condition if we fail (Rom. 1:32). Let us notice what happened to Israel and Judah when they failed and then be diligent to see that we do not do likewise.

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Young People's Society - - By Rev. Lambert Olgers

A suggested program for the Young People's meetings.

1. Two or more hymns selected for their fitness to the subject for the evening.
2. Reading of the Scripture Lesson.
3. Prayer by the leader or a few of the members of the society.
4. Special music or a hymn with the offertory either just preceding or following while the organist plays.
5. The leader's discussion of the topic.
6. A general participation by all those present or as many as time permits.
7. A closing hymn followed by the repeating in unison of the benediction.

Topic for December 1, 1935

How Should the Christian Use Friendship to Advance the Cause of Christ? Mark. 3:13, 14.

Suggested hymns to use:

1. "What A Friend We Have in Jesus."
2. "Lord, Speak To Me That I May Speak."
3. "Where Cross The Crowded Ways of Life."
4. "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee."

It is not always an easy matter to speak to our friends concerning Jesus Christ. Too often the call of friendship is merely a call to social activities and social or business relations without regard to the deepest things of life. Friendship should not only be based upon acquaintance but also upon love. Friendship and love go hand in hand.

The question of "Who is my neighbor?" is also a question of love. Who must I love? This attitude of basing friendship on love is distinctly a Christian trait. The world uses friendship for selfish ends in many cases. What can I get out of him or her that they should be my friends, is all too common an attitude. Not so for the Christian. His attitude, based upon love, is, what can I give to my friends?

Jesus says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13). Love demands the best and most worth while. Why not give Christ to our friends. Many a soul has found Jesus Christ because some friend spoke of Him to them. The best that we can give is none too good and by giving our Saviour we are introducing one friend to another friend. We need never be ashamed of that. If Christ's friendship and love is priceless to you and your earthly friends are worthy of you, then introduce them one to another.

Christian friendship and love being the same thing is wider in its scope than merely acquaintance. By that we mean that you can love someone whom you have never met.

That is the strength of the Christian ministry, here and on the mission fields. So also should it be in our lives as Christian young people. How about using your talents for those around you? There are some young people's groups going into the hospitals of the large cities to read the Scriptures, offer prayers and sing hymns for the patients in them. Others have gone into prisons, or on the corners of the streets in large metropolitan areas. Other societies have formed teams to take charge of services in churches that had no minister and would otherwise have no religious services on the Lord's Day.

Christian friendship may also be used for the purifying of conditions around us. Not everything that happens is Christian. Not all businesses are run in accordance with God's will. We ought to use our friendship to right wrong and to stop that which is evil both among our acquaintances and others. Many a young man and young woman leaving their old homes for work in the cities have been compelled because of a desire for companionship to find it in the dens of vice. Why not find such wherever possible and invite them to our meetings and to our church?

Biblical examples of the use of Friendship:

- Jonathan and David.
- The Good Samaritan.
- Paul and Onesimus.
- Ruth and Naomi.

December 8, 1935. Our Church.

Presbyterianism Acts 14: 19-28.
Hymns:

- "Christ Is Made The Sure Foundation."
- "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken."
- "Jesus With Thy Church Abide."
- "Sweet Is The Solemn Voice That Calls."

In connection with this topic may also be used the Study Book Chapter III.

We believe that the head of the Church is not on earth. The Great authority is not with men but with Christ. The church as a company of believers is the body. As such it can only carry out the orders of Him who is the Head of it. Jesus Christ is the only Head of the Church. He rules it by His authoritative Word. In all things the judgments of men must be submitted to the judgment of Christ. All authority is given unto Him in Heaven and in earth. He rules the church by His active preserving presence in it. His Spirit works in the hearts of men and directs the course of the whole future church. Though at times it may appear as though the church is not even superficially connected with the Head yet in later years we can see in part the mysterious working of the Spirit in renewing and reviving the worn and broken members of the body. It was the Spirit that demanded the separation of Paul and Barnabas to a new task and field.

The body must be obedient to the Head. The body of a drunken man does not respond to the orders of the head. The Church without Christ and

without obedience to Him would be a staggering institution. To function properly and efficiently their must be absolute co-ordination between all members of the church and the church and her Head, even Christ.

Discussion Topics

- Of what does the church consist?
- Is there anything in your church contrary to Christ's will?
- Why do factions arise in the church if Christ is the Head?
- How can we make our church more efficient and true?

Topic For December 15.

What is the Limit in Self-sacrifice in Friendship.

Scrip. John 15: 13; Luke 10: 30-37.

Suitable hymns:

- "I've Found A Friend, O Such a Friend."
- "O Love Divine! That Stoop'st To Share Our Sharpest Pang."
- "One There Is, Above All Others."
- "We Give Thee But Thine Own."

The words of Jesus, "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13) finds an echoing response in many hearts. All are willing to agree that the greatest thing a man can give is his own life. That is the supreme sacrifice and an evidence of great love. By that standard Jesus Christ is the supreme, the ideal, the most glorious and perfect friend. He gave His life "a ransom for many." Last June a number of private yachts participated in a race from New York to Bergen, Norway. One of them, upon which were six men, a father and two sons with three friends, encountered a severe storm off the shores of Nova Scotia. The father was washed over board by a large wave. First one son jumped over to go to the rescue of his father and a few minutes after the second son. As a result all three lost their lives. Two of them in an attempt to rescue the third. A noble sacrifice men say.

Yet as we look at the sacrifice of Jesus Christ there is more than just the giving of a life. It is also the giving of a living. Christ left His home on high to make his abode with men. He forsook the glory that He had with the Father to take up the ignominy and shame of earth. He left the marvelous beauty and perfection of the Kingdom of Heaven in order to dwell amidst the imperfections and shame of the Kingdom of men. Christ sacrificed His Home on high in order to share man's home below that man in due time might share with Him the Home on High.

Now, while there are many individuals who are willing to admit that the supreme test of love is the sacrificing of a life, they are unwilling to admit that friendship means also a sacrificing of a living. They realize that the opportunity to give a life does not come to all but the sacrifice of a living does. For some earthly possessions mean more than life itself. It touches them and they refuse to be touched. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ included everything. Not one thing that was essential did He

withhold. Rightly did and could He say, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." (Matt. 8:20).

During the last great war there was a slogan, "Give until it hurts." That may be a good war slogan but it is a poor life slogan for the Christian. In the light of Christ's sacrifice no sacrifice we can make should hurt. Everything we do and everything we give must be out of a joyous spirit of service and an infinite love for Him who is the Supreme Sacrifice and willingly gave "the last full measure of his devotion."

Questions For Discussion

To whom does the wealth of the world belong?

What is man's relationship to this wealth?

Is all giving sacrificing? Why? Should care be exercised in our sacrificing?

Topic For December 22, 1935.

A Christmas Meeting. Subject: The Coming of Man's Greatest Friend. Scripture Passage Luke 2: 8-20.

- Hymns: "Joy To The World."
- "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night."
- "O Little Town of Bethlehem".
- "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear".
- Perhaps the happiest season in

Christendom is the Christmas season. How much of that happiness is connected with the thought of gifts to be given and received is hard to say. We know that much of the real meaning of Christmas is lost beneath the tramp, tramp, tramp of shopper's feet. Back of it all there is the idea of a gift received that demands a gift in return but much of the first coming of the Son of Man as the Saviour of the world is hidden.

A few years ago there was a movement among religious thinkers having the slogan, "Back to Christ." On this day there ought to be a movement "Back to the First Christmas." As that thought becomes predominant in our minds we see once more the whole picture in pageant form of that first glad day. We see the weary march of Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem, braving danger and sickness in order to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's" and so fulfill the prophecy of God. We see the shepherds in the silent watches of the night standing amazed at the spectacle before them of the heavenly hosts singing their angelic chorus. We see the guiding star of the wise men as it leads them to the Light of the World with their gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh.

In casting aside the customs of men and their traditions we shall be drawn closer to the Christ Child and the purpose of His coming, the manner of His coming and the glory of His coming. Almost every parent, when the little son or daughter first sees the light of day, plans for future years, builds castles of future greatness. Seldom do they think at the dawn of life of the day when that life shall cease to be. Yet it must ever

be so with the life of Christ. As in retrospect we look at His life we link the day of birth with the day of death. Our very lack of knowledge of so much of His life seems thereby to bring these two events so much closer than they actually were. But that which links it still closer is the purpose.

In John 10:10 Christ gives the purpose of His coming. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Christ came into the world with more than merely the promise of another life added to the tax rolls of Caesar. He came to forever pay sin's tax. He came not that men should minister unto His needs and present gifts to Him but that He might minister unto the needs of men and that the gift of life eternal should be given to "whosoever believeth in Him". The purpose as accomplished in His death ought to have a place in the thought of His nativity. The thought of His birth may soften the hearts of the scrouges of the world but only the thought of His purposive coming can melt the stony hearts of men.

Discuss in connection with this subject:

Has the promise of "Peace and good will among men" been fulfilled?

What would the condition of the world be today without His coming?

When did Christ's friendship begin?

Do you think that the commercial interests have improved the day?

December 29, 1935.

Missionary Meeting. Topic: The Mission Work as a Whole.

Scripture Matt. 28: 16-20.

Hymns:

"From Greenland's Icy Mountains"

"Jesus Shall Reign Where'er The Sun"

"Christ For The World, We Sing."

"The Morning Light Is Breaking."

Whenever we think of the word mission we have a picture of someone sent on a definite task to accomplish a purpose. There are always three elements in it—the sender, he who is sent and the one or ones to whom they are sent. Of the three the most important is the sender. He determines what shall be sent. The messenger merely transmits the word and message his employer gives. He may not change that message one iota. The sender also determines to whom the message shall be sent.

Now in Christian missions this is peculiarly true. Christ is the sender. All missionary authority is vested in Him. Without Him there could be no missionary program for the Christian church. He as sender has determined the message—the Gospel—to be given. Here we ought to remember the statement made above that those sent may not change that message. Sad to say some of those who claim to be sent are usurping the right of the sender. They are taking not the full message but only a part and that portion of it which seems to agree with their own desires. Not only do they arrogate unto themselves the right to edit the Word but even to advocate its abolition as the distinctive truth essential for all men. In the business realm they would be "fired." They are tol-

erated and even encouraged in some religious centers.

The message of missions is and ever must be the full "council of God." No individual having a divine commission may ever change that. For Jew and Gentile the message is ever the same. One name is given even Jesus Christ who is "Lord of Lords and King of Kings."

The Sender has also chosen those who are to be His ambassadors. His disciples in all ages in all climes are to bear the Story of salvation. They have with their commission the promise of His presence with them wherever they are and for all time.

Their commission carries them into the whole world. They are ambassadors at large carrying the instructions of Him they represent into out of the way corners of the world as well as the metropolitan areas of the land. It is a very elastic commission in that it may begin within two feet of them or may be stretched to embrace the other side of the world.

This message Christ entrusts not to angels but to men. The winning of the world is to be through the instrumentality of human beings and not heavenly beings. The evangelization of the world rises or falls with man's effort plus the work of the Holy Spirit.

For Discussion

How many of the nations may be called Christian?

How much of the world must yet be won for Christ?

Are missions accomplishing what they were intended to? Why?

How much of the work is our work?

The Shepherds

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." Let us draw near and listen to them as they talk one to another.

"The night is cold, Thomas. It is fortunate that we can sit close to such a warm fire."

"Yes, that is true. No doubt Reuben will enjoy this fire when he comes back from making his rounds. It seems to be taking him rather long. But, behold, is that not he in the distance?"

"I believe it is. The stars are so bright this night that one can see a long distance. It seems that he is carrying something in his arms. I wonder what it can be?"

"To me it appears that he carries one of the flock. Yes, so it is,—Well, Reuben, what seems to be the trouble."

"The same old story, Caleb. The wolves are busy again. Fortunately I came just in time to scare them off. They nearly killed this lamb. My how I hate those wolves."

"Yes, they are terrible creatures. But what I hate worse is a human wolf. We have one such ruling us now. Herod is nothing but a blood-thirsty wolf. Would that we could protect Israel from him as we pro-

tect this flock from the maurauding beasts."

"Only God can be such a Shepherd, Caleb. As David said of old, 'The Lord is my Shepherd.' Some day the great Shepherd of the flock will avenge the ill treatment of Israel."

"That will be in the days that the Messiah will appear upon earth. Do you think, Thomas, that the Messiah will appear in our day?"

"I do not know. But O how I wish he would come. Herod becomes more cruel every day. The Romans burden us with taxes. It is in order to tax us more that they have summoned the family of David to gather in the town of Bethlehem. If ever the Messiah is needed it is now."

"It would indeed be wonderful if He were to appear in our day. The prophet Isaiah says of Him 'That his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor. The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.' That passage of the prophet always fills me with longing for the coming of the Messiah."

"And so it does with me, Reuben. To think of one who is to be a greater prophet than Moses; a greater priest than Aaron; and a greater king than David. But then I suppose that we will never behold Him even if he comes in our day."

"No I do not suppose we will. He will be born in Jerusalem of some great family. He will reign as a great king. Such humble shepherds as we will not be able to approach him. He will be surrounded by the chief priests, the scribes, and the pharisees. But what does it matter as long as He delivers us and reigns with justice and righteousness. Still it would be wonderful just to have a glimpse of Him."

"But, behold, does it not seem to become brighter?"

"Yes, the heavens seem to glow with a strange light."

"And what being is that. It must be God. I am afraid."

"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and

Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

BIBLE STUDY

EXPOSITION OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Isn't it surprising what little attention we pay to the words of our Lord and Saviour? We spend hours upon hours of reading literature of all sorts but we spend very few moments in reading the recorded words of Jesus. We are occupied with the wisdom of the world but the wisdom of Jesus is neglected. Surely every word of our Lord should be treasured. And what a treasure there is in the Sermon on the Mount which is recorded in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the Gospel of Matthew. It is the greatest sermon of all ages. How much do we know of that sermon? How many of its principles have we taken in our lives? If we are true followers of Christ His words should be our constant study. Our greatest desire should be to live as He wants us to live. The only way we can know how Christ wants us to live is by a study of His words. For that reason it is our purpose in this column to make a study of the Sermon on the Mount. In every issue we will take part of that Sermon as our study.

The First Principle

The first principle that should be observed in the study of the Sermon on the Mount is that it was written for Christians only. These words were spoken to the disciples of Christ. Only a Christian can ever hope to follow these words. Only a Christian can apply these words to his life and heart. Christ did not say "Ye are the light of the world" to an unbeliever. Christ did not call a drunkard, adulterer, or thief the salt of the earth. His true followers are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. A presupposition of this exposition is that the reader is saved. The natural man will consider a study of this sort as so much foolishness. But the spiritual man will rejoice in the Word of the Lord and will make a serious effort to apply them to his heart and life. With this in mind let us make a diligent study of this Sermon.

The Beautitudes

Jesus begins His sermon by stating the blessedness of those who have the virtues of the citizens of the kingdom. To be blessed means to be happy. So often people have the

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idea that to be Christ's means to be gloomy and sorrowful. That is not true. One does not know happiness until he surrenders himself to Christ and possesses the virtues of the kingdom. The promise of true happiness certainly attract one to the kingdom of God. Luther states, "That is, indeed, a fine, sweet, friendly beginning of His teaching and sermon. For He does not proceed, like Moses, or a teacher of the law, with commands, threats, and terrors, but in a most friendly manner, with pure attractions and allurements, and pleasant promises."

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

Isn't it strange that the requirement for entrance in the kingdom of heaven is that one should be poor in the spirit? You would think that those who were rich in the spirit would be the ones crowding the entrance to the kingdom. But according to Jesus their's is the kingdom of heaven who realize the poverty of their souls. The first requirement of a disciple of the Lord is that he empty himself. He becomes an empty vessel waiting for the Lord to fill him. He empties himself of pride, self-righteousness, and all vanity.

To be "Poor in spirit" is to realize the sinfulness of one's condition. One realizes that one is not morally what one should be. One realizes that in many ways he has offended God. "God have mercy on me a sinner" is the cry of the soul that is poor in spirit.

To be "poor in spirit" is to realize the terrible ignorance of the things of the Spirit. There is so little we know about God, His Son, and the Revelation which He has made.

To be "poor in spirit" is to realize the smallness of the good one is daily doing. There is so much that one leaves undone. One feels that he is not doing one part of what he should do for God and His kingdom.

When there is a consciousness of sin, a consciousness of ignorance, a consciousness of poverty of goodness then one is ready to flee to Jesus and receive from Him the blessings of the kingdom. Jesus dwells in such souls that have emptied themselves of pride and vanity. As we read in Isaiah, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

No doubt, if a person is poor in the spirit he will mourn for his state of poverty. He will mourn for his sins. But at such a time Jesus will com-

fort him with the assurance that his sins are forgiven. When a person is under a conviction of sin the only comfort that he will ever find is in Christ Jesus.

There is also another aspect to be seen in the second beatitude. Blessed are those who mourn because of the loss of loved ones. The only real comfort to be found at such a time is that comfort which is found in Christ Jesus. What a wonderful comfort

steals into the heart with the realization that Jesus has received a loved one in glory! How wonderful it is to know that our loved ones are in a land where there is no suffering, sorrow, or pain. Many an aching heart has accepted the invitation "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Such have found the state of blessedness. Such have been comforted.

Christ and the Bible

All Christians are aware of the fact that the Bible has been attacked throughout its history. But not all Christians are aware of the fact that the Bible is being attacked today in a greater way than ever before. The reason why they are not aware of the fact is because the attack is so subtle. The attack does not so much come from without but it comes from within the church. Atheists, infidels, and unbelievers have always attacked the Bible and with little avail. But now the Bible is often attacked from the pulpit. This attack is not always open, of course. For that reason it is all the more deadly.

Verbal Inspiration

The attack comes in the form of denying the verbal inspiration of the Bible. By verbal inspiration is meant that the Holy Spirit so guided the writers of the Scriptures that they wrote without error. Their words are the words of God. The words of Scripture are therefore infallible. They form our authority in all matters of faith and doctrine. This verbal inspiration is being denied in many and various ways.

Inspired in Part

Some say that the Bible is inspired only in part. There are parts inspired and parts not inspired. Then the question comes as to what are the parts inspired? And who is to determine which parts are inspired? The answer to the latter question is that the scholars will determine which parts are inspired. That means we place the scholars in greater authority than the Bible! The Bible is not the final authority. According to this teaching man is the final authority.

One minister told us that he believed that there were not more than ten per cent of the ministry who believed in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Another stated that he doubted whether one out of a hundred believed the Bible to be plenary inspired. What an awful state if that were true! That would mean that the majority of ministers are, more or less, undermining the authority of the Scriptures. We hope, however, that such statements are exaggerations. It would mean that

the majority of ministers are disloyal to their creeds and what is more are disloyal to Christ. For Christ believed and taught that the Bible is verbally inspired. For proof of that we have merely to refer to the statements of Christ in reference to the Scriptures. And this we hope to do from month to month. By so doing there cannot be any doubt, at least, as what Christ taught.

Matthew 4: 1-11

We begin in this issue by quoting the first recorded words of Christ after His baptism. Turn to your Bible and read carefully the first eleven verses of the fourth chapter of Matthew. There are three statements that have an important bearing on our subject. They are, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." and "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Thus three times in that passage we come across the expression, "It is written." From this we can note the following things:

1. Jesus in His controversy with the devil appealed to the WRITTEN WORD. Some minister has stated that Jesus very seldom appealed to the written Word. But here in the very beginning of His ministry and, we may say, in the crisis of His ministry He appeals to the written Word.

2. Jesus quotes the Scriptures as having unquestionable authority for His conduct in reference to the temptations of the devil. He appeals to the Scriptures as final authority.

3. Jesus quotes from the book of Deuteronomy. This book has been slashed into a hundred pieces by some of the higher-critics. But for Jesus it was the Word of God.

4. The Devil does not dispute the authority of the Scriptures with Christ. Some of the higher critics are bolder than the devil.

The Devil and the Scriptures

In that passage the Devil also quotes Scripture. He states, "For it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot

against a stone." This quotation is found in Psalm 91: 11, 12. You will notice that the Devil omits part of verse 11. He omits, "To keep thee in all thy ways." God did not give His angels charge concerning him to keep him in the ways of the devil. It was only to keep him in the ways of God. The Devil would, of course, omit that important truth because it was unpleasant to him. It seems that some of the higher critics and preachers do the same thing. They want to omit from Scripture all those passages which are unpleasant to them. And for that reason are attacking the authority of the Scriptures.

THE RANSOM

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soldiers were hardened in heart. But isn't it likewise with us?

However there was One upon whom the death of Christ made a deep impression. And that was God the Father. He was the third party to the ransom. He was the receiver of the ransom. The inclination in the human heart is never to look with favor upon the receiver of a ransom. Therefore many people have thought that God was harsh and cruel to demand such a sacrifice for the ransom of sinners. But whoever feels that God is such is totally ignorant of the facts of the case. Justice demands that every crime be punished. We would not think much of a judge who would free every murderer, fornicator and thief who would come before him. It would repel our sense of justice. How then can we expect God to free those who are clearly guilty of sin? God's sense of justice is infinitely finer and greater than ours. He must inflict the penalty. But His infinite love was such that He provided a way of escape. And that was by inflicting the penalty of sin upon His only begotten Son. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." That is real love. It cost something for God to give His Son a ransom for sin. Yes, God the Father receives the ransom but do not forget that the Ransom was His Son whom He loved with an overwhelming love.

Finally let us notice the last word of the text which is "many." Jesus came to give His life a ransom for MANY. Think not that He came for a few. Those who are ransomed by Him form a mighty army. They are found in all ages and in all places. From the crucifixion of Jesus unto this very day the ransomed army has been marching. In China, in Japan, in Africa, in Canada and everywhere we find battalion of this vast army. The question then comes to you and to me, Do I belong to the "many"? Am I ransomed by Christ? The ransom is there. It is up to you whether you will take it or not. It is up to you to volunteer.

"LIVING WITH CHRIST"

Each day to walk with thee a little nearer;
Each day to talk with thee a little clearer;
Each day to find Thy will a little dearer;
Be this Thy gift, O Lord, to every hearer. (Selected)