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Sermons

SERMONS
(Abridged)

By

Phineas F. Bresee, D.D.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

GENERAL SUPT. CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE AT LARGE
PASTOR OF FIRST CHURCH
LOS ANGELES

Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. — Heb. 12:14

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. — 1 John 1:7

NAZARENE PUBLISHING COMPANY

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA,

1903

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By

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CONTENTS

Sermon 1

THE LAST COMMAND

Sermon 2

DIVINE POWER

Sermon 3

THE OUTSTRETCHED HANDS

Sermon 4

DAYS OF WAITING

Sermon 5

THE GREAT QUESTION

Sermon 6

THE PRINCE OF LIFE

Sermon 7

PERSECUTION

Sermon 8

DEATH AND LIFE

Sermon 9

THAT "GREAT AND NOTABLE DAY"

Sermon 10

ANNIVERSARY

Sermon 11

THE MIND OF CHRIST IN US

Sermon 12

"LO, I COME"

Sermon 13
THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS

Sermon 14
THE MOTIVE TO ENDURANCE

Sermon 15
THE CONQUEROR

Sermon 16
THE BLESSING

Sermon 17
STANDING FOR CHRIST

Sermon 18
THE LAW OF REPRODUCTION

Sermon 19
THE OPEN DOOR

Sermon 20
A MARVELOUS THING

Sermon 21
THE LIFTING OF THE VAIL

Sermon 22
THE TRANSFIGURING GAZE

Sermon 23
THE TRANSFERRED IMAGE

Sermon 24
THE CONQUERING WORD

Sermon 25
THE LAMB AMID THE BLOODWASHED

Sermon 26
THE GLORY OF A TRANSCENDENT PURPOSE

Sermon 28
THE HEAVENLY VISION

Sermon 29
CONSUMING FIRE

Sermon 30
ONE THING

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

PREFACE

The earnest request has been made by many of God's people that a volume of Rev. Dr. P. F. Bresee's sermons be published, not alone for the refreshing and upbuilding of those who have had the privilege of sitting under his Pentecostal ministry, but also as an important addition to the holiness literature of the day. This expressed desire on the part of "the holy people" has been humbly responded to by the publication of the accompanying volume of his discourses.

Everyone, however, who has heard Dr. Bresee preach will readily understand that in order to receive the full import and power of his sermons they should be heard rather than read. In a remarkable degree the anointed personality of this servant of the Lord intensifies both the matter and delivery of his burning messages. So that to those who have heard this mighty preacher and felt the power of his impassioned utterances, there may be some lack both in the force and pathos of the printed discourses, especially as they are presented in a much abridged form. And yet because of the Holy Spirit's sign and seal — their Divine authorship — many readers will be able to enter into the themes, and even supply and understand the power of the unwritten words.

At a supreme epoch in the spiritual life of the author of these sermons, he was himself made "a minister and a witness" of the great dispensational truth which it has been his joy to proclaim ever since and which is so constantly emphasized in these discourses, namely, the baptism with the Holy Ghost, accomplishing in the hearts of believers today the self-same work as at the first Pentecost when He purified their hearts by faith.

May these sermons continue to preach and burn their way into the hearts of men, even to the uttermost part of the earth, by the power of the Holy Ghost under whose authorship and inspiration they have been prepared and preached, and to whose control and commission they are committed, is the prayer of ONE OF THE BLOODWASHED.

SERMONS

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Sermon 1

THE LAST COMMAND

TEXT — "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me."
— Acts 1:4

Luke, the beloved physician and the first historian of the Christian Church, looks backward and recalls his former treatises in which he spoke of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, thus recognizing, as we should, that the earthly ministry of our Lord both in doing and teaching was but the beginning of the glorious work which He will continue, through the person of the Holy Ghost, until the end of the age.

Luke refers to the history of Jesus after the resurrection, and then comes to His last interview with His disciples. They were at Jerusalem. The day for His ascension was at hand. Soon He would be parted from them, but He waited to give His final direction. Just one thing He commanded with greatest emphasis. "They were not to depart from Jerusalem but were to wait for the promise of the Father which, saith He, ye have heard of me."

I am greatly impressed with this command of Jesus to His disciples — this last command. How clear it is. It impresses me the more because, after the most careful and critical study, I am convinced that it is not of any private interpretation. In its deep and real meaning it is mandatory to every disciple, for all time. It is this fact which gives this command interest and power. If this were not true it would be little more to us than any literary fossil dug up from the ages. Neither is there any lack of clearness in reference to the meaning of that for which the disciples were to wait — this "promise of the Father."

It is very definitely stated here that the "promise of the Father" is the baptism with the Holy Ghost of which Jesus had before told them in that close heart to heart talk in the upper room, saying — "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another comforter that He may abide with you forever." "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

On the day of Pentecost, when Peter was defining to the multitude the meaning of the marvelous experience which had come to the disciples he said, that Jesus, having risen and ascended and "having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath sent forth this which ye now see and hear." This promise of the Father had been foreshadowed in prophecy which fact Peter plainly declared in his address on the day of Pentecost.

Preaching to the Jews, Peter quotes from their accepted authority; but Jesus in this last interview with His disciples only recalled to their memory His own words in regard to the promise. Beyond question, that which He so strictly commanded them to wait for was the baptism with the Holy Ghost. This baptism was indispensable for their own experience, and without this equipment their efforts to carry out the divine commission would have been futile, even worse; it would have been treason. Without the Holy Ghost their insufficiency meant defeat and dishonor to Jesus Christ. What would be the result of a body of men going unequipped into the enemy's country, contrary to a direct command from their leader to wait for arms and ammunition before pressing the battle?

It is difficult for us to realize the greatness of this promise, which was to prepare, equip and empower these men for the Conquest of this world.

Not only is this command to "wait for the promise" in full force today, but it is also an abiding necessity. Unequipped soldiers in the face of the enemy are as sad a spectacle today as it would have been in that day, and the results are equally disastrous. The enemies of Jesus Christ were never more intense and virulent than today. The devil and his forces are defiant in the face of the Church. Instead of our boasted civilization being really Christian, the black flag of the piracy of hell waves every where. The devil pours out his broth in the trough and millions drink it to debauchery and poverty and eternal damnation. He sets his doorway in the gates of the Christian Sabbath and it is crowded with devotees. He builds his temples of worship and they are thronged week days and Sabbaths. The professedly Christian church, enslaved by worldliness, largely does the bidding of the arch-destroyer. Samson captured, shorn, blind, grinding — is its prophet and type.

Whisky and Sabbath desecration — twin giants of diabolism — are marching with iron hoofs over the land. They are putting their mark of red-hot irony on the bowed back of the professed church of God. The great leading men in churchianity, for the sake of political preferment, join hands with the blood-soaked hands of whisky, and the Church says, "very good." The greatest organ of the greatest Protestant church says, "the church as a whole has, probably, never been so deeply devoted to the complete fulfillment of its holy mission as today." In the name of Jesus Christ I ask "what is its holy mission?" Is it to stand hand in hand with the most gigantic villainy that ever saw the sun simply for gain and aggrandizement? No: its holy mission is to strike — to smite this bloody monument of hell until it is utterly overthrown, and this scarlet pyramid of skulls is buried in the sea of human history, and there is a new era of peace on earth and good will to men.

A great fundamental heresy has entered into the Christian thinking of today. It is not clear thought. Heresy is never clear — but it has come to be a conviction; it is that this divine power is not now needed for the doing of God's work. And because of this conviction the conditions are greatly complicated. It would be difficult to change the conditions of an army, fighting with tin swords and living on tainted meat, if there was conviction that they were well equipped, even though they were impotent before the foe.

Instead of the helmet of salvation, we have wreathed our heads with the bay tree leaves of human culture; instead of the breastplate of righteousness, we have the popular standing with dominant forces; instead of girding our loins with the eternal truth of God, we are tied up with the cotton thread of higher criticism; instead of the shield of faith, we gaze to discern the tide of public opinion;

instead of our feet being shod with the preparation of the gospel until they glow with the power of God like burning brass in a furnace, we have the shoes of human endeavor; instead of the sword of the Spirit — the Word of God — flashing with the fire of the Holy Ghost, we lift the tinsel blade of human philosophy; instead of praying with all prayer and thus, by way of the Throne, throwing great shells into the enemy's camp sending consternation and rout, we are rolling balls in the allies of worldly ambition and gain.

This heresy has put its talons still deeper into the church's life. Education and art and philosophy are come to be regarded as the fundamental facts of Christian civilization. The great effort of leading churches in entering upon the 20th century is to have for equipment the monied endowments for these things. The effort for souls is an after thought.

I would strike at the center of the whole business. What the Church needs more than anything else — its all-embracing need — is "the promise of the Father" — the baptism with the Holy Ghost. I bring it nearer home. Whatever other churches, be they great or small, may need or ask, the one thing for us — far above all policy, all need, is that every one of us obey the definite, unequivocal command of Jesus to tarry at Jerusalem till the promise of the Father is secured.

SERMONS

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By

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Sermon 2

DIVINE POWER

TEXT — But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. — Acts 1:8

There is nothing so gentle, so humble, so unassuming as a Christian. There is nothing — divine paradox — so powerful as a Christian. Not of himself; he of himself, is but weakness. It is the Holy Ghost who is with and in him who bears all power. The Christian prays

"Now let me gain perfection's height,
Now let me into nothing fall!
As less than nothing in thy sight;
And feel that Christ is all in all."

The answer to that prayer, puts the excellency of power into earthen vessels. Every Christian is to be empowered. A weak Christian, a weak church, a weak gospel is a disgrace to Jesus Christ. This does not refer to weakness of body; neither to weakness of intellect; but to weakness of Spiritual life and power — weakness in faith, in that which is supernatural in salvation — not having that strength which God supplies through His eternal Son. To be trying to work out our own salvation in this sinful earth; to be trying to do His work without equipment, is to have defeat, and does not properly represent Him who says, "all power is given unto me ... go ye, therefore, and make Christians of all nations."

That this spectacle of defeat might not be seen in the moral universe, Jesus has commanded that all His disciples tarry at Jerusalem until they receive the promise of the Father. For this end this promise is given — "ye shall receive power."

It is evident that the baptism with the Holy Ghost is the conveyance into men and through men of the "all power" of Jesus Christ — the revelation of Him in the soul. All earth power is only the conditions for heaven power in this work. And the best conditions of manhood whether brought about by earthly or heavenly power form but a basis for the efficient, sufficient power of God in this work. All that possibly can be done for a man or woman in the way of education or intellectual development — the greatest cultivation of the best natural gifts, does not give power to live godly or to do the work of God.

The assaults of the devil upon a cultured mind may be different from those made upon an ignorant soul, but are likely to be just as effective. Human culture enthrones self. It may enlarge and polish its idol, but it is utterly unable to make a man fit or able to glorify God.

Neither does heavenly endowment — aside from the indwelling divine personality — confer upon men power, either for Christian living or service. To make a man guiltless and pure — which God has provided for — is not sufficient. If left thus he would be an easy prey to the devil and the world, and utterly unable to do the work of bringing men and women to God. We stand by faith, which is heart loyalty to God, and intense longing, trustful gazing into His face; but this would not be sufficient, only that God provides that, into such a heart, the divine presence comes, filling it with Himself. He keeps it. He acts in it and through it. It becomes His temple and His basis of operations, The Bible insists upon, and we must have holiness of heart, but we cannot trust in a holy heart; we can trust only in him who dwells within it.

Our work is not simply a matter of authority but of power. Jesus said, "all power" — "*exousia*," authority — "is given unto me; go." We are sent by Christ's authority. But authority is not enough. He now says, "power" — "*dunamis*" "ye shall receive." Not so much the power of possessing God, as the power of being possessed by Him.

It has been said "I seek the Holy Ghost for power, or for service." This to me, is an awful utterance. A forgiven prodigal does not presume to seek to possess control of his father and his wealth that he may have power, it is enough that he is fed and used by the father. Any thing more would be an impertinence. The only answer from heaven to a request for the possession of the Holy Ghost for service, must be that given to the same petition made by Simon the Sorcerer; that he had neither lot nor part in the matter.

Human nature at its best, under the blessed remedial power of the blood of Jesus, is but a dwelling place from which, or an avenue through which God acts. Of course the dwelling place or avenue is glorified by His presence, as the water in the river-bed makes its banks fresh with life and beauty. There must be conditions of power, but the conditions are utterly useless without the added power.

I was reading the other day, of a great steamer that crossed the Atlantic at the average speed of twenty-seven miles an hour. The power necessary to accomplish this great speed was generated by the use of a ton of coal every two minutes. What strength of machinery, what conditions for power! It was capable of bearing the almost unthinkable power, produced by the consumption of seven hundred and twenty tons of coal every twenty-four hours. And yet, of its self the great machinery was as powerless as a baby's arm. The power was a necessity. The conditions were a necessity.

A human soul can be nothing more than conditions. It may be clean and pure, it may be strong and perfect, but to be kept so and to be enabled to help others, to bring dead men to life — to open blind eyes, and unstop deaf ears — it must have the power of God.

This great, divine, most wonderful of all miracles, which the Church is sent to do is to make thoroughly bad men, good. Men who are God-hating, sin-loving, base, devilish in every element of their being, rebels against God — to make these men good is the work of the Church. And to do this — to bring them into loyalty to God, to change the will and yet not force it, to change the motive, remove the baseness and all elements of evil; to make them clean and pure as an angel, with a devotion to God that fills every part of the being with its passion, is something more than the completest human machinery can do. It is beyond the realm of human power. Suppose you proposed

to go to England in the steamer just alluded to. You go on board, and wait and wait but it fails to start. You inquire the cause "I have waited," you say, "day after day, a week now, and yet the steamer is just where it was when I came on board. Doesn't it propose to move, wasn't it made to go?" "Oh, yes;" is the reply, "but as yet it can not go, there is no coal in the bunkers, not a drop of water in the boilers. We can not go, there is no power." So too, must the Church of God have upon it the power of God to be made effective. There is something very peculiar about that vision of Ezekiel — "wheels within wheels." There were wings as well as wheels and fire as lighted lamps or torches moving up and down among the wheels When the vision moved the wheels moved but did not turn. The moving power was not generated, but was divine. Neither was the sound heard produced by the noise of machinery — not by the wheels but by the wings. It was as the noise of great waters — the voice of the Almighty. The power was upon and in the wheels but not from them. As with the wheels, so it is now with the Church, nothing will do but the conscious presence and glory of God, the sound of the Pentecost is heaven born and men are borne along by it and with it.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 3

THE OUTSTRETCHED HANDS

TEXT — And it came to pass, while He blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. — Luke 24:51

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. — Acts 1:9

That part of the life of Jesus which, recently, we have been reviewing, embraces a period of eleven months, and extends from Mt. Hermon to the Mt. of Olives — from that marvelous night of transfiguration to the more marvelous day of ascension.

It is true that we only have been able to touch this history here and there. In this part of His life He has wrought great miracles; not so many, it is true, as in His earlier ministry — they seemed to have faded out into the diviner life of his own abundant teaching, and the manifestation of Himself in atoning sacrifice — but still there have been revealed great acts of divine power upon the bodies of men or connected with the mysteries of dying and living. During these months there have been teachings, very vast and multiform; the close relationship between Jesus and the disciples has been manifested, and, in the atoning work, there has been the revelation of the infinite God and the perfect man, such as can be found no where else.

We have seen also the glory of the resurrection, and His manifestations to the disciples during the forty days of his subsequent tarrying in this world. We have now come to the moment of His departure.

He had led His disciples out to the mount of Olives over against Bethany. The great work was done; the great utterances made; the great commission given; the great promise sealed; the last great command laid upon their hearts. He looks into their faces His last good-bye. They look into His face in bewilderment — everything is so new, so surprising. They have tried to lift the veil a little, asking: "Wilt thou, at this time, restore the kingdom to Israel?" He had answered only, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." They cannot comprehend nor apprehend anything, they simply know that they behold Him, that He hath led them hither, and that here in this little nook on the hillside they linger. What is to come next? Of late such strange things have come to pass, and now the horizon of life has closed down upon them. They can see nothing but Him — He fills all their vision. No speech, no pen, no painter's brush can reproduce this scene — a goodly company, perhaps more than an hundred, waiting in this covert spot. Jesus in the midst of them, and they gazing, with loving hearts, upon him.

There are moments when the whole of life comes before the mind, like as the landscape is revealed in a night of blackness by a flash of lightning. At this hour, what memories must have swept the hearts of the disciples — the resurrection morning, the crucifixion, Gethsemane! Peter saw again that never-to-be forgotten night of his shame and sorrow. Mary's heart must have stirred with strange emotions. This marvelous One! How often had she pondered in her heart the mysteries of His birth and being. In sweeping vision she saw it all, and the sword that pierced her "own soul also." Mary Magdalene remembered the moment when, at his word, the evil spirits departed from her.

I do not know that Jesus uttered a word as he stood in the midst, while they gazed upon Him; but He lifted His hands in blessing and looked upon them unutterable things. He seems to grow a little taller, very soon it is evident that his feet do not touch the earth; His hands are clear above their heads; His feet are higher than their brows; He is higher than the old olive trees; His hands are still outstretched in blessing, but He is far above them. A cloud, white as the light, is about His brow; it envelopes Him. He is lost to sight. But there they stand gazing into heaven — lost to themselves and to all about them. Some one speaks; the spell is broken; they look; and behold, two strangers in white apparel, who say "Ye men of Galilee why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." And there they worshipped Him. To them and to us there are two things unmistakable — Jesus has gone away; and Jesus will return again in like manner — "Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him."

This morning I would make inquiry concerning one thing only — and that is, the import of His blessing — what is implied by His outstretched hands? Surely the way He went up from us is a way of blessing. His open hands tell of the gifts of His love. His attitude is the expression of His grace. This benediction of the extended hands is the expression of the fact that Jesus Christ, leading captivity captive, in His ascension, becomes the open fountain of life to men.

What are the gifts which the open, outstretched hands of our ascending Lord indicate? There is an expressive statement quoted by Paul from the sixty-eighth Psalm, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also" — evidently, blessings for the loyal, the true and also — for rebels.

We find a great generic statement by Paul in Rom. 6:23 — "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then the open hands of the ascending Christ mean, eternal life to every one who will accept Him. He who turns to Christ for rescue from sin, to that one Christ gives life — life from the dead.

Christ-saved men are a race from the dead touched by resurrection life — a race rescued from the mouth of hell. No wonder they are a marked people — a peculiar people, in the moral universe! If an angel from heaven should come and preach to the dead in our cemeteries, and here and there a grave would open, and its occupant — man, woman or child, as the case might be — should come forth, having peculiar affinity for each other — with close family relationships; they would be a marked people, with thoughts unearthly and tastes and desires born of another world. Men would point at them and say — "that is one of them." They would be called "the people of the new life"; "the people of the new way." And that is just the appellation given to the early Christians, they were

called the people of "the way." Christians are a peculiar race — in this world but not of it. Their citizenship is in heaven.

He has "received gifts for men" — "for the rebellious also" — "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Not only life, but gifts of life — I came that ye might have life and that ye might have it more abundantly. There are blessings that come through these outstretched hands to Christian life which, because of their very greatness, are unspeakable. The apostle, contemplating the great grace or favor and power of the redeemed people cried out "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." These open hands of our Lord, more especially represents the great blessing which is to come to His disciples; that of which He has just been talking to them and which is necessary for His work.

There is a gift, which men receive through the atonement, and by the provision of Jesus, which is so prominent, and so all embracing of the gifts which come down from God out of heaven, that we do not wonder that our Lord's thought was upon it in His last interview with His disciples, nor that the stretched-out, wounded hands especially betoken it. This gift is the gift of God. The gift of Himself. It is peculiarly the gift of prophecy; the gift of promise. Everything that goes before it is only preparatory. Patriarchal teaching; the law as a school-master for a distrustful people; the culmination of law and prophecy in John the Baptist; the incarnation of the Son of God, His death, resurrection, ascension, were all preparatory for the crowning, abiding glory of the Holy Ghost.

As in history, so also in personal experience. The awakening and wooing of the Spirit; the pardoning grace and converting power of God; the babyhood of Christian life; the feeding upon milk; the revelation of Christian truth and ideas in the heart; the voice of God calling unto holiness are all preparatory for the great gift of God through Jesus Christ, which is the gift of Himself. This is the import of the outstretched hands. They mean the coming of the Comforter whom God sends in Jesus' name.

There is a blessing which is "The" blessing of Christ Paul says to the Romans, "I know that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ." The question which must be rightly answered for Christian experience and conquest is — "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"

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Sermon 4

DAYS OF WAITING

TEXT — What shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
— Acts 2:37-38

The disciples went joyfully from the Mount of Olives, back to Jerusalem, and for days following, wherever they were, whether in the upper room or in the temple, "they were praising and blessing God." It was true Jesus was gone; they were not expecting Him to burst in upon them as he had been doing for the past forty days; they realized that He was "parted from them;" but the majesty of that scene of His ascension, and especially the attitude of his outstretched hands of blessing — a continual emblem of the blessing promised, filled them with hope and joy.

Those days of waiting were blessed days. Putting together the different statements in reference to them we learn something concerning how and where they were spent. It would seem there was a place of rendezvous where some of the apostles and disciples dwelt — a large upper room or kind of hall, capable of holding at least, one hundred and twenty people — some of the time was spent in this place. They were also, often in the temple. Luke in his gospel, says, they "were continually in the temple praising and blessing God."

Some of the time was spent in attending to business. Peter delivered an address upon the necessity of filling Judas' place, and a ballot was taken. Evidently they went to the temple with glad hearts. Here at this spot the Master had taught; just yonder He stood and cried: "If any man thirst, let Him come unto me and drink." What wonderful things had come to pass since then! As they looked upon the people about them, they thought "how little you dream of what we have felt and seen since He was here among us. True, things have occurred which much disturb you, but how ignorant you are of the glory which we have seen. Then, too, the things which we now feel, the promise of the things which are to come, and the glory which is to be revealed. The last blessing, the promise, the expectancy, fill our souls with almost unutterable joy; surely all men must see it."

They spent much time in prayer, talking with the Father about it all, and in supplication, covenanting themselves to walk in the way of the new glory which was to come, and praying God to speed the day and then —

It was Sunday morning — the Lord's day, the day of His resurrection — "the Sabbath after the Sabbath," the great day of the Pentecostal feast, fifty days after the fulfillment of that other command to wave the first sheaf, when Jesus arose, and now again the day after the Jewish Sabbath, when the loaves of the harvest were waved before the Lord. When that day had come, they were all of one

accord in one place. Jesus had said, "not many days;" evidently there was great expectancy that morning.

"Suddenly there was a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues."

And when it was noised abroad, the multitude came together — there is no question but that the Holy Ghost will advertise His presence; He will see to it that it is "noised abroad" — and they were confounded and amazed. Two facts seem to have been patent to them — that those who spoke were Galileans, and yet, that each one heard in his own mother-tongue. There was genuine inquiry; there was, also, mockery. The race of mockers is a tough race, as tenacious, almost, as the "old man" himself. They were here, and said: "These men are full of new wine." To this Peter made reply, giving an explanation of things, and was led on to preach a sermon, the outlines of which are given, "and with many other words did he testify and exhort."

When the people heard the message, they were awakened, and deeply convicted, — at least, many of the multitude were greatly moved. The expressive statement here used is, "pricked in their hearts;" and they said, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then came from the fire-kissed lips of Peter, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." We see here very clearly that a fire-baptized church is the basis for the conviction of the unsaved. It is evidently God's plan. The normal way of awakening and convicting the world is through the Church of God, made up of the children of God, baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Whatever was necessary to secure, in this world, a church of the children of God, prepared for the baptism with the Holy Ghost, God had undertaken to do. The movements of human history, of divine manifestations and revelations through forty centuries, crowned at last with the incarnation, the teaching, and the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, were to bring into existence this prepared people, and open the way for the glory which was to follow.

This preparation through four thousand years may seem to some a long exordium; but the plan of salvation is a very great affair. At its inception every voice in heaven was hushed while infinite thought was concentrated upon it. Then God began His work. He poured into human life streams of revelation and divine manifestation. He took up one agency after another, and finally He took one man and made a covenant with him and his seed, and as He could swear by none greater He swore by Himself that in this man and his seed should all the nations of earth be blessed. He persisted with divine tenacity with this family; putting it into every disciplinary condition — slavery, freedom, poverty, wealth, power, oppression, He made the world contributory in every way. In fulfillment of the obligation which He had taken upon Himself, He opened heaven in an incarnation and caused Shiloh to come. It seems stupendous to us that the Son of God should lay aside the glory which He had with the Father and take upon Himself the nature of man, that He should tread this earth in lowliness, and yet every step in divine power; that He should lay down His life and take it again. And yet this stupendous work was to make ready a few souls to receive the Holy Ghost. The preparation

was not too great; no divine plan was too intricate; no necessary time too long; no divine expenditure too great, to secure a few men and women, and bring them into condition to receive the Holy Ghost.

The point in human salvation was at last reached; God had at last succeeded in getting a proper human basis for His work upon the hearts of men.

What then is the divine order for the salvation of this world? First of all a Holy Ghost baptized church — sanctification, is not the end of things, nor the end aimed at in the divine economy, but is the condition for the bringing of things to pass.

We see at once in the context, the beginning of results. Men were pricked in their hearts. They were at once affected in the very center of their being by the divine touch.

Let us see how little human agency — notwithstanding its necessity — entered into this result. First, there was phenomena of divine manifestations. Second, there was explanation, through fire-baptized lips, of what had come to pass; and exhortation. Third, the people were pricked in their hearts and cried out, "What shall we do?"

Though the human agency bears relatively so small a part, yet the need of it handicaps divine sagacity and stays the flood of divine power. The great preparation was — and is — the securing of a people whose God is the Lord, a church of the children of God ready to receive the Holy Ghost.

The manifest presence of the Holy Ghost will always attract the attention of men. It was so on the day of Pentecost It "noised" itself "abroad" and the multitude came together. Many saw that it was of God; there was sufficient glory manifested to make clear His presence and man saw it and heard the testimony. Peter explained a little, and held up Jesus. The Holy Ghost did the work. If there had been no manifest presence of the Holy Ghost, there would have been nothing to explain; there would have been no glory to have transformed the cross; and no pierced hearts.

But some would not see the glory. There were irreverent scoffers who would not discern even the Holy Ghost.

That a man may get a glimpse of the vision and harden his heart is evident. Glory as bright as Pentecost was on Stephen's brow, and yet men, resisting the truth, hardened their hearts and were only angered. Men may see the glory and be blinded and hardened by it; men may see it, open wide their hearts and receive it, and be transformed and glorified.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 5

THE GREAT QUESTION

TEXT — Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? — Acts 2:37

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. — Acts 2:38

Conviction came upon the people, as a result of the falling of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples and their speaking forth "the wonderful works of God." The manifested power of God in holiness awoke sinners.

This is the royal way of God — the Holy Ghost falls upon believers, their hearts and filling their being; they tell out the mighty work, and sinners are convicted, and seek the kind of salvation which they see manifested. No sinner who really undertakes to seek God does it with the intention of a half way business.

A sinner may be drawn by an ornate ritualism, choice music, elegant forms, eloquent dissertation on ethical subjects. These may be interesting to him — may minister to his taste in an artistic or intellectual way — and he may serve himself with them, as he does with other things. They may entertain him in the same way, if not in the same measure, as the horse race or the theater, and he may consider the place where these things are found better for his wife and children. He thus may be willing to pay for the building of churches, and the support of pastors; hire singers and musicians. He may love to see his name among other reputable givers. It may be, indeed, pleasant for him to sit in an upholstered pew in a gilded room for an hour on the Sabbath and be entertained with choice music and the presentation of a beautiful ideal. He may like the euphonious expressions — "our church," "what a beautiful service," etc. But all this is but self-gratification and has no more to do with salvation than the theater to which he may go with the same motive.

But when a man is awakened — aroused to a sense of being and destiny — and somewhat realizes that he is a sinner — a rebel with the just condemnation of God upon him, and sees that Jesus Christ by His atoning sacrifice has made a way out of sin, and that there has come to him a possibility of holiness and eternal glory; when he realizes the darkness and bondage of sin, and sees the possibility of liberty and eternal life, and grounds his weapons and seeks God, he has no idea of anything less than the fullness of God. It is holiness and heaven for which he starts. The enemies of holiness are the Devil and devil-possessed men. Every man loyal to God longs for holiness and is ready to do anything for its obtainment.

In the absence of children of God, the Holy Ghost still puts forth effort to secure a people who will receive Him; and there is sometimes conviction directly in connection with conscious need and the word of God. But God's way, in this dispensation, of convicting sinners is through a people baptized with the Holy Ghost, ministering and testifying the word of the Lord in the power of the Spirit.

When people see the light of God through holy souls, and radiant faces, and are pricked in their hearts by the Spirit, the natural inquiry is, "What shall we do?" This is the great question: What shall a sinner do? A rebel in the moral universe of God, with guilt upon his soul and the results of sin in his own wrecked being — what shall he do? God's righteousness fills the universe. Is there any refuge for him? He cannot flee from the Divine Presence. If he takes the wings of the morning and flies to the uttermost parts of the earth God is there. Anywhere — heaven or hell — everywhere God's righteousness is condemnation and unquenchable fire. What shall he do?

When Jesus appeared to His disciples on the evening of the day of His resurrection, and "opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures," He said, "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, among all people." There is a refuge in this universe for the sinner. It is not in earth, or heaven, or hell. It is in the atoning blood of Christ. It is not a matter of locality, but of new conditions through the Blood.

What is the way to this refuge? The Holy Spirit said through Peter's lips "Repent." You have heard that word before. It may seem to you a hackneyed word; but in experience, you will find it a fresh new fact. "Repent;" that word dawns upon thy soul like the star of Bethlehem upon the vision of the Eastern Magi. It means to thee that a new King is born. It means to gather thy store and away — out of thy country — to pour thy treasure at His feet. "Repent;" it means that thou hast seen the vision of God. That cross which Constantine saw beneath the sun bearing the inscription — "*In hoc signo vinces*" thou hast seen, with its bleeding, dying victim bearing to you the inscription — "In this hope" — thou hast seen in it a new possibility; it may be, but dimly, but thou hast seen; and written beneath it was pardon, freedom, purity. Thou hast seen an opening beyond it, in the blue ether, a jeweled portal, and over it inscribed, "Life, abounding Life, eternal Life." Something of the vision has come to thee. Somehow with it has come a hatred of the chains and bondage of sin; with it has come impulse to flee away to the bosom of God and bury thyself in His mercy and love. There is despair of thyself in the old conditions, unutterable sorrow for them, but new hope. With that hope there is eternal renunciation of all rebellion and complete surrender to Jesus Christ.

Repentance means the forsaking of sin, the hating of what God hates, the loathing of our own iniquity, and the soul's deepest cry for mercy. This heart-cry does not go unanswered. "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Repentance insures forgiveness. It casts itself at Jesus' feet. It confesses and forsakes sin and the promise is sure. "Repent," was but the beginning of the command. Peter also said — "and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism here stands for something more than a form — whether the water be applied to the subject or the subject to the water. It means heart loyalty to Jesus Christ, and stands here as the emblem of a heart given to Him. It is not unlike the enlisted recruit, who has agreed to go to the war, the day for his swearing in has come, and he takes the oath.

The oath makes him no different in heart from what he was before — he was already given to the government in his heart, that is why he now takes the oath; but the oath is the outer token of what he is and what he is to be in heart fidelity and service to the government. In like manner baptism here stands for the sealing of God on the inner and outer life — wholly and forever His. In this faith and this eternal covenant before men, Peter said, "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This gift foretold by the prophets and explicitly promised by Jesus Christ, is the salvation of this dispensation. That it was never intended to be a narrow nor restricted blessing was shown when Peter said, — "The promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off."

This general promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost makes it of greatest importance that we know what it can do for us; know — as only spiritual blessings can be known — by experience.

This gift purifies the heart. That means the destruction of the body "of sin," the removal of the carnal mind. It means also something far other; it is more than house-cleaning. This gift is the gift of Himself. The house is cleaned, purified, in order to receive the Guest. He makes it ready for His abode. Jesus was asked the question — "How wilt thou manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world?" He answered: "If any man love me, he will keep my words and my Father will love him, and we will come unto Him and make our abode with Him." Through this gift all our need is supplied according to His riches in glory. The indwelling Holy Ghost will bring about our personal transfiguration. He makes the place of His abode all glorious. I see human faces that shine with a glory like the rainbow around the throne. We need not wonder at it. He has made man for His own abode.

Our lips are touched with fire. Because of this gift the voice of God is heard in this world in human speech and God speaks in no other way as He does through human lips. The divinest power manifested in this universe, is the love of God out of a pure heart, spoken through pure lips, melting the heart of a sinner and lifting a lost soul from the very brink of hell. God manifested in the flesh, speaking through lips of clay, is the password to victory.

This gift is also the translation glory.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 6

THE PRINCE OF LIFE

TEXT — The Prince of Life. — Acts 3:15

"The Prince of Life" — these four words are a great jewel in a rare setting. They form the central statement of one of the most magnificent utterances ever made. The word preceding them is, "KILLED." Words following are, "RAISED FROM THE DEAD." Going before them is all Christian history from the days of Abraham. Following them, is the fulfillment of all things until the coming again of our Lord.

The immediate cause of this magnificent utterance was the healing of an almost helpless cripple at one of the Temple gates. It was especially called forth by the astonishment expressed by the multitude as they gazed upon the scene which followed the healing. The lame man, who never before had walked, "held Peter and John" and leaped and shouted and praised God, and "all the people ... greatly wondered." But this utterance, itself, was a thousand times greater miracle than the healing of the cripple. The one brought strength to one man's body; the other, life to thousands of souls.

This miracle was not the work of a conjurer, neither was Peter, especially, an ankle-bone healer. The miracle power was in him, and the lesson is full of instruction, peculiarly so to us — we who go back to seek "the way" — the utterances, the power, the spirit of the early church. We can apprehend and lay hold of the lessons here taught, only, by recalling some of the facts in the preceding chapters of this book.

Pentecost had been but recent. Its fire, its tempest, its excitement, its noise, its drunkenness with the Spirit, were not far past. What was next to be expected?

We are sometimes ready to think that never again can anything be ordinary or commonplace; we can never again come down from the heavens and walk the earth in the old way. But nothing could be more ordinary than the opening of this chapter — two men walking together, up to the Temple, for the customary hour of prayer. They had not forgotten the time; neither had they reached a place where there was no need of Christian fellowship and worship. When the old sun-dial told the hour of evening sacrifice, Peter and John "went up together to the Temple." They had not lost their inspiration — the hallowed fire burned as fully in the quiet as in the storm.

When they reached the gate, Beautiful, of the Temple, they saw lying there, a beggar, a familiar form — he had been daily carried and laid there in order to ask alms of those who passed. Something about him strangely attracted the attention of Peter — a heart-hunger, a soul-poverty and longing — and he, with John, said to him, "Look on us."

The man responded with earnest gaze; "he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them." "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none" — the passers by who probably had paused a moment — attracted by Peter's words, moved on. "We had supposed," so we fancy they said, "that these men would have done something nice for the cripple; but they are only poverty-stricken tramps who have excited his expectations, only to say we have nothing to give you."

But no; Peter did not quite say that. There are other things in this universe beside silver and gold. A man may be rich without money; he may be poor with it. The community life had not enriched the apostles with silver and gold; but they had divine energy spiritual life, social sympathy, and hearts to bless the needy. The poverty of the apostles was in material things, and therefore no poverty at all. He is the poor man who has nothing but money; he is the rich man who has the love of God shed abroad in his heart and pours out its blessings through every avenue of his being. I have read of a Pope, as he looked upon the silver and gold — the gatherings of Peter's pence — which lay piled upon the table, saying to one of his cardinals, "As the representatives of St. Peter we can no longer say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' " "No," replied the cardinal; "neither can we any longer say, 'Rise up and walk.' "

The apostles had the presence and power of the Holy Ghost. They were not bankrupts. They had something to give. Peter said, "Such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk." The Holy Ghost was in them, and He got into the soul of the cripple and into his feet and ankle bones, and "he leaping up stood and walked and entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God;" and the ecstatic joy of this beggar gave the Holy Ghost the opportunity to work the mightier miracle of turning a great multitude to God.

Let us learn a few things. This cripple was, in many things, well surrounded. He lived in a favored land of beauty and blessing. Sky of deepest azure bent above him. A landscape of more than ordinary attractiveness met his gaze. Works of rarest art were all about him — he laid at the Beautiful gate of the magnificent Temple — and, more than all he was at the very entrance to the house of God. But none of these things availed him aught. It was the name of the Nazarene — that name and the power of the Holy Ghost which made him whole.

Beauty of scenery has little to do with moral and spiritual life. We may be as utterly degraded, as thoroughly selfish, in fair Southern California as in the most barren desert.

The surroundings of art will have little effect upon the spiritual life. Athens with its wealth of artistic beauty was as far removed from righteousness as is today any savage tribe in the heart of Africa. I know that abject poverty is peculiarly exposed to certain vices. I know that which also is peculiarly exposed to certain vices. A heart may be as far from God, as thoroughly in rebellion against Him, in a palace as in a hovel. A man may be as near hell on a bed of down as on a pile of straw. Living at the very door of the sanctuary of God, will of itself, avail nothing in spiritual life. There are many who live within a few minutes' walk of the house of God who never enter. Oceans of selfishness and mountains of prejudice lie between them and the house of the Lord.

This cripple was helpless. A great need was the healing of his body.

Many a coin had been thrown him. These had done something for him — supplied some need. But better, far better than all coins, was the healing touch of Jesus.

That which lies at the very root of the desperate need of our race is the fact that it is wicked, crippled, sin-cursed, wounded, ruined. The awful need of humanity can not be overstated. Living, breathing, struggling, dying — rising for a moment on the wave; uttering one great heart-cry; then going down beneath it to death. Our really ruined condition is enough to make the angels weep. It did draw the choking, blinding tears from the Son of God. He wept amid our graves. He wept with deeper wail over our sins — "How often would I have gathered thy children together!" But tears are not sufficient. Jesus wept; but Jerusalem went down in its sin. You may weep; but the crimson may abide.

This cripple needed the divine touch. Peter fixed his eye upon him, secured his attention, inspired his confidence, stirred his soul, pointed him to Jesus of Nazareth, laid hold of him, and lifted him up.

All that was good. It is just what has to be done now. We must get the eye, the ear of men; stir their souls by a look of love, by kindness and sympathy. We must inspire their confidence — they must see we are to be relied upon. We must point them to Jesus Christ. We must lay hold of them. We must lift them up. No standing off in this work; we have place in this army for those only who will make the most of their opportunities. Gentlemen of leisure, please move on.

I am in awful earnest. There are plenty of graveyards. If that is what you want let me urge you to select your lot, crawl into your grave and get out of the way.

Brethren, we have the pry under a thousand souls, and every one must lift! Lift every pound of strength! Lift till we see stars! Lift till we see beyond the stars! But, brethren, we may lift till every eye is strained from its socket and it will do no good, if Jesus of Nazareth walk not in the midst. When Peter lifted, almighty power wrought.

The miracle — the first after the baptism with the Holy Ghost — was wrought upon a beggar.

It means that the first service of the Holy Ghost baptized church is to the poor; that its ministry is to those who are lowest down; that its gifts are for those who need them most. As the Spirit was upon Jesus to preach the gospel to the poor, so His Spirit is upon His servants for the same purpose. As, when on earth, Jesus declared the crowning evidence of His divine mission to be that "The poor have the gospel preached to them"; so today the evidence of the presence of Jesus in our midst is that we bear the gospel, primarily, to the poor.

This must be genuine; it is more than sentiment; it can not be simulated, nor successfully imitated. It comes when a man loses his life and finds it. When the kernel of grain falls into the earth and dies, it brings forth,

The mendicant friars, the followers of St. Francis, were filled with a divine enthusiasm. They went to Great Britain and settled in the slums of the large towns and devoted themselves to preaching to

the poor. They speedily had a marvelous power over men. The early Methodists were like them. Our gospel goes directly to the bottom of society.

This poor beggar, saved, healed, filled with the blessing and power of the Lord, opened the way for salvation to many. This, too, is the Lord's way. One man helped, rescued, saved, the fire of God blazing forth in a new experience, is something like the fire which started in a shanty and burned up a city. Who shall tell where fire started in a human soul, lit by fire from the heart of Jesus, will ever stop? One thing I know, the Devil has not engines enough to put it out.

The crippled beggar, leaping and praising God, attracted the multitude. There is a spiritual utterance in the praise and hallelujahs of a man into whom and through whom God speaks, that is "noised abroad" and heard by human hearts; as, when the tongues of fire fell on the disciples in the upper room it was "noised" — "*phena*" — a sound as of a trumpet, rushing wings, chariots, thunders.

One thing we must remember, which, after all, may be the chief thing. That is the utterance which brought all this miracle of soul-saving about, "The Prince of Life." Peter and John stood facing the great multitude, while, as we have seen, the healed cripple held on to them and the marveling people gazed earnestly upon them to discover, if possible, the secret of this mighty work. Peter hastened to assure them that not any power of their own had wrought it — it was not in them or of them; but "The Prince of Life," who was dead and is alive forevermore. The marvel was, the mystery was, the glory was, that the Holy Ghost took that name, that uplifted name, and smote the hearts of men and gathered them to the bosom of God.

As Peter and John stood that day before the inquiring crowd, so, we, today stand before the vast work of saving men. We have nothing in nor of ourselves. No human utterance is anything. No human power can do anything. We stand in our weakness and helplessness simply to tell men the marvelous name, "THE PRINCE OF LIFE."

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 7

PERSECUTION

TEXT — By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? — Acts 4:7

The first persecution had dawned upon the infant church. A persecution that is likely never to die out, I see no reason to try to limit, either to a point of time or given place, that broad statement of St. Paul's, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

The thorn crown is still plaited. The scourge is still in the hand of public opinion. It behooves us to learn the lessons of this first persecution, that, in the fires through which we pass, we may be worthy followers of these men, and of Him who has called us. The cripple beggar at the gate Beautiful had been healed. The excitement caused by his shouts of praise had drawn together a great company in Solomon's porch. They were filled with amazement, and fixed their wondering gaze upon the apostles. Peter answered this gaze by so holding up to them "The Prince of Life" that many saw Him wounded, dying, dead; rising, risen; alive forevermore, mighty to deliver; and bowed their hearts to Him and felt His power to save.

In the midst of all this, "the priests, the captains of the Temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead." They hurried them into the temple prison, "for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed. That "howbeit" — be it as it may — is a wonderful word. God got in through the open doorway, the seed was sown and men believed — there was one result which priests and Sadducees could not affect. It is blessed to know, that, having preached the truth, sown the word; the Lord himself careth for the results. You may be hurried away to prison, or to the chamber of death, but God's finger is upon the word to prosper it whereunto it is sent. We are to seize the passing moment. Lay hold upon the opportunity. It was not far from that beggar's ankle-bones to the cross. No occurrence in life is far from Calvary. Nothing will come to you, my anointed brother, that is not within reach of the sacred spot. There is not a text in the Bible three feet away from Calvary. God has put nothing in His book that is not within easy reach of His dying Son. Nothing will come into your life that will not be under the outstretched hand on the cross. So in everything, through everything tell men of "The Prince of Life."

The next morning there was a large and hurried meeting of the Sanhedrin. "Annas, the high priest, Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest were gathered together at Jerusalem." Peter and John were brought and set in the midst of them. This court of inquiry began proceedings in a very strange way. It was an exhibition of the spirit of persecution as seen in all ages. They asked, "By what power or by what name have ye done this?" There should have been a statement of the crime for which they had been arrested. The healed man stood in the midst; he could have spoken for himself. The court admitted that a notable miracle had been done.

If it had been an outgrowth from themselves, it would have been glorious. They all would have exulted in it. But this was not the case, therefore it was challenged; those who did it were to be silenced; such unauthorized work must cease. The surface question of persecution is, "In what name, under what authority do you do these things?" No matter how good the work is, not being of us it must be suppressed.

This court was the Jewish church in council, and their utterance is the everlasting utterance of a spiritless church. A dead *ecclesia* always has been the worst enemy to spiritual life. It was the Jewish church that slew the prophets and murdered those who were sent unto them. Jesus said, "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." It was of her that He drew that awful indictment of the vineyard which a certain man had planted and let out to husbandmen, who beat and stoned his servants and slew his son.

The Christian church, so marvelously created by Christ himself, and sanctified and empowered by the Holy Ghost, soon lost her gifts and life, and, in a great establishment became as intolerant of spiritual religion as the old Jewish church had been. It was the church that burned Huss, Jerome and Savonarola, and sent Chrysostom to banishment and death. It was the church that burned Latimer and Ridley. It was the reformed church that drove Wesley and Whitefield out of its pulpits. Much of the church today has grown rich and worldly and earth seeking, and you need not wonder if real salvation finds in many places little sympathy and much opposition. It is only repeating the history of all the ages.

What is it that so regularly brings the Church — or has in the past — to persecute the truth which was its life? We all see that the church is of God. God called Abraham, and gave him the great truth of salvation by faith. He lived in that faith and it wrought in his life. It is a pleasant study to see how that deposit of Divine revelation found large fruitage in the life of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Caleb and Joshua, and a sad sight to see how it gradually faded out. Here and there one heard the Divine voice and walked in the light, but was persecuted and often slain. Then Jesus came, with the new wine of a more perfect revelation, creating new bottles to contain it. The whole Christian movement sprang out of the old conditions like a bird out of its shell, and yet was persecuted to the death by the old church. But finding new life in death, springing up out of its own ashes, rising out of its own blood, it conquered its way. There is something marvelously strange in the history of the Christian church. Persecuted, bleeding, dying, she draws strength as from her own blood, and, by the hand of God, puts on power in the midst of weakness. But, becoming strong, powerful, influential, she, in turn, becomes the oppressor and persecutes the same truth for which she had been persecuted. Its triumph becomes the ruin of its spiritual life, its strength becomes the strength of the oppressor. Thus, has history over and over again repeated itself.

The church today is as it has been. It requires far more courage to preach in many of the pulpits of the great churches, the whole gospel, than it does to preach doubt and heresy.

What are the underlying causes of all this? I verily believe that first among them is **WORLDLY WEALTH**. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God," were the words which Jesus wrote upon the back of the rich young ruler who "went away."

The only way to save a rich man is to make him poor. Every man who would have Jesus Christ, must have Him at the cost of all he possesses. Every dollar must be given to God, to be no more his than it is the beggar's in the street. He may retain, if God wills, the care and burden of administering it; but for every penny a strict account must be rendered to Him whose it is.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth" is just as much a command as "Thou shalt not steal." The fundamental cause of apostasy is disobedience to Christ in this matter. The church builds cozy places of meeting that are monuments to the pride of men. Denominations vie with denominations as to which shall have the most "attractive" church. Each succeeding one to be more "attractive" because it is more replete in artistic taste, more rich in furnishings; more "attractive," in that the sun pours its rays through more elaborately colored glass, that the pews are covered with softer cushions, and a grander and more costly organ discourses sweeter sounds. This is an enthronement of human taste, passion, pride. Rich men become more and more a necessity for it requires money to carry on these things.

The pulpit must be filled by men who can charm, interest, entertain. To this end institutions must be founded, endowments made, books written. Young men in preparation for the pulpit are taught such things as will enable them to instruct and entertain men along the way of human taste — music, art, politics, socialism, reform, education. In short, they must be men "well rounded out" and this is a costly affair.

Places should be provided that correspond with poverty of spirit, and with the purpose of saving the poor. Our costly buildings, our great organs, our hired singers, etc., ought to humiliate us. They are both the cause and the fruitage of our apostasy. When we cease to depend upon these things to reach the taste and pride of men and trust in the Holy Ghost to awaken and save, we will come back to God.

Earth's riches with show and pomp, even though they are baptized as a Christian church and used in connection with a form of so-called worship, are incompatible with the power of the salvation of God. It has been the accumulation of these which have undermined the religion of Jesus Christ in the Church in every age.

There are other things which go along with this, such as seeking honor — personal and ecclesiastical. Jesus said, "How can ye believe, receiving glory one from another, and do not seek that glory which only cometh from God." When men in the Church begin to seek place and honor in it, then begins its decay; and when the sons of a church seek for their own special denomination a popular position in the nation, with political and social recognition and honors, they set a trap for their own feet and for those who come after them.

These and similar things undermine the earnest study of the word of God, they do away with deep heart searchings; they drive from us that hunger and thirst after righteousness which impels us to cry out for the Holy Ghost to cleanse and fill; they bring in the chaff of worldliness, and put the Church in the position where it can not endure sound words, nor the searching, prophetic utterances which awaken and humble and bring back to God. The bearers of such messages are disposed of, if in an

age that will bear it, by fire and sword; if not, then by displacement, by frowning down, by bringing down upon them ecclesiastical power and influence.

"By what power, or by what name have ye done this? Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost —" Blessed is the man, who being persecuted, finds the everlasting arms under him and the heavenly anointing on his soul. This is sure to be the case with him who, faithful to God, stands against the powers over him and around about him. Jesus, himself, said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you."

The Holy Ghost is our defense, our power, our glory. He turns cowards into heroes; He touches stammering lips and they burn with a Divine eloquence; He gives a power which persecutors cannot withstand, and earth and hell know not what to do with; they are confounded, overwhelmed, and say to the man so empowered, "Sit down," and behold, an hundred have sprung to his side; they say we will side-track that man, and lo, the side track is turned into a through line and is teeming with a multitude; they put him in prison, and the dungeon flames with light; earthquake power shakes the place; the doors are opened and the jailer is born to God; they put him to death and a thousand spring out of his blood to tell the story.

"Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost said unto them —" The prisoner just from the cell, is at once transformed into a preacher of salvation. As he stands in he midst of the Sanhedrin to answer the questions put to him, you might have seen the light on his brow, the glow on his cheek, the fire in his eye, the flame that tipped his lips — he was filled with the Holy Ghost. "What name?" There is but one name. "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, and whom God raised from the dead even by Him." He turned to the man — "was this man made whole." He did not stop there, it would seem he never could stop, "neither," he continued, "is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Don't seek persecution. Don't fear it. It is only an incident. The one great thing is to be led with the Holy Ghost. Peter received Him in the upper room, on the day of Pentecost, in the purification of his heart and went straight on, until, crucified with his head downward, he swept through the gates to be forever with the Lord.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 8

DEATH AND LIFE

TEXT — Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death. — Rom 6:4

What I desire to present to you, is something of the life beyond the death of sin. Gethsemane has the same figurative meaning as Calvary, and, perhaps — as the physical man did not then die — even better illustrates that passion which fully gives up to God, and to which every disciple must come before the incoming of the Comforter.

Two questions I would ask: How fully can a man be saved? What are his subsequent possibilities? If God's word be true there is one thing from which men may be saved, and that is SIN. This probably embraces in some way, all from which we are saved. We are to be saved from servile fear; from worldliness; from the power of death; from the fruit of the flesh — but all these are so related to sin that they are disposed of by the settlement of the sin question. The question is, how fully may we be saved as the gift of God?

We may be saved from sinning. That fact is not a settled question with some, but it is with the Word of God. "He that committeth sin is of the Devil."

The thoughtless, careless opponent of righteousness says, Does not the Bible say, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us?" Passages of Scripture are often taken out of their connections and made to teach the very opposite of their true intent. This passage is one of them. Its real meaning is that if we say we have no sin — carnality — to be cleansed away, after our sins have been forgiven us, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

God commanded men to be holy; required purity in the inward parts, and promises most explicitly to take all impurity away — wash out its very stains and make whiter' than snow. God insists that men must have clean hands and pure hearts.

Clean hands: — God begins necessarily with sinners — men in the natural state are sinners, enemies, rebels against God — and His first utterance is a proclamation of amnesty. It is a statement of the attitude of God, who "so loved the world." It is an invitation to mercy. It is attended by the light of the Spirit showing the exceeding sinfulness of 'sin. It is graciously accompanied by enabling power to look to the uplifted Christ; to turn away from sin; to purpose in the heart to take up the cross and follow Jesus.

The penitent ceases to be a sinner in act, though he may be one in law. A traitor to his country heart-sick of treason, and longing to get back to the old flag he deter mines to do so, even if death

be the result, throws down his arms and surrenders. He is no longer a traitor in act, although he is still one in law. A man quits sinning when he seeks God.

God's amnesty proclamation is a promise of forgiveness, and when a man forsakes his sinning and surrenders his being to the King of Glory, He forgives him his sins and makes him a new creation, and he becomes the son of God, with a new, dominant life.

I would say such a man was well saved — saved from his sins and from sinning, unto perfect loyalty of purpose, and into a supremacy of love to God, with an experience of His forgiving grace. He is saved from hell. He is justified by the merit of the Blood. He is in the will of God, and in His special care and providence. He is so given up to God that the responsibility of his eternal salvation is with his advocate, "Jesus Christ, the righteous."

Does he need a further salvation from sin? Do the Scriptures teach and does human experience exemplify that there is a salvation from sin "deeper down and further back" than that received at conversion?

The Scriptures affirm that there remains in man, after conversion, what is called "the flesh," the "old man," "carnality," "wrath" — inherited predisposition — some call this predisposition, "tendency to evil," but it is evidently more; the apostle calls it "the body of sin."

After Jesus had pronounced upon His disciples, the eulogy "ye are not of the world," they had need of a further work for which he prayed, "sanctify them," which was evidently accomplished on the day of Pentecost, referring to which, Peter says, "that their hearts were purified by faith." Peter was commissioned to tell Cornelius — evidently a converted man — "words" whereby he was to be "saved," proving that Cornelius needed a further salvation than that received when his sins were pardoned.

Paul says, "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." He says again, "put ye off ... the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." And again, "ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man after the image of Him that created him." "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

To us the clear teaching of the Bible is, that a man quits sinning when he begins to repent; that God freely forgives the repentant sinner, and that the child of God goes with Jesus without the camp hearing His reproach and, putting his arms of faith about the will of God, believes God and the old man is crucified by the power of God — the inherited fountain of evil is taken away, and the new man Christ Jesus becomes the fountain of life. This brings an end to all sin in the soul. It is what David meant when he said, "Wash me and shall be whiter than snow!" What Paul meant when he said, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." He who is thus washed in the blood of the Lamb is made every whit clean; he is without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; the life in him is not his own life, but Christ in him. "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

But he does need a further salvation from many other things; his ignorance — lack of skilled conformity to heavy patterns — and from his limitations or shortcomings because of the results of old conditions. He is like a king's son who was captured and carried away to live among wild and uncivilized races, but who was at last recaptured and brought home; he is full of gladness and love, yet, in his ignorance, liable to offend in many ways against the new conditions into which he has come. Thus every Christian will always have need to say, "forgive me my trespasses."

He needs a salvation — of abounding grace that will keep every element of mind and body in its normal condition as the agent and instrument of Jesus Christ.

The appetites of the body are God created — right and good — and are to be held in proper poise and condition by the gracious anointings with the Holy Ghost.

The attributes of the mind are, likewise, God created and must be held in balance by the same divine Spirit. Some of them will need great, direct help from the Holy Ghost, and it is necessary for our good that we realize this help and receive it in answer to prayer.

The manhood of Jesus was pure, but, in Gethsemane, He looked into the awful cyclone of suffering and in answer to prayer His human heart was strengthened. Paul evidently needed peculiar strengthening when, during that trial before Nero "no man stood with" him; but he tells us, "the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." Luther, in his defense before that great Diet at Worms, needed and received peculiar help from the hand of God.

In the salvation of Jesus Christ there is supply for us up to the measure of our need, which is to be received by faith from time to time.

After the baptism with the Holy Ghost there is that advancement — that growth, that changing from glory to glory — that being consumed by the divine Presence — that increasing spiritual luster — to which I desire to call attention; and yet, I confess, that I scarcely know how to do it in a way that will be sufficiently clear to be laid hold upon.

A sanctified man is at the bottom of the ladder. He is but a child — a clean child. He is now to learn; to grow; to rise; to be divinely enlarged and transformed. The Christ in him is to make new and complete channels in and through every part of his being — pouring the stream of heaven through his thinking, living, devotement and faith. The divine battery — His manifest presence — is to be enlarged. The truth of God is to be revealed, and poured through the soul and lips, with holy fire and divine unction, more and more abundantly. I am convinced that a lack of the conception of these facts has been the death warrant to many a soul. A lack of person realization of the fact that I, myself, must stir myself up has brought wreck and ruin to many. God will stir up him who stirs up himself, until he comes unto the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ."

How Christ loved! How fearless, how righteous He was! What a message He had to men — at the table, by the wayside, to the sick in the halls of wealth, in the cottages of poverty — always, everywhere; it was eternal righteousness and love! And this Christ is to live in us, pouring His life

through every avenue of our being, therefore — to obtain this gift — "we are buried with Him by baptism unto death."

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 9

THAT GREAT AND NOTABLE DAY

TEXT — The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: — Acts 2:20

Every day of a human life is a great fact. But there comes, or may come a time, called a day; that rises so far above all other days as to be the day.

There are several notable days connected with human life. Three great days are spoken of — birth, marriage, death. The birthday can scarcely be compared with any other — probably none of these three days can be; each is unique. The birthday, so far as the individual is concerned, is the beginning of things and makes all things possible. But for birth there would be no personal life.

Marriage has its own peculiar place, in forming life and shaping destiny. The day of death is the portal of the unseen and it also, has incomparable relationships.

The Christian thinker, regarding the greatness of days, thinks, first, of the day of a man's conversion, and, so far as the greatness of the work wrought is concerned, it is a day of greatest import. But the day here spoken of is an epoch, also an era, and a condition — a continued condition.

It has a relation to conversion, described by Peter when he says "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the daystar arise in your hearts." Conversion is from darkness to light; as a lamp let down into the darkness, but it is not day — but there is an experience which is perfect day. It is an era — an unending era. A life where the sun has risen and goes not down. When the soul feels the fact of which Isaiah prophesied when he said "thy sun shall no more go down." This experience the prophet Joel declared and Peter, here, under the illumination of the Holy Ghost denotes and applies, and tells us that it is the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

The baptism with the Holy Ghost by Jesus Christ is not only an era in the history of redemption, but is an era in each heart. The salvation of each soul is the reliving of the history of redemption. There is utter darkness; there is the voice of mercy and help; then the cry to God and self surrenders; and the Voice of pardon and the light of God in a newly imparted life. There is much of the shadowing of carnality, but light sufficient to guide the way, step by step, to the dawn and the rising sun, which scatters all shadows and drives away all darkness. This experience is emphatically "the day of the Lord." He is its sun. its life, its glory. There is given here a brief, but comparatively full statement of the great facts connected with this experience — not only the work itself, but that which goes immediately before it, and that which follows. The prophet saw the great facts. He saw their

appearance in the moral heavens and in the earth, and tells us what the crowning facts are — Blood, Fire, Vapor, (pillars) of Smoke.

This day could not come without blood. The darkness and shadows which are to be removed are the darkness and shadows of sin, and without blood sin can not be put away. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. The cleansing is, also, by blood. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us." Christ gave Himself to the Church to cleanse it just as much as He gave Himself for sinners for redemption. "The Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world." It is the Lamb, the sacrifice, the poured out blood, which makes the way of holiness possible. We enter "the holiest by the blood of Jesus." It is His blood that cleanseth us from all sin.

The first thing the pre-eminent thing, in the moral heavens which the prophet saw was Blood — atoning Blood, cleansing Blood, sprinkled (applied) Blood.

Our gospel is primarily the Gospel of Blood. The salvation of men is the breaking of the heart of eternal Love, and the blood of that Infinite heart has flowed in the gift of His Son a ransom for us. So we do not wonder that the first fact of prophetic vision was blood.

The second fact was Fire. Two facts are predicated, by divine revelation, of God — Love and Fire — "God is Love," "God is Fire." Of course these two are one, and express the same fact or personality — possibly in different attitudes.

There is no other physical fact, so far as we see, which so represents the great moral or spiritual fact of love as does the fact of fire, and from its use in the Scriptures it is evident that it is the Infinite personal love in that peculiar activity of divine personality — the cleansing of a human soul from sin.

I recall three places in the Word where God is referred to as fire. First: Isaiah 33:14-15 — "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions," etc; clearly showing that those who are given to God in a complete consecration, are made holy and abide the glory of the Divine presence.

Second: Matthew 3:11 — Where John the Baptist prophesies of the Christ and says. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire" — evidently an expression of personality and of the peculiar relation of that personality to the human soul in cleansing it from all sin, and of the indwelling of that personality in the soul.

Third: — Hebrews 12:29 — "For our God is a consuming fire" — which being taken in connection with that which precedes it in the chapter, clearly refers to the personal presence of God making men holy.

So when it is here said that the second great fact of prophetic vision was fire, it expresses the manifest active presence of God making men holy. The third great fact which the prophet saw was "Vapor of Smoke," or to quote literally "Pillars of Smoke."

When the Children of Israel were in the wilderness the one thing which marked their place and position — that which was their guide, shelter and protection was the pillar of cloud. Now the prophet sees for the Church in the last days — or attending it, phenomena which he calls "Pillars of Smoke." It is not now coming down from the skies; it is not from the clouds of heaven — not pillars of cloud. It is not primarily fire, but that which comes from and is the result fire. It manifests the presence of fire, and rises in the sight of the world, and, evidently, is the testimony of the cleansed people in whom God dwells.

The three great facts of the last days are Blood, Fire, Smoke.

Two things precede the experience connected with these three great facts and are of vast import — first: the sun is turned into darkness; second: the moon is turned into blood.

This imagery expresses a great experience. Its meaning is clearly seen. The sun is the center of the solar system and the planets revolve around it. Perhaps neither the prophet Joel nor the apostle Peter knew this, but the Holy Ghost did.

Every human being in his natural state has his center, around which he revolves and that center is the idealized self. This sun may seem to take as many different forms as there are persons, but it is always the same sun — the self and conditions of self. Thus one revolves about a self surrounded by wealth, another pleasure, another intellectual attainments, another friendships, another social position or honor, etc., a new center is established and he revolves in the new orbit.

When a man is converted this idealized self still attracts and has its hold upon the soul; Christ is the center of his life, and he describes a new circle; but soon his being feels the attraction of the old center. He is drawn from his orbit by the idealized self, and his experience becomes what might be called eccentric. It is evident that something attracted contrary to Jesus Christ. He would be true to the Lord and love Him with all his heart, and lo, soon, he is on an oblique line, mightily under the influence of that old idealized self, and wealth, or art or culture or ease. Now the statement is that what has been the sun of the life is to be blotted out — "turned into darkness." In other words, the idealized self is to cease to be. I am no longer to regard self under the old idealizations. My very conception of self as being rich, or cultured or popular is to be blotted out. For this the blood was shed, for this the fire has come and I lose my life — my idealized self. What am I then to be? I am to be lost in Christ. The life which I now live is not I, but Christ in me.

We not only know no other man after the flesh, but we know not ourselves after the flesh, and in order to do this the old center is to be blotted out.

The moon is also to be turned into blood. The moon is that which revolves around the planet and is held in its grasp of influence. There is that which we hold in our hands, of possession and influence, these are to be no longer held as unto ourselves or so as to revolve around ourselves; they are to be melted into our life's devotement unto Jesus Christ. The blood is intrinsically the life, and whatever we possess and all our influence is to be melted into special devotement unto Him. Thus the moon is turned into blood. These are the things which precede "The great and notable day of the

Lord." But no sooner are these conditions complied with, than the fire — the second great fact of the vision — falls in power and glory upon the soul. The Holy Ghost has come to abide.

Then follows the third fact of the vision — Pillars of Smoke. These are the clear, potent testimony of the fire baptized-soul. Thus the world knows, and through it and in connection with it the Holy Ghost works. The Pillars of Smoke are related to the visions of the young men; the dreams of the old men, and to the prophesying of "sons and daughters" "servants and hand maidens."

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 10 ANNIVERSARY

TEXT — Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. — 2 Tim 2:3

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: — 2 Cor 10:3

Six years ago today, through the providences of God, we first gathered together as a little band. And at this hour we lift our hearts to Him in grateful remembrance and offer special praise and thanksgiving for His unnumbered mercies and all the blessings of His grace.

Of all the years these have been the richest in heavenly benediction and the most fruitful in service. Looking back over them and into our own souls we can but say, "What hath God wrought?" I am lost in wonder, love and praise!

These have been years of hard earnest toil; thank God, we love to toil for Him. They have been years of conflict; thank God, these conflicts have been ways of victory. They have brought us sorrow and bereavement; but His hand has wiped away our tears, and lifted up the everlasting gates for the chariots of the redeemed.

This morning we linger for a moment with our eyes toward the past, simply to strengthen our hearts for the future; like as Israel of old who gathered new inspiration by looking backward and singing of divided seas, astonished rivers, moving mountains and heavenly manna. Surely Israel never saw, more plainly the hand of God, in the opening up of the way and guidance than we have seen it.

To tell of His marvelous dealings would more than fill the hour. They are not far removed; this morning, they hang like the overshadowing branches of the tree of life.

My message, therefore, is not of the past, but of the present and future. It is my especial desire that we gather our robes about us, and buckle the heavenly armour more closely, in order that, with renewed strength, we may press the battle of the Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that we may more fully see the glory of His conquering arm, and that the strength and valor of the past may be greatly re-enforced from heaven.

These texts which I have taken today sound afresh the bugle notes of war. The first fact here, pressed upon us, is that the Lord Jesus Christ hath chosen us to be soldiers. He hath called us to special service and in so doing has placed upon us peculiar duties and honors.

I know we are but a small company of the great army of our King, but I would not forget that we are picked men on special duty. We are a small detached force, called by God for special and most important work. We are especially commissioned to uphold the banner of our Lord in this southwest land, and to charge the enemy with the power of the blood. Our work for the time may be comparatively local, but your flashing blades have been seen throughout the land, and if faithful the light of your spears will reach to the ends of the earth.

You are called to lift high the banner of holiness, to preach the blessing of Christ and lead men and women into its fullness; to do this, unencumbered by the hindrances which come to most who would seek the same ends, God has cut us loose from old traditions and heavy camp equipage, and armed us for the fight.

It is not too much to say that every true soldier loves the detached service. A regiment or company chosen to do a particular work because of its difficulties and dangers, and the need of heroism to do it, regard it as a matter of honor. Undying honor has been won in this way. I remember reading that in that fearful battle of Lookout Mountain, a body of men were seen storming a battery, the difficulties and dangers of which were so great that the general commanding, in amazement, asked of the brigade commander, if he had ordered that charge. "No," replied the commander, "they are just doing it themselves."

Our Commander orders difficult assaults. The work to be done demands the greatest heroism.

It is no easy thing to establish and open up the avenues of a new fountain of power. I believe every general in the field, six years ago, prophesied early defeat and overthrow. And so it must surely have been, had not God been with us to give us the victory. I speak of this to say that we are soldiers called out, volunteers, for most difficult, arduous and glorious work.

What I say has no bearing upon any other department of God's work; but He has called us to most heroic service. We are to be a band like Gideon's. God said in choosing us, if there be any attractions that can draw you away, go now. If old associations or tastes or ease or respectability are likely to affect you, you are not really of this company. If you do not so hear the call of God that you cannot well be anywhere else you have not fully the spirit of this work. It is not simply a call by a preference for a church. It is the call of God to proclaim holiness, without compromise or let or hindrance.

This work means being filled with an intensity and enthusiasm that overmasters natural tastes, desires and conveniences; that does not wait to drink, but lifts a little water in the hand to wet the lips while running to execute the work commissioned. The soldiers, here enlisted, must be able to pronounce the "h" in "*shibboleth*." They must be able to say "holiness" and "sanctification." There must be no jar in their testimony to the cleansing Blood. They must break their pitchers and shout for God and victory. God calls for unentangled soldiers, who have the one great passion to please Him who has called them.

The equipment is of God. Our weapons are not carnal nor of the flesh. We have neither expectancy or hope from worldly sources and powers. We are not expecting that any earthly thing

will break the chrysalis of worldliness and pierce the heart of sin. We are not looking for mammoth structures or human eloquence or charm of music to move men to the fountain of cleansing.

Our weapons are of God and are mighty through Him. The soldier of Calvary and Pentecost is clothed upon. On his brow is the helmet of salvation. What he knows is by personal experience, and is mightier than all argument. The thoughts and allurements of earth here lose their charm. Vain are the attacks of Satan and men upon the brow of him who has the Holy Ghost. He wears the breastplate of righteousness which no steel of the enemy can pierce — his heart is covered and made holy by the righteousness of Jesus Christ. His loins are girt about and made strong by the truth of God. His feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Like his Masters, his feet are as fine brass burning in a furnace, emblem of power to tread down the foe and march on to victory. He has the shield of faith, quenching every dart of the enemy, and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. He has the howitzer of prayer, which by way of the Throne, sends great shells into the ranks of the enemy, causing consternation to men and devils.

The power is not in the weapons; it is of God. Our hope is in God. He is our strength. He uses the weak things and things that are not to accomplish magnificent purposes.

We are commissioned to storm the strongholds and bring them into captivity to Jesus Christ. There are no strongholds like a human soul. It is not difficult work to parade. Great gatherings of professors, like the recent convention at San Francisco, mean a good deal of work, but not difficult work. It is not a great task to build entrenchments and fortifications churches, colleges and universities are all within the power of men to build. But to convert men, to turn then front the power of Satan unto God, can only come by the power of God through His own weapons. The great body of the army is undertaking to do what is humanly possible and comparatively easy — like McClellan who saw that he could dig ditches and build entrenchments, but did not see how he could get on to Richmond; only fighting could take him there. The army may dig and march, but the getting fire down from heaven and the overthrow of the prophets of Baal is by the power of God.

The greatness of this conquest is seen in the completeness of the victory. The triumph is over imaginations or reasonings and the bringing of all thought into captivity to Christ. The figure here used is that of an enemy who is defeated in the field and the city taken. He however retires into the citadel and begins a fresh attack; but from this place he is again assaulted, overthrown and captured.

It is a magnificent victory when the divine Christ thunders at the gates of a human soul, with the law of righteousness, until the ruler — Will — gives up the key, opens the gates and admits the Mighty to Save. The black banner is pulled down, and the cross is reared. The city is under new government; there are new laws, new life, new joys, new plenty. But the rebels have retreated to the citadel and the armed force have possession of it. The city is loyal, but nothing is safe so long as the citadel is held by the enemy. It must be stormed, taken, destroyed. As the Bastille was taken, torn down, and destroyed. so, this citadel of evil must be captured and annihilated. In order to this conquest, the city itself must be allied to the Conqueror in other words, the life must be given up to Jesus Christ.

The destruction of the citadel is an expensive affair, and can only be done by giving up the city, freely, to the Conqueror. When the city was taken the king — Will — was not dethroned. The Conqueror came in and continued to abide, because the king willed it so. But when he saw that the destruction of the citadel was imperative, he turned over the whole city to the Conqueror; every power and resource of it was put into His hands, with the earnest cry — "destroy the citadel!" Jacob's sanctification stands out in history to illustrate this way. He wrestled with the man or angel — the angel of the covenant. Jacob wanted deliverance. He had taken steps to make things right with Esau. He was loyal to God, but there was in him a great amount of self-life, reasonings, thoughts that were self-contained and self-centered, upon which he depended and in which he trusted. His own shrewdness, sharpness, craftiness, cunning. These were steeped in carnality, and their outcome was sometimes crookedness. He struggled hard to meet the conditions and receive the blessing he needed. Finally the Angel of the Covenant was about to depart.

Jacob did not pay the price; was not ready for the conditions, and the angel said "let me go." But he clung to him in prayer — "Thou must not go — I yield, I yield, I will hold out no more."

"In vain thou strugglest to get free,
I never will unloose my hold;
Art thou the man that died for me?
The secret of thy love unfold;
Struggling, I will not let thee go
Till I thy name thy nature know."

Then the angel said, "What is thy name? — Look into thine own being; see and tell me the depths of thy need? And he answered, "My name is Jacob" — the crooked perversity of my being I bring to thee. And the angel said, "Thy name shall no more be Jacob, but Israel — the Prince of God." His nature cleansed; his name changed.

This conquest is of the thought-life — the reasonings. It is made in the depth of our being. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." This is the depth of being, the fountain of life. Here it is that man's nature is really found, that his greatness is really seen. Here it is that we see that he was made in the divine likeness, and, though in wreck and ruin, how wonderful he is.

The grandeur of man is seen in the fact that he is a thinking, reasoning being. In this he is like God. God is the great thinker; man, too, is a thinker. How incomparably great is a creature who thinks. Without thought a created being is not a man. Thought is human life, character, destiny. Man as a thinker yields to God before he is converted or born again. But there are thoughts in the deepest recesses of being which are not loyal even to the will, and though the will is given to God this thought life seeks its own way.

Nothing will do for us but the capturing of the citadel and the bringing of every thought into captivity to Christ.

How does Christ, with our co-operation, propose to do this?

1st. By great limitations.

2nd. By ensphering.

3rd. By the Blood, making the fountains of life pure and holy and filling the thought with divine personality.

Thought may not be limited by a dogma, nor by authority; the rack, the thumbscrew, prison walls, or death itself, cannot limit it; it leaps over all these to be free; but it can be limited by facts. Thought is to be limited by experience. It is to be ensphered by divine truth and Christian testimony, and holy environments; until in answer to prayer the very fountains are cleansed and filled with the presence of Jesus Christ.

ENDNOTE

The sermon preached at the First church of the Nazarene, Oct. 6th, 1901, it being the sixth anniversary of the first gathering of people that, a few weeks later, God called to organize the Church of the Nazarene.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 11

THE MIND OF CHRIST IN US

TEXT — Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: — Phil 2:5

But we have the mind of Christ. — 1 Cor 2:16

This is a command and an experience. The mind is the whole spiritual nature. It embraces, alike, the intellectual and moral faculties. It thinks, remembers, reasons, judges, wills. It is the abode of the passions, feelings, sentiments. It is here that jealousy, pride, anger, hatred burrow. It is here that love builds her temple, and meekness and gentleness abide.

It is the mind that is corrupted and defiled. We read in the Word, of "corrupt" and even "reprobate" minds.

It is the mind that is renewed by the Holy Ghost — "be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Mind in different individuals may be so made up of the same elements and conditions that they are in some sense the same — as water in two jars is the same, though not the same. We say the two jars are filled with the same thing; so we say we are of the same mind. Therefore these marvelous utterances — "Let this mind be in you," and "We have the mind of Christ."

The mind is not only the measure, but the quality of the man. The mind is the measure of his greatness, but its quality decides its value.

"Let this mind be in you." We measure the excellence of manhood by the measure of the Christ. As we measure gold by carats, so we measure manhood by Christ.

When I study the mind of Jesus Christ until I can somewhat understand Him, until, at least I see a little of the flashing glory of His being; then study human nature and see how base its quality; and consider that the human mind must be like His mind — indeed like it as water is like water — it seems hopeless. It is only in remembering the fact that the human mind is the subject of remedial grace that it can be born again; that it is the subject of the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, that I can hope.

Let us study a little the mind Christ as revealed in His life. The first thing which impresses me is that the mind of Christ strangely affects the appearance of that which it contemplates.

The telescope is so made that the object it reveals is first taken into its bosom. The object is not looked upon in its own place, but is seen in the mirror which lies in the bosom of the instrument. So the mind takes the object into itself that is why the same thing looks so different to different people. The object looked upon is the same, but in each mind is a personal mirror and the same thing looks different in different mirrors.

Man looks altogether different in the mirror of the Christ mind. His necessities and the possibilities of being and destiny are uncovered and brought to view as no where else. Christ gives us a photograph of man's real being from the mirror of His own mind, and we are permitted to see something of His greatness as a moral agent; his whole intellectual and moral being throbbing with immortality, with a possibility in himself of rising to the very acme of created beings, by choosing divine life and glory, becoming through his own volition a holy intelligence near the throne. Here, in the mind of Christ, you see that nothing counts but free volition God-ward — forever given up to Him, freely giving to Him, fully trusting Him. Nothing else can be of value in him or to him, and, with these in him, nothing can hinder his upward flight.

Sin committed or inherited can not hinder, for here is an enswathement of atoning blood. Weakness can not hinder, for here are the everlasting arms. Poverty can not hinder, for here is the divine alchemy which turns a unit into millions. Wealth can not hinder, for here is the transforming power that turns which into welcoming friends. I thank God for this photograph, but there is something better — when I, through the renewal and sanctification of my mind and His own indwelling, have His mind, I see as He sees; I have the same vision of a human being; man stands out before me in his undying glory and infinite possibilities, I have the mind of Christ.

The mind of Christ has the force of enthusiasm. The opinion that many had of Him in the days of His incarnation that He was beside Himself, that He had a devil, and was mad, was not without some foundation. There was something about Him which they did not see, nor comprehend; this uncomprehended something which they so misinterpreted was a divine enthusiasm — a passion for God, for the will of God, for man, for the salvation of men. A passion to give Himself that God might be known and loved and that man might be saved and love.

He was an enthusiast. One great passion filled His mind and dominated His being and life. There was a deep, all pervading current, which, when it found expression was I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened until it be accomplished. There was one fact, toward which He ever pressed — the Cross and the salvation glory which lay beyond.

Whenever He touched men it was the touch of this passion. If He touched blinded eyes it was that men might see God. If He healed their bodies, it was that they might know Him who saves to the uttermost. If He raised men from the dead it was that they might learn the way of life, and the life more abundant. These things were done that men might believe and believing, have life through His name. Did He teach, His words were the beatitudes of the unearthly — the open portal to the heavenly glory. How quickly, from every point, He makes His way to the central fact! A am the true Shepherd." "I am the living bread which comes down from heaven."

His mind had the force of the enthusiasm of suffering. It was dominated by Calvary. That was not the end but that was the objective point, everything centered there, at that place was to be opened the new fountain. There is an intensity, a passion in a soul that suffers that is perhaps found in no other; especially where the way of suffering is chosen for a purpose and is essential to it. Look upon Jesus as he approaches Calvary. See how the fire of His enthusiasm burns more and more. "What shall I say? Let this cup pass from me? For this cause came I to this hour. Father glorify thy name." There may be shrinking from the pain, but the eternities are behind me, the eternities are before me, I am here for this hour — let the awful conflict come. See Him in Gethsemane as the waves of agony roll over Him and hear Him say — "If this cup may not pass except I drink it, thy will be done." See the intensity of His passion on the cross. As the nails are driven He says "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." As the awful darkness gathers and the earth trembles and the graves open hear Him cry *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.*" Here is a soul that can suffer.

Let this mind of Christ be also in you — a mind that has the force of enthusiasm, a force of intensity, a passion of awful earnestness. The mind of Christ in us is an endowment. It comes by the Holy Ghost baptism. You may see Calvary, and know what it is to have earthly things sink out of sight and perish; to feel the treasures dying out of your arms, and you dying to yourself until you are crucified to the world and the world to you. And you may know that the resurrection life has come into you — and that He fills you with His abundant life.

May I not wait to say, that all things with us are too hallow. Our seeking is too formal — often perfunctory, our crying to God scarcely a cry; our whole effort is often for a little comfort or a little relief. Men say, after crying to God I don't feel any better." Oh, brothers, sisters, we need a new vision — we need to see God, to be disrobed of sin, to be clothed upon from our home in heaven, not only with the white robes of purity but with the mind of Christ."

His mind was surrounded by and permeated with a supernatural atmosphere. It was fragrant with the divine presence. When a child, looking up into His mother's face, He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" In the city and the multitude He stopped to say "I and my Father are one." Walking by Bethesda, the people waiting about Him, He lingers to say "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Standing by the open grave He lifted His eyes to heaven and said "Father I know that thou hearest me always." When thousands were to be fed He multiplied the five little barley loaves by the touch of His prayer. Going up into the Mountain to pray He turned the midnight into heavenly light by the manifested glory of God through His praying.

There is one great fact which is the context of this command. It is divine humility, of which the mind of Christ is a peculiar revelation — the humility of the Son of God. He was with the Father, equal with the Father. But, leaving the throne, laying aside the glory, He made Himself of no reputation, took upon Himself the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of man and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him.

The mind of Christ is the new way to glory — the way of humiliation, of shame, of burden bearing, of suffering, making ones' self of no reputation. Going with Christ without the camp — bearing His reproach — where He sanctifies the people with His own blood. Choosing affliction and

persecution and death and the holiness of Jesus Christ through His blood. Counting all earth with its honors and riches as but dung that we may win Christ and know Him in the fellowship of His sufferings and the power of His resurrection. "Let this mind be in you." "We have the mind of Christ."

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 12

"LO, I COME."

TEXT — Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. — Psa. 40:6-8

The best comment on these words is to be found in the book of Hebrews. The writer, having quoted them, says "When He said sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law. Then said He, lo I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

When the sun rises the candles are put out. Sacrifices and offerings were of no value. Although oft repeated they had no power; only as a type did they help men to look away to something better. As a candle is a very small prophecy of sunrise, so these sacrifices may have foretold, dimly, the Lamb slain in the midst of the Throne — yet to be revealed. In them was no merit, nor any thing pleasing to God; but by them He could teach His child a little and lead him along to real verities.

This statement in the 40th Psalm is quoted, as I have read, by the author of the Hebrews as a prophetic utterance of Christ; indeed he makes Christ, himself, the author of these words — "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I lo, I come ... I delight to do thy will O my God."

The Old Testament is one side of the great arch of revealed truth; the New Testament is the other; the key stone is Jesus Christ. The whole utterance of the Old Testament is that of the coming Christ. There are many local conditions and personal things — the staging as it goes up — but the arch itself, the real utterance, is the coming Christ. The utterance of the New Testament is that the Christ is come. Upon it all is plainly written — "He abideth forever."

The late Joseph Cook in his last Boston lecture said, "Once I was told by an engineer who had thrown a bridge over one of the rapid rivers of the Adirondacks — a sixty foot span — 'there are two necessities about an arch' — the man stuttered a little — 'these necessities are that the f-feet must not s-slip and that the m-middle must not b-bend.'" Joseph Cook was showing that the feet of the Old Testament are so down in human history, and the feet of the New Testament so down in the life of men that they can not slip, and that the center — the veracity of Christ can not bend. It is perfectly in order to put any typical utterance of the Old Testament in the mouth of the Christ as He comes to fulfill it.

The great joy is that whatever is written — either in prophecy or fulfillment — of Christ, is written in some measure of us — our names are written there. The glory which He had received of the Father He has given us, that we may be one with Him and with the Father. His relation is such to us and ours is such to Him that the words of this text are peculiarly our own. These words may not seem to have been primarily uttered of Jesus. but they are a part of the prophecy — appropriate to Him and to be quoted in reference to Him and are so quoted by the Holy Ghost. But Jesus said "as I am so are ye in this world" and so, these words not only apply to the master but to the disciple, and eventuate in the experience of the disciple as the result of the will of God.

Mark — "Not sacrifice and offerings." Nothing is of any avail. It is the attitude toward Himself to which God looks, and this attitude He works in us.

As the Master is represented as making these words His own, so the disciple comes with the same utterance — "Lo I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me." I read my name written on every page of this Book. When God made a covenant with Abraham — "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" — my name is written there. When Paul explained it — "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" — my name is written there. When the Book says "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," that means me. When the Spirit says — "whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." "It is the will of God, even your sanctification." "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" — when the Spirit thus speaks He refers to me.

"Lo, I come." "Lo"! — Behold! I come." Here is an assertion, so far as the individual is concerned, of a supreme fact. It calls attention. Whatever this means it is not done in a corner. The importance of the soul's relation to God is such that its supreme loyalty challenges the attention of heaven, earth and hell. A man in the attitude of this coming does not fold his banner, nor restrain his testimony to the fact. David called together all the saints, "Come and hear all ye that fear the Lord and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." The Greek word here, "*Idou*," "lo," "behold," before the personal pronoun "I," signifies resignation, obedience — let all the world know that I am in the attitude of obedience to God.

Some of the processes are here given by which this attitude has been brought about, and some of the results. There is first the putting away of every possible thought that any act of his own could have brought him into this attitude. Sacrifice and offering were of no avail. All the effort that a man can put forth is powerless to bring him to the attitude of obedience to God. The leprosy of sin has corrupted his being. He is essentially a rebel against God. He loves what God hates, and hates what God loves.

Salvation and human reclamation must come from God. The rivers of life are from the throne. The streams of love and mercy are from the skies, so we have it here "Mine ears hast Thou opened." The open ears stand for obedience, devotement, the attitude of hearing and accepting the divine word. The margin makes it very expressive. "Mine ears hast Thou digged." Mine ears are not filled up as were the wells of Abraham, which Isaac re-dug, but are excavated down to the soul.

God has done it. "Mine ears hast Thou digged." The opening of an unobstructed avenue to the soul, for the work of the Lord is a divine work. It is the working in us a perfect heart of obedience. It is brought about by conviction — the Holy Ghost working in us true penitence — by the regeneration of the soul; by the revelation of self; by the chastenings of God, given to His child, until the ears are digged and man stands with an amen in his soul to the will of God. Isaiah said, "The Lord God hath opened mine ears and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." It is thought by some that this opening or digging of the ear, refers to the boring of the ear, when the slave, for love's sake, declines the opportunity of liberty at the year of jubilee. But if so it is the same thought — hearing the will of God, with loving resignation and obedience.

In the quotation of this text in Hebrews the author freely translates this passage — mine ears hast Thou opened — as, "a body hast Thou prepared me." Making it still more comprehensive, that the whole body was the avenue and agent of the divine will.

He emphasized this attitude by saying, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." In the New Testament it reads, "I come to do Thy will O God." This is not an expression of our ability to do the perfect will of God, but of our willingness, our desire, our delight, our purpose to do the perfect will of God. The attitude here emphasized is the one to which every disciple comes.

The ears are digged out. Our position is clearly defined "in the book it is written of me" that I am to be holy that it is the will of God even my sanctification. I am commanded to be holy, the very God of peace, himself, is to sanctify me through and through. My ears are digged out, I hear it, and I come to do Thy will, to do it in my inmost being, by rendering up myself to Thee for Thy will to be done in me. I call heaven and earth and hell to witness, "Behold, I come to do Thy will, O my God."

What is the result? "Thy law is written within my heart." In Hebrews, when the apostle comes to the close of the statement, "Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God," he goes on to say — instead of "Thy will is written within my heart," he says — "by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." The promise of the new covenant is that the law of God is to be written in our hearts, but it is done by our sanctification through the blood of the Lamb. The will of the Father the will of Jesus Christ, and our will all blend in the one end, even our sanctification, which we receive through the atoning blood by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, and thus the law is written in our hearts.

The apostle adds another comment to this Scripture, "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us."

The Psalmist tells us here the results by giving his own experience, which was a clear, definite, full, enthusiastic declaration to men of the facts. He says he did not hide it in his heart — he had not refrained his lips, but had become a preacher of righteousness or holiness. He had declared the faithfulness and salvation of God.

The effect upon the Psalmist was great humility. He recognized how poor and needy he was, but how he was enriched by the Divine thought. "He thinketh upon me." All this mercy and transfiguring glory is through His thoughts to usward.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 13

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS

TEXT — The testimony of Jesus Christ. — Rev 1:9

This utterance is found several times in this book of Revelation and stands as a thing of life, reaching out its hands in so many directions that it challenges our attention.

The word "testimony" is a very common word and the common, oft repeated words are the important ones. The first time, I believe, that it is used in the Bible, is in reference to the pot of manna which, in accordance with the command of the Lord, "Aaron laid up before the testimony to be kept." Then comes the direction that the "testimony" which God should give, i.e. the law written on the tables of stone, should be put into the ark.

The ark was called "the ark of the testimony," and the tabernacle was called "the tabernacle of testimony."

Then the law of God began to be called "His testimonies." In the 119th Psalm the will of the Lord is referred to as "testimonies," at least fifteen times. Again, the Psalmist speaking of Jerusalem and the joy of worship, says, "Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel."

Isaiah says, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." And so the Old Testament, which is completed testimony, was closed, and the New Testament which is the testimony of Jesus was opened and is open.

The New Testament is not closed. When it is said in the apocalypse; "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book," the meaning is, not that Jesus Christ has ceased to speak, but that man-made things are not to be brought in.

The New Testament, or the speaking of Christ to man, has not ended. Men still have the testimony of Jesus Christ from his own lips.

The words, "testimony" and "witness" are closely allied and interwoven and in the Old Testament are translated from the same Hebrew word; in the New Testament we find both words coming from "*martus*" and "*marturia*." There is, perhaps, a shade of difference. The witness is the person, the witnessing is the act, the testimony is the fact witnessed to. Thus we come to consider the testimony of Jesus. He is the witness. Twice in the book of Revelation He is said to be "the faithful witness."

The living, personal manifestation of the divine Christ is the Holy Ghost. He has been called the executive of the God-head, but the God-head is never divided. God is revealed to us as a trinity, but a trinity in unity. In the sunshine there is light, color, heat; but it takes a whole ray to produce any one of these. In the God-head there is Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but it takes the Infinite God to have any one and to have one is to have all.

We sometimes talk of the "dispensations of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." It is our poor way of trying to express unutterable things. We may say of this flower, "it is the dispensation of color," but it took a whole ray of light to make it. I say of the warmth that comes upon my hand as I hold it in the sun light, "this is the dispensation of heat," but it took the whole ray to make it. I speak of the light of the sun and say, "this is the dispensation of light," but without the whole sunbeam it could not be. In like manner, when we speak of the dispensation of the Father we recognize that the Son and Holy Ghost were there; when of the Son, that the Father and Holy Ghost were there, and now when we speak of this Holy Ghost dispensation it is also evident that Christ and the Father are present.

So the Holy Ghost is the God-head to us. He is to us the present manifest Christ. When Jesus Christ was near the culmination of the work of the atonement and about to ascend, and was promising the disciples the coming of the Holy Ghost — the real manifestation of God in this world, in richer glory and power as a result of the completed atonement than any thing which had preceded it — He said, "He shall testify of me," i.e., this peculiarly manifest Divine Presence shall especially testify of the incarnation and atonement. He shall take of these and show them unto you. He shall glorify Me — make this incarnation all luminous to you.

Therefore the great testimony of Jesus is the facts declared by the Holy Ghost. Do we reverently ask, what are these facts? Do we earnestly desire to know the testimony of Jesus? If we do, we may. It has been made very plain.

It means to make revealed truth divinely alive to us. Perhaps it is better to say, it makes us alive to revealed truth. God has taken manifest pains to utter, in this world, through prophets, through the incarnate God, through the apostles and disciples of our Lord sufficient truth; but between our souls, dead in trespasses and sins, and this truth there is no vital relation. The lightning might flash but a blind man would not see it. The thunders might roar but a deaf man would not hear it. A dead man is both blind and deaf.

The truth of God thunders from Sinai and shines in brightest glory from the cross, but the dead soul neither sees nor hears.

The testimony of Jesus is a testimony of life. The hand of the holy Ghost is laid upon the dead man and He lives. He is awakened at least long enough to hear the law of God, and to see the light of Calvary and to know "that there is life for a look."

The testimony of Jesus is the testimony of a new possibility. He brings into the soul the consciousness of a new chance for life. A man is raised from the death of sin, by the resurrection power of Jesus, long enough to have spread before his eyes the vision of eternal life. He is filled

sufficiently and long enough with moral conviction to know something of the difference between sin and holiness, to have fall upon him the shadow of Calvary and to see the blood-stained way of the atonement of infinite love.

It is by the power of the testimony of Jesus in this world that men are aroused from death and held long enough to choose eternal life. There is nothing more wonderful to me, even in the Gospel, than this power of the testimony of Jesus — the Holy Ghost making men alive from the death of sin, and holding them in new spiritual animation until they fully have a new chance for eternal glory. There is nothing that moves me like this new chance — a fallen, reprobate, condemned, doomed man; the sentence stayed by the bloody hands of Jesus Christ; justice satisfied by his sacrificial death and a full pardon and a new life offered on the only possible ground — ceasing rebellion and obeying God.

The testimony of Jesus is the testimony of holiness. What does Calvary mean? What does the Lamb slain in the midst of the throne mean? What is the meaning, as declared by the Holy Ghost? They mean the breaking of the seals of destiny which involves not only the freeing from condemnation, but harmony with God; and there can be no harmony where sin is. What then is the testimony of Jesus? It is the destruction of sin. The testimony of Jesus is, 'Holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.' The supreme utterance of the Holy Ghost is, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The testimony of Jesus Christ is a testimony of power. After He had tasted death, after He had come forth from the grave, when the azure was bending over Him to crown Him in His ascending glory, when the vacant throne was waiting to welcome Him He said, "Ye shall receive power." The coming of the Holy Ghost into the soul is the coming of power. His footfall is the tread of omnipotence. "All power is given unto Me." "Lo, I am with you." "Ye shall receive power" — power of humility, power of gentleness, power of heavenly-mindedness, power of peace, joy, hope, love. Not only the power of holiness but the power of unction — not by the power of holy manhood, but the power of God.

The testimony of Jesus means, in and through us the Spirit of God, so that it is not I, but Christ who liveth in me.

The testimony of Jesus is victory. First, over the flesh or the body of sin. The first utterance of the mighty Christ, when He comes in, is to cast out the man of sin. Second, victory over the world. His presence puts me so far away from the world, and His glory so blinds me to the world that I can see naught else but Him; and He makes me to be so filled with Himself that I am to the world as a root out of dry ground, there is no comeliness that men desire. Third, victory over the devil. We overcome him "by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony." Satan was thoroughly smitten on Calvary. The long waiting prophecy, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head" was fulfilled. And now the merit and power of the blood is given us. The blood speaks and the conquered devil, bruised by the heel of the Mighty Conqueror slinks away with his sore head. "The word of our testimony." We are more than conquerors, for testimony follows the blood to the dispoiling of the powers of hell. Testimony ravages the territory of the conquered foe, bursts open the prison doors and liberates his captives. The banners are borne forward and planted on the battlements of the enemy.

The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. When John had been shown something of the glory of worship around the throne, where the great multitude was saying, "Allelujah, salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God," he fell down to worship at the feet of glorious guide, but he said, "see thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus ... the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Those around the throne have it, the prophets and apostles had it, all of the disciples of Jesus are to have it by the Holy Ghost.

The testimony of Jesus is in us and through us. It is the indwelling Holy Ghost witnessing to His own work of cleansing and keeping, filling every avenue of our redeemed being, and speaking through us His own words, in His own power; holding us steady and the conflict and turning the wrath of men to the glory of God.

The testimony of Jesus is not in the weakness of a human conviction or purpose, or even a human experience It is not compassed by human thinking nor by the pattern of human ways. It is the power of God and the wisdom of God. God is among us and in us. Wesley, when dying, said, "The best of all is God is with us." This is the all-comprehensive glory.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 14

THE MOTIVE TO ENDURANCE

TEXT — He endured, as seeing him who is invisible. — Heb 11:27

In Paris there is a statue of Coligni, one of the greatest and best men France ever had; one of the heroes of this world statesman, warrior, patriot, Christian, martyr. He was one of the victims of that fatal night — August 24, 1572 — known as St. Bartholomew's. Having been basely slaughtered his body was exposed to the outrages of the mob, who cut off his head — which was sent to Rome — and his body, thus mutilated, was drawn through the bloody filth of the streets and hung by his feet to the glows.

In the hand of this statue of Coligni is a marble Bible and on its open leaf is chiseled, "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

There is, evidently, a good deal said and inferred in the Bible about suffering and enduring, in connection with religion. With some there has been some lack of clear thought in reference to this. Some have seemed to think, and I fear some still think, that religion itself is a thing to be endured, instead of it being what it is — the sweetest, gladest, richest, most blessed, as well as the most essential and necessary thing that pertains to human life.

That there are some things to be endured in connection, with religion, or more properly, with salvation, I admit; but it is not salvation. The inevitable result of salvation is war with the world and with the devil. This warfare takes on different forms according to the age and country in which we live, but the words of Jesus remain always true "The world hath hated them because they are not of the world." "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me." "If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world ... therefore the world hateth you." "The servant is not greater than his lord, if they have persecuted Me they will also persecute you, if they have kept My sayings they will keep yours also." The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household." Also the words of the Apostle: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." "Ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake."

While the position and condition of the enemy changes, his nature never changes; neither does the nature of salvation change. The command is just as imperative today as it ever was. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ... For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father."

Salvation is not to be endured but enjoyed; nevertheless he who will have it must fight the good fight of faith. It is a fight in which there is no truce, no compromise, no quarter. It is a fight unto the death.

It would be utter folly for me to attempt to induce people to seek salvation on any basis but that of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. To do that would be to try to induce them to seek that which is false. And here, I believe, is where the difficulty largely lies. People are led to seek for the religion of Jesus Christ where it is not, and seek for that which is not in it. I myself was. I believe most people are. While I took the covenant to renounce the devil and all his works, ... the vain pomp and glory of the world;" yet, in a most subtle way, I was taught that this religion would bring me these worldly things. I was to be good in order that men would trust me, confide in me and honor me; that the way to honorable distinction was the integrity of character which I would thus build up. I was taught to seek self-aggrandizement and worldly place and honor by being religious. Thus religion was to minister to my pride and self-exaltation. I was to be discreet, not fanatical, not radical — going along with the people, that I might thus guide and bless them. If I was too radical I would be too far removed from them to serve them. The very hope of doing good was used as a motive to make and keep me worldly.

As a Sunday-school scholar I was taught that the Lord needed great men — presidents and statesmen — and where so likely to find them as among boys in the Sunday-school? I was exhorted to be good in order to be great. I was further taught that the Lord needed great preachers; that when He wanted a leader for Israel He sought a man learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; when he looked for a reformer he went to a German University. When he wanted a man for the eighteenth century revival, he went to Oxford College. I was thus inspired with the conviction that learning was the door-way to, and the great preparation for usefulness. The trend of my religious teaching was self. There was much truth in it, but the Cross was not the center; it did not lead to self-crucifixion and the enthronement of the Christ. "But," says one, "is not complete loss of self in Jesus Christ the way to honorable remembrance in this world?" Yes; after death. The prophets are killed and posterity build their sepulchers. Jesus Christ is an example — "The" example. Was not His a blessed childhood — a beautiful young life? Was He not the embodiment of genius? Was He not the personification of wisdom? Was He not more tender and gentle than womanhood? Did He not live to serve and help? Did He seek position, or did He displace any? What was the matter with Him?

There was in Him a revelation of holiness from heaven! It stirred up every devil all about; it stirred up carnality in the hearts of men. It did just what every new manifestation of holiness does in this world — "As I am so are ye in this world." "The servant is not above his Lord."

Let me ask, what is the Christian religion? What is it to be saved? No one cares enough about this question to really ask it, save only, he who asks it in the spirit of obedience. Unless a man willeth to do His will he shall not know of the teaching.

The beginning is personal surrender to Jesus Christ. I remember early in the war of the rebellion, when the days were dark, I was at a great gathering of the people; recruits were being solicited — the nation must have soldiers. Among those who enlisted that day was a man who most literally left the plow in the furrow — he left home, wife and children at his country's call. He was not a soldier,

but he was ready to be. He was mustered in, took the oath and became a soldier. In some sense he lost his identity; he lost his will; he lost his rights; he gave them up under the flag. He gained some things — a place in an organized body; the right to be shot at; the right to suffer in the trenches, to die on the battle field. His life was given up to his country when he took the oath. Jesus said: "Come, take up the cross and follow me." "Take the cross;" Jesus said that before the cross had ought of sacredness about it. It was simply an instrument of death.

Let him be ready to die for me. Not for truth outside of me, not for any cause which is not of me — but follow me by way of the cross. Erasmus is reported as saying that he knew of no reason why he should die for truth. There seems to me to be many truths which are scarce worth dying for, but for Him who is "The Truth," we are to live and die.

The taking of the cross is a very radical thing, and means the utmost bondage, the completest slavery to Jesus Christ. Every power, every element, every force is to be thoroughly and completely given up to Him. Every imagination cut down and every thought brought into captivity.

Do you say "that is a hard saying; who can hear it?" The same was said to Jesus. But He will have every aspiration, every longing, every desire, passion, power; or He will have nothing. You will either bring your all, a glad offering, or else hear Him say that the feet of those who buried so many before you are at the door, and shall carry you out.

Of course this giving your all, means holiness. No man is fully saved until he is washed from all sin in the blood of the Lamb. Men are born again by the power of God that they may be made holy, and no man can remain a child of God an hour who does not want holiness. The very moment that any man would rather have sin than holiness he is spewed out of His mouth.

Perhaps I ought to say that in this bondage to Jesus is highest, completest liberty. By taking the cross things are made possible. We are empowered to will heavenward. Power is given to love holiness. Like a new incarnation a passionate love is put into us for Jesus Christ.

A man has liberty when he has power and privilege according to his deepest love and most intense longing. No matter what I have, if I have not what I desire, or love, I am in a prison cell. If I have what I love and desire, I have liberty in my chains, wherever I am.

'Prisons will palaces prove,
If Jesus abides with me there.'

This salvation means to those who have it, that, by the power of God, every bond is broken and we are united to Jesus in everlasting wedlock; that we are lost in Him; what we think His thoughts, do His will, represent Him in any world wherever He may send us or call us to stand.

This means unfaltering devotion, unflagging zeal, undying enthusiasm. It means that which is not governed by conditions, but which lives and burns and glows in spite of conditions.

It means that which made the wilderness of Midian better than the palaces of Egypt; which illuminated the lion's mouth. It means that which made the fiery furnace a place of safety and divine communion. It means that which sustained and transfigured Stephen, making his face shine like an angel's face and enabled him in the midst of his martyrdom to see Jesus standing to welcome him home.

It is said, "the days of persecution are past" — the fire, block, wild beasts, etc. These are not the only things that try men's souls. There are social spears and family blades, and business fires, and political wild beasts, and ecclesiastical thumb-screws.

To take the real Cross today means such a relationship to the old life and the dead forms of paganized Christianity about us, that we will, at least, know what it means to go with Him without the camp bearing His reproach. Softness, and self indulgence, and worldly conformity find no more place in real salvation today than in the days of the Roman empire. The Divine Presence fixes the line of demarcation and conflict between holiness and worldliness as clearly today as it ever was fixed.

But the privilege of bearing reproach for Him, of suffering the loss of all things for Him, of filling up in our lives the measure of His suffering which remains, in order that holiness may be preached and testified to, is the sweetest joy which comes to us under the stars.

What is its inspiration? The vision of the invisible. "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible." This life of holiness is not merely a matter of principle or sentiment. It is the result of the soul's vision of God. Feebleness of Christian life means dimness of divine vision. seeing Him who is invisible" will fill every avenue of your soul, and pour intensity into mind, soul and body. You can no more come from the vision of God without being transformed and intensified than you can come from under Niagara without being wet.

The soul's vision is of Him who is invisible. God has revealed Himself at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers and then in Jesus Christ. Jesus went away because it was better for us that the Holy Ghost should come. He was to reveal Jesus unto us. There was to be a revelation of God clearer, more transforming, more all-embracing. Under His touch, cleansed by His fiery glory, the 'soul was to see God.

The Word of God is a living body and soul of truth. In this body and soul God walks this earth. Under the touch of the Holy Spirit, opening our eyes and taking the veil away, we gaze with the intensity of immortal, bloodwashed spirits, and we see His glory. He repeats to us what He did to Moses and puts us in the cleft of the rock shows us not His face, not the future, but His goodness, His atoning love, the methods of His mercy.

It is not form, but Love bursting forth in power to save.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 15

THE CONQUEROR

TEXT — Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. — Isa 63:1

It is difficult to have an adequate conception of the Christ. If I were introduced from another planet into this world, and placed where I could have a commanding view of its forces, I think that which would most astonish me would be Christianity.

As I would see a power working for righteousness; the transformation of many lives; souls filled with holy comfort, I would ask "what brought all this about?" Being answered "Jesus Christ," I think I would say "tell me about Him?" And although there would be an attempted explanation of how Jesus came in an incarnation — the God man — how He suffered and died to take away the sin of the world; and how, in this day, He still works the work He began, and through the Holy Spirit is pressing eternal life upon all hearts; nevertheless, I think it would be difficult to form any proper conception of Him.

Before me are great boundless results. I must recognize Him; but how conceive of Him?

We have been born into the light of the knowledge of Him, and from our childhood we have been schooled in the thought of Him. Our conception of the Christ has gradually taken on form and been enlarged, and although it is not very comprehensive nor in any wise complete, yet how much clearer it is than could have been given by any single utterance or vision. But God gave to the prophets some idea of the Christ of these later ages. Isaiah, especially, heard words and saw visions of Him which when illuminated by the light which has come in these days, reveals Him to us in very precious ways.

Here, in this text, the Christ stands out before the eyes of the prophet as a mighty conquering warrior — blood-stained — fresh from the field of conquest and pressing on to victory. As Isaiah gazed upon this uncomprehended vision, he asked, "Who is this?"

This is evidently the Christ from Calvary going forth as the Christ of Pentecost. His blood-stained robes — His dyed garments — are simply the proclamation, the evidences of conflicts fought. It clearly refers to the "wine-press," which He trod "alone" to the awful conflict that centered in the Cross. Of that great battle, fought by our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, I attempt no description. It evidently was, not only the battle of all time, around which more and more the conflicts of earth gather, but it was the battle of the eternal ages.

The covenants and provisions for this conquest were from the foundations of the earth; and when Christ was manifested He came to destroy the works of the devil.

That conflict was first of all a sacrifice. Before Satan could be smitten, and men rescued from His power, eternal justice must be satisfied. The sacrifice, the offering of obedience and blood, was unto the Father. It must be made possible for man to be forgiven and reconciled unto Him, and the first work of Jesus was the making of the atonement, but in doing that He contended with the powers of darkness; Satan gathered his emissaries; hell poured forth her legions; the heavens were black with the power of darkness; the earth trembled under the tread of the mighty contending forces. But that wounded, bleeding hand, that broken heart held the hosts of hell at bay. For dreadful hours billows from the pit broke over Him. He cried out in the conflict, but it was the cry of faintness; again, but it was the cry of deepest agony.

At last, He lifted His eyes and looking out into the darkness and beyond, said "It is finished;" and when the cloud of the darkness of the conflict passed away, there waved above the cross in holy triumph the banner of salvation, and streams of heavenly light and human hope sprang out from it.

Our gospel is the manifested truth of God made crimson with atoning blood; it is soaked in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus Christ is the warrior whom Isaiah saw with dyed garments.

A Christ of moral influences, of example, simply, is of no avail. Nothing other than a Christ of atoning blood, who thus opened up a fountain for sin and uncleanness can meet the need.

The cry of this warrior is, destruction of the works of the devil; holiness through the Blood. He shed His blood, not to leave men in sin, but that they might have remission of sin and "an inheritance with them which are sanctified." So when prophets eyes saw Jesus emerge into this world, they saw a blood-stained conquering warrior going on to conquest.

But the place where the prophet saw Him, where the glory of His appearance and the tread of His triumphant march seemed to stand out most vividly before Him is of special interest. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?"

This statement in reference to place is not accidental. A prophetic image of such marvelous cut and coloring as this would be true to its great spiritual facts and teachings.

Edom was the land of Esau. Bozrah was probably its capitol. Edom was the closest relation to Israel and perhaps her bitterest foe. It was Edom, who, when the Israelites came out of Egypt would not permit them to even pass through their land. Esau was the brother of Jacob, born of the same mother at the same time, strived and obtained the mastery and represents carnality.

These blood-relation enemies represent the deep radical enemy of God and man "the carnal mind," which "is not subject to the will of God neither indeed can be."

The point of vision which the prophet had was where Jesus went forth, after Pentecost to the conquest of the hearts of men. At the Pentecost Jesus reached the bottom of human need. There, by the baptism with the Holy Ghost, He destroyed the carnal mind and purified human hearts.

The first complete victory in this world of Him who conquered on the cross was that Pentecost morning. Men and women were made holy. Christ had come in the Holy Ghost. Peter stood and looked that morning and 'said "Therefore "Jesus conquered on the cross; He came forth from the grave, "therefore" you hear now His conquering tread; you see the flashing of His eyes of infinite light; you feel the limitless force of His saving power. The coming of the Holy Ghost means the conquest of Edom, the destruction of Bozrah — the end of carnality.

This vision of the Conqueror's going forth from Edom has peculiar force. It is from the destruction of carnality in and through the baptism with the Holy Ghost that the Christ goes forth to conquest. This is His highway of victory. He really treads no other way. The mighty Christ always goes forth from Edom.

The prophet waits to say that "He is glorious (decked) in His apparel." Of the appearance of this mighty One as Isaiah saw Him I can not tell. He seems to have been clothed with a beauty and glory indescribable — the shadow of that overpowering glory which John saw on Patmos, who being turned to see the voice that spake to him "saw one like unto the Son of man."

In this vision of Isaiah, the Conqueror was already "decked" with crowns of victory. The stars were already in His diadem — the stars of the morning — and as the prophet gazed each turned to a sun of indescribable glory. "Traveling in the greatness of His strength." There is in this whole passage an inexpressible movement of power and glory; the overflowing fullness of majesty and might. It is an onward march. This Conqueror never camps two night's in the same place.

There is an intensity and passion expressed here which it is impossible to put into words. It is strength; moral strength, spiritual strength, Divine strength in intensest activity. It is the passion of God. It is God's fury. It is God's vengeance. God's arm. It must be remembered that from Pentecost — from Edom — Christ is in a new incarnation. He walks forth in this world in His people. His passion, His fury, his intensity is in His people. The one way that Christ can be seen and felt is in and through His people. "For me to live is Christ."

If His people lack the Divine passion; if the fury does not burn in them; if the Divine arm does not bring salvation through them, then the Conqueror has quit the field.

Isaiah hears Christ's own answer in reference to His personality — "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Christ, in this world, is a clear Divine voice in righteousness; not in policy; not in compromise, not in jangling; not in personal criticism; not in judgment; but in righteousness — a proclamation of the truth of the Divine will, of human need, of Divine provision. I who speak in righteousness — who bear the sword against all iniquity, to cut asunder every wrong, to break every yoke and let the oppressed go free.

Christ bears the proclamation for the ills of this world; but more than all this — more than all else, He reaches deeper than all else — He comes to save. "Mighty to save." He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto Him.

Yet, as great as is His strength; as terrible as is His power; as glorious as are the possibilities He brings; men will not be saved. Men, in their madness, prefer to cast themselves under the train rather than to step on board.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 16 **THE BLESSING**

TEXT — I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. — Rom 15:29

Paul received his commission somewhere on the spurs of Mt. Hermon, southwest of Damascus, from the lips of Jesus Christ. He never forgot the words which the Lord spoke to him that day; they seemed to have been burned into his very soul. Nearly thirty years afterwards, when he stood before Festus and Agrippa he reproduced them, evidently with great carefulness and accuracy. In answer to his question the Lord said, "I am He whom thou persecutest but rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me."

I do not wonder that the trained mind and awakened heart of Saul of Tarsus never lost a syllable of that commission and that it burned and glowed, with divine glory, in his very being. Three days after this he was more fully prepared and equipped by the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

Henceforth Paul had but one business and that was to proclaim the riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. He may have worked, at times, at other things but it was not for the sake of other things but only that he might carry on this ministry. He went with restless energy from place to place, especially desiring to plant the truth in new soil. His work was not prosecuted in a hap-hazard way, but with statesman-like ability he carefully sought out centers of population and proclaimed the message of salvation in the cities of the old world; accordingly he especially desired to enter the imperial city of Rome.

Paul had his enemies; they attacked him on every side; they slandered him in almost every way; they had said that he would not go to Rome; that while he might influence province cities, he would not dare to lay his message beside the teachings of the philosophers of the great metropolis. Some had said that after all he was not a great man — his letters were strong but his speech was contemptible.

Paul, writing to the band of Christians at Rome told them that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it was the power of God unto salvation; that as much as was in him he was ready to preach the gospel at Rome also. He greatly desired to see them that he might impart unto them a further grace, to the end that they might be established.

But, concerning one thing Paul was fully assured; beyond any doubt he knew that when he should come he would be thoroughly equipped for his work. "I am sure that when I come unto you I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ." Let us look at "the blessing" and see what it is. The Apostle does not say that he will be in possession of the many blessings of providence. He does not even say of the blessings of Christ. It might be correct to say, the many blessings of Christ; for his blessings are manifold, but that was not Paul's thought. Paul knew how to be exact, no one ever had a clearer conception of the meaning of words, nor used them with greater accuracy than he. He saw how the whole covenant of God with Abraham hinged on one letter — the letter is "not unto seeds as of many but seed as of one." The same exactness of expression is shown in this utterance "the blessing of Christ." Here also the whole covenant would be vitiated by the adding of the letter 's'. It is blessing and not blessings. All blessings flow from Him, He is over all blessed forever, the fountain of every good and perfect gift; there is no blessing to humanity without Him — in every land, in every age the blessings of men are from Him; but the Apostle here clearly indicates that there is a blessing which is "the blessing." There is such a thing as the blessing of the Christ. There is a blessing which is so transcendentally His, which is so especially His work, that it is peculiarly His blessing. We do not have to go far to find out what this blessing is. Listen to the annunciation of His coming. His immediate forerunner, whose special work it was to prepare the way before Him and to usher in His ministry said, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire."

Jesus Christ was incarnate for one great purpose and that was to accomplish on earth what had long been accomplished in Heaven — the making atonement for sin. The Lamb slain before the throne was to be slain on Calvary. Incidentally He taught and preached and healed; to establish His place in the convictions of men, He wrought miracles; once or twice to assert His supreme God-head He forgave us; but all of these things might have been done without an incarnation, His one great purpose was to make the sacrifice for sin.

That offering was accomplished the sacrifice made once for all then coming forth in resurrection power He ascended on high and began His real ministry the baptizing with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost comes as a baptism, i.e. He comes upon — the Divine personality comes upon — enters into, abides with, becomes the life of a human soul.

Now this baptism with the Holy Ghost is "the blessing of Christ" spoken of in this text. Some one may still ask, "why is it called 'the blessing of Christ.' " Because it is; "why is it?" It is the crowning glory of the work of the soul's salvation. All that ever went before was preparatory for it. Did prophets speak and write; did sacrifices burn; were offerings made; did martyrs die; did Jesus lay aside the glory; did He teach and pray and stretch out His hands on the cross; did He rise from the dead and ascend into Heaven; is He at the right hand of God? It was preparatory to this baptism. Men are convinced of sin, born again and made new creatures that they may be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

This work completes the soul's salvation. Jesus came to destroy sin — the work of the devil — the baptism with the Holy Ghost does that. Jesus sought for Himself fellowship, communion and unity with human souls, by this baptism He is enthroned and revealed in man.

There is nothing that ever came, or can ever come, to a human soul half so mysteriously wonderful and blessed as the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire — the body of sin, the body of death is destroyed, the soul is washed whiter than snow in the blood of the Lamb, is filled with all the fullness of God. The soul comes, by God's impartation of Himself into spiritual manhood, endowed among them that are sanctified with the inheritance of the riches of God.

I do not wonder that the Holy Ghost calls the day of this marvelous transaction the "great and notable day of the Lord." That is the day you come into your inheritance of God, by the baptism with the Holy Ghost. You may talk about the day you enter Paradise, that day Paradise entered you. You may talk about putting off mortality, that day you put on the power of an endless life. You may talk about power, that day you took on board the dynamite of eternal, infinite Love. You may talk about coronation day, that day fits you for crowning glory. You may talk about heaven, that day the kingdom of heaven is set upon you. Hail King of Glory! Thou sayest "Lift up your heads O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in." He has come in. Christ is "in us the hope of glory" — the richest gift of all worlds.

There is a blessing that fills. "I shall come in the fulness of the blessing." This blessing is a fullness of Jesus — His holiness, love, sympathy, compassion — the same spirit that made Him though rich to become poor; the same intense love that led Him to the bottom of human need that He might get His arms under the lowest; the same spirit that filled Him with such humility and gentleness as to kindle the fire of a sacrifice that bore the sin of the world.

"When I come" — Paul went to Rome, not in the way, perhaps, he had expected. That journey was a prosperous one, in the sense that he had "the blessing" all the way, and that Christ caused all things to declare that he had "the blessing."

That awful storm at sea which brought to the front the prophet of the gospel showed that one among them had "the blessing" — the billows, the breaking ship, the darkness, the unknown shore, the barbarous people, the fire, the viper, all showed that there was one man who had "the blessing." Then in that journey from the sea-port — Puteoli into the city — 124 miles, a way of toil and expectancy, there was one man who had "the blessing." Then at Appi Forum, and the Three Taverns where "the brethren" met Paul and when he thanked God and took courage, it was evident there was one among them who had "the blessing."

Paul entered Rome the city where his last battles were to be fought his last victories won, and from whence his spirit was to ascend to God — he entered imperial Rome a prisoner, but he had "the blessing." After three days Paul called together the leading men of his nation and explained why he was there in chains. They said unto him, "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake harm of thee; but we desire to hear what thou thinkest, for as for this sect" — sect of the Nazarene — "we know that everywhere it is spoken against." Then Paul appointed a day and they came to him at his lodging and he expounded and testified to them the kingdom of God "from morning till evening" — all day long. Some believed the things which he spoke, but many turned away. Before they left Paul was obliged to speak "one word" — with what agony he must have said it "Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias. Hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see and not perceive."

For two years Paul dwelt in his own hired house, preaching the kingdom of God. Then came that hearing before Nero. He was doubtless permitted to speak for himself, and one thing we know — he preached the gospel. He says, "No man stood by me, but all forsook me. Nevertheless the Lord Jesus stood by me and strengthened my heart that by me the proclamation of the glad tidings might be accomplished in full measure and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the lion's mouth." After a brief liberty he was again arrested and taken to prison, not now treated with the leniency first extended him, but as a mal-factor.

The Christians were intensely hated and this man in Rome is no longer a Jew under ban, but is the "ringleader" of this hated sect, who are neither Jews nor Gentiles. Paul knew that under the circumstances he would doubtless be condemned, yet he had "the fullness of the blessing of Christ."

"The fullness of the blessing of Christ" is not always the shout of joy. It is, sometimes, the deep, mighty cry of the warrior — "I thirst." It does not mean that persecutions and temptations and afflictions are never yours. It does mean that sin in you is destroyed; that in your weakness you have strength to stand for Christ wherever He places you; that the favor of the Lord Jesus is more than life; that in all conditions, down deep below all surface waves is the peace of God; that out through the storm, over the rolling billows into the serene harbor is the cable of trust joined to the anchor of hope. It does mean that you, and all you have, are given to God, and that He has come in to possess you.

I am accused of not preaching to the people in reference to giving. He who is in "the fullness of the blessing of Christ" has in him the burning, glowing message, the impelling Christ, the same love and force which parted the heavens and brought Him to earth, presses every avenue of being.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 17

STANDING FOR CHRIST

TEXT — Then Paul stood up. — Acts 13:16

We are quite familiar with the history of Saul of Tarsus. We first saw him that day when Stephen made his earnest, courageous speech before the Sanhedrin, gave that magnificent testimony to Jesus Christ, and won for himself a martyr's crown.

Saul was there; he heard that speech and evidently never forgot it. But his heart was hardened by false teaching and prejudice. We have seen him breathing out slaughter and death to Christian men and women in and about Jerusalem, bringing them before the council and giving his voice against them.

We have seen him for this purpose on his journey to ancient Damascus We have seen how Jesus appeared to him in the way and uncovered to him somewhat of his glory, sufficient to break his heart and melt him into penitence. Then we have seen him as he yielded himself to Jesus, in deepest loyalty and was received in pardoning love, and commissioned to show sinners the way of pardon and believers the way to their inheritance. We have seen him under the ministry of Ananias as he received the baptism with the Holy Ghost. We have seen him in retirement, in study, prayer, looking for Divine guidance and anointing. We have seen him at Antioch where he was set apart by the Holy Ghost for the special work to which He called him. We have seen him sail for Cyprus. Here was wrought his first recorded miracle at Paphos. In it we see how he — as everybody else is like to do in the early stages of work — reproduced what he had seen and felt. He declared to the false prophet, Bar-jesus, that he should be "blind, not seeing the sun for a season." This was the way the Lord had dealt with him and he evidently thought it the way to deal with all blasphemous opposers. Loosing from Paphos, he went to Perga and from there to Antioch in Pisidia. Here he made his first recorded address. With his co-laborer Barnabas he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Traveling from place to place was not easily accomplished in that day, and but little of it was done. The chief men of the synagogue knew every Jew who came to worship, and when these two — doubtless distinguished looking men — entered the room and sat reverently listening to the reading of the law, the rulers sent unto them and said, "If you have any word of exhortation for the people say on." "Then Paul stood up." He seized the opportunity to deliver his message. The context says he beckoned with his hand, in other words he courteously recognized those whom he addressed. Paul was always courteous. It was one of the things he both practiced and inculcated. The humility and gentleness and love and pity, which the Holy Ghost imparts, makes a true gentleman. "Paul standing and beckoning with his hand said, men of Israel and ye that fear God." He here showed his conservatism. Paul was a radical conservative. He was most conservative that he might accomplish most radical things. Radical men, who are not conservative, have their place. They rush rashly into danger, they hurry to martyrdom, they bring on the crises. John Brown was a radical. He loved the

slave, he hated oppression. He threw himself on the institution of slavery, and quickly gave his life on the scaffold. He gave it not in vain. Dying, he awoke a dormant people. Somehow they were made to feel that in such martyrdom there was victory, they began to sing that his soul was "marching on," and the spirit of that radical martyr seemed to be present to intensify the cause of liberty. Abraham Lincoln was a radical conservative. He had perhaps as much love for the slave, as intense hatred for slavery, as did John Brown. The tears filled his eyes as he said to friends, "Douglas says he don't care whether slavery is voted up or down, but God cares and I care." But Lincoln was a conservative. He saw that the institution of slavery was hedged about by law, jurisprudence and popular prejudice, and that it could not be rudely torn down; that it must be done in accord with law and public sentiment or else by revolution, and in connection with the over-ruling providence of God. But, in the fullness of time he dared to be radical. When Seward said, "the time has not yet come," he replied "I promised Almighty God that if He would drive Lee back I would issue the emancipation proclamation."

There is a place for the radical man without conservatism; there is a place for the radical — conservative man; but I have never yet been able to discover the place for the conservative pure and simple. He is always looking back, holding on to the things that are gone, saying, the former days were better than these.

Paul was a conservative-radical. He took hold of men in the condition he found them and tried to join himself to them and lift them up. He did not here denounce the ceremonial law, though he knew it's day was done.

"Paul stood up." His attitude was an expression of the fact that he had a message, that he bore tidings, that he had truth to declare and at the moment of opportunity he stood forth to proclaim it. He well knew it was but a question of a little time before his gospel would produce conflict — persecution. The Master had said that He would show him what great things he should suffer for His name's sake. It takes courage to be a Christian. Perhaps not a great deal to be a conventional Christian. That kind may be popular. But real Christianity is little more popular than in the early days. To renounce the world still requires courage. It always takes courage to stand clearly for Jesus on the line of battle. This line is not always the same. But wherever it is, it takes courage to seize the opportunity and stand for Jesus Christ.

Luther fought along the line of justification by faith. Today there is a vast attempt to turn the battle of righteousness into one great picnic; or to go into summer or winter quarters as the case may be; or to carry on the work by means of great shows, parades etc., but there is a battle line — the power of the cleansing blood — and we must find it, and stand in our place. Paul in the day of battle did not falter. He had the courage of the Holy Ghost. He "stood up," it was a marvelous standing up. It faced a world of sin and opposition. It was the beginning of a battle that knew no end until the same warrior said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course."

Paul did not stand alone. He did not simply stand up. He was lifted up. Every crucial action of a loyal life is an inspiration. Make an outline of purpose and thought and submit it to God and you may never see it again, you may be led far from it. No plan is big enough to hold God's inspiration. A Christian should always go out not knowing whither he goes, only that he goes with God. Many of

us are in the A, B, C, of prudence and calculation, and have never come to the high ideal of inspiration and in gladness.

Paul bore a message in his own person. He was a voice crying in the wilderness. Not an empty voice — not even a hopeful voice, but a voice of truth; of revealed facts; of experience. His message was God in the flesh — Jesus Christ. All that went before prepared the way. All that followed proceeded from Him. Paul went back through the ages and brought before them the history of their fathers. He declared the coming of David's Son and His death and resurrection and the out-flowing gospel.

Paul declared that he brought them good tidings. The promise to the fathers had been fulfilled — Jesus Christ the Messiah had come. Most especially he proclaimed that God had raised Him from the dead as He had promised the prophet David and that now the gospel of salvation could be preached to all men — "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him, all that believe, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Jesus Christ is raised from the dead and forgiveness of sins is freely preached. It is not altogether a new doctrine. Forgiveness is already an old word. It is a marvelous word. We have learned it from heaven. It is not in the human vocabulary. Without revelation from God we know nothing about it. But it has been whispered from the skies that there is forgiveness with God. Moses heard it faintly; David more distinctly and was enabled to say "there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared," and "who forgiveth all thine iniquities."

But this is but a part of the message, Paul says "AND." When Paul proclaims the forgiveness of sins and then says "and," you may well study carefully what follows. He says, "and by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." This last half of the sentence was an enigma to me. This great apostle does not speak foolishly. He does not say "and," signifying something to be added, and then re-state the very same thing. And yet, he did say "are justified," and justification is co-ordinate with forgiveness. I wondered as to the real meaning of that word justified, and so consulted my Greek Testament and found the word to mean — made righteous, all together right, the righteousness of God. I then turned to my critical commentary and found that, by the interpretation there given, it meant a work of righteousness, done in a believer after the forgiveness of sins. Then as I looked at it, I saw that Paul here clearly preached — made it a co-ordinate part of his message — in this his first reported address, that which he so insists upon in all his epistles, namely, that men are to be forgiven and then cleansed from all sin.

In this speech Paul declares that believers are to be made holy; something which the law of Moses could not do. It is clearly taught in the Hebrews that the first covenant was a shadow of good things to come — gifts and sacrifices which could not make the worshippers perfect. It could cleanse the outer life, but not the fountains of being. The first tabernacle was a figure by which the Holy Ghost signified that the way to the holiest was not yet opened. But Christ being a High Priest of good things to come, to come — gifts and sacrifices which could not make the worshippers perfect. It could cleanse the outer life, but not the fountains of being. The first tabernacle was a figure by which the Holy Ghost signified that the way to the holiest was not yet opened. But Christ being a High Priest

of good things to come, through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself to God without spot and by an offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. The one thing that the law of Moses could not do was to make men and women holy. No blood of bulls or goats, no sprinkling priest could reach the leprosy within. They were a type, a shadow. The good things come from the risen Lord, through the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost.

The first part of this gospel message that men maybe forgiven of sin is glorious, but the second part that they may be made holy is more glorious. To preach pardon to sinners without proclaiming the baptism with the Holy Ghost to cleanse and fill is so incomplete that it renders itself nugatory. Jesus said in the beginning tarry at Jerusalem until ye receive power. It is said you make a specialty of holiness. The gospel is a holiness specialty.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 18

THE LAW OF REPRODUCTION

TEXT — That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. — Gen 22:17

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. — Gal 3:29

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one. — Mat 13:38

I asked the Lord for the message for this, the last Sabbath of the year, he gave me this passage from Genesis and called to my thought these explanatory verses, from the New Testament.

While in a peculiar sense, Jesus Christ is the seed of Abraham, those who believe and are Christ's are also the seed of Abraham, and good men are the seed of the kingdom in this world, which He scatters broadcast that the world might be filled with a golden harvest.

I was looking out into the future and into this work: and searching heavenward for new discoveries of Divine grace in new victories through the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony, when the Lord said to me "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." He made it clear to me that we are a part of this multiplying seed because of our relation to Jesus Christ, and that this promise of great increase and victory is ours. I saw that the promise is a law life; a law of conditions, and especially the presence of Him who is the fountain of law and the Creator of conditions.

The first law of increase in seed is life. There is the incomprehensible fact of life, in everything capable of reproduction, which is God or God-given. It does not come from organization or conditions. Some of us are old enough to remember when Christian teaching in reference to creation was attacked through the theory of spontaneous life; but it died under experiment; there is no such thing. No conditions of matter nor any chemical action will produce life of any kind. The chemist can so imitate a kernel of corn or wheat that no eye nor chemical analysis can detect the difference, but there is one unailing test — it will never grow — it has no life.

None can tell what this life is. It escapes the most powerful microscope and the most minute analysis of the chemist. This rule holds good all the way up from the lowest form of life to the highest of all, which is spiritual. St. John says of the child of God, that His seed remaineth in him, or, as the Greek suggests, "the Divine life through which he is begotten of God," remains in him and

he is the child of God, just as the stalk of wheat can be nothing but wheat — not corn nor rye — because the life that made it wheat remains in it. Life alone is reproductive and life determines the reproduction.

The promised blessing to Abraham was given because of the Divine life in him. He was fresh from Mt. Moriah. He had been gazing into the Divine Presence. He had been walking under the weight of the greatest promise, in conditions that challenged the Divine power of all realms. The promise of God was through Isaac, God commanded Abraham to sacrifice him, and yet Abraham did not stagger. He was so joined to God in having faith, that he recognized life and death to be all alike to Him, and knew that He could bring to pass His own purpose in His own way.

It was a marvelous sight, that going to Mt. Moriah and the transactions there: the preparations for the journey; the journey itself; the leaving of the servants at the foot of the mount; the binding of the wood upon Isaac's back; the taking by Abraham of fire and a knife in his hand; the going of the two together to the place of sacrifice; the question of the lad in reference to a lamb for the offering; the answer of Abraham; the reaching of the place which God had appointed; the building of the altar; the laying of the wood in order; the ready acquiescence of the young man in being bound and laid on the altar upon the wood; the stretching forth of Abraham's hand to slay his son; the call of the angel of the Lord out of heaven unto him, saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me." This is the man with whom God made His covenant of blessing. It was at this place, after Abraham had offered the provided ram that the angel of the Lord called to him the second time and said, "By Myself have I sworn saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." It is this Divine Life in man, through complete, unstaggering faith that is the law of multiplication by reproduction.

Every power is inadequate to create and bring forth souls new born to God. Only Divine life can do it. This is why the Holy Ghost is given. All other things may not be inefficient but they are insufficient. Human labor and effort and toil, education and training, human eloquence and sweetest song may have their place and may not be without efficiency but they can no more make men new creatures in Christ Jesus than the rubbing of a pebble can make it grow.

The law of reproduction in the kingdom of God is the indwelling Holy Ghost. He finds a way to increase the kingdom of God, with or without the help of other things.

There is much discussion today in reference to revivals, their need, the methods, etc. But so far as power to precipitate the work of God is concerned, there is nothing uncertain nor intricate about it. It is the manifestation of God in the hearts of believers.

Take a bushel of wheat: there is life enough in it to produce twenty bushels. No one questions it. So, too there is life enough in every divinely baptized believer to multiply itself some thirty, some fifty, some an hundred fold. Without the Divine presence there is no life — no saving power. There is a way to accumulate sand but not by reproduction. You may sow bushels of sand but it will never

grow, you accumulate it by gathering it together, it will not reproduce. People can be thus gathered together. They often are. They may be gathered regularly — great organizations. But the kingdom of God is not an aggregation of people. He has ordained that His children must be born into it. A family is not a number of children gathered together — you may do that, but in the company there are two or three little tots who are bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh — your children.

Life is put into this world for reproduction. In the beginning God said unto Adam and Eve and to every creature .-after its kind, be fruitful and multiply.

If you examine a great forest tree an oak — it would seem that it exists in order to cover the mountains and valleys with oaks. It is not economic, it does not spare, it brings forth and scatters the life for ten thousand oaks. Because of conditions only few will grow. Few will ever germinate, but it matters not. Season after season it lifts its head to the storm, sways in the tempest; endures in the cold in order to scatter another crop of germinal life, some take root, and stand a forest after an hundred years.

The good seed are the children of the kingdom. They have been planted by the hand of the Lord here and there. They have sprung up and are trees of righteousness planted by the rivers of water whose leaf does not wither and who bring forth their fruit in their season. There are no economic laws of life-giving in the Divinely baptized heart. The life is forever going forth.

Wherever there is a Christ-baptized soul there will be a life movement. No community can remain unchanged that has within it a tree of life.

We must consider the conditions of multiplication. I take it for granted that where one oak stands and flourishes, others may. And yet we must not ignore soil and climatic conditions. Jesus told us of the sower who went forth to sow and of the different soil into which the seed fell. Probably He told us this because soil has to be prepared and because of our responsibility, somewhat for its condition. It is true Jesus could not do many mighty works in a certain place because of their unbelief. It is also true that Jesus in the incarnation was but a fore-runner of Jesus in the Holy Ghost; and what He might not do shut up in the chrysalis of the incarnation, He can do in the freedom and power of the Holy Spirit. It is now His province to make new climatic conditions which will soften the valleys and make the mountains flow. There is power in the Holy Ghost to melt snow and rock. It is His office to break up the fallow ground, to awaken and break the stony heart. If the life of God abounds in us our own life will be strong. Difficult conditions only add to vigor and power of life development. Strength of soul, health of spirit means large measure of Divine manifestation in us, and gives large opportunity for His manifestation through us.

"And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." This is translated or paraphrased by the Holy Spirit, through the lips of Zecharias to mean that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our lives.

There is in this the voice of victory. In this multiplying life by the power of God there is victory for His saints conquering victory. The Church has, through her smallness of faith, little conception

of the conquering power that the indwelling Christ waits to give. In this war we have learned to doubt, to fear, to question — to try to be prudent and careful. We have learned but little of expectancy after the Divine pattern. We have scarcely learned to be really filled with the Divine enthusiasm, to yield fully to the Spirit that made Pentecost; we have scarcely learned the faith that knows no policy but simply obeys the onward command to blow the trumpets and break the pitchers and shout the victory.

We are likely to think we are a little company and the enemy a great host. We do well to remember Elisha's servant and his vision, also Jonathan and his armour bearer.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 19

THE OPEN DOOR

TEXT — Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. — Rev 3:8

An open door is a possibility, an opportunity, a hope. Doors are opened to men, to people, to organizations; and, doors are closed. "He openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth."

Possibilities come, and then cease to be possibilities. There is an opportunity, and then it passes away. There is a hope, and it dies like a burnt out star, which burns and glows and flashes, then grows dim and dark and is gone forever. The Lord said in this message to the church at Philadelphia, "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth and shutteth and no man openeth." The Lord openeth; He gives opportunity. He shutteth — opportunity is gone forever. It is necessarily so; things cannot abide. Every thing moves on. Things must be taken at their flow or, receding they are forever lost.

The great thing sought for man — sought in the councils of God; sought by the incarnation, in atoning blood; sought by the struggling ministry of the Holy Ghost is a new opportunity. The great climax has been reached. Man has a new chance an open door of new possibility; a door of hope. That is a marvelous utterance of the Spirit through the prophet Hosea — "I will give her the valley of Achor for a door of hope." Achor was the dark place — the place of disaster, defeat, wreck; and that place of darkness is made a door of hope. Where the wreck and ruin came, there the Cross is raised. Sin has caused the awful blight and curse, but right in the very place where the curse falls, there the Blood flows. The Lamb of God dies to take away the sin of the world.

The Son of God has made the darkest place of human history the most luminous place in this universe. Every thing is dim beside it. Ten thousand suns gathered into one, would be blackness itself compared to the unspeakable glory of the cross of Christ. The Cross is the great suffering, infinite, crowning glory of God. It is the mighty, struggling, dying effort to do what omnipotence can not do; to accomplish the impossible; to cause infinite justice and infinite mercy to kiss each other over the brow of a doomed man, and folding their arms about him, lift him to a new possibility. To the amazement of a moral universe it is done. Infinite love, infinite suffering bring it to pass.

'Tis mercy all! the immortal dies!
Who can explore this strange design?
In vain the first born seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore,
Let angel minds inquire no more."

A door of hope is opened for man. A possibility is set before us. There is light for darkness, purity for impurity. The opportunity is ours which leads to regeneration, sanctification, glorification.

We read that in one of the cities of ancient Greece there was a statue known as "Opportunity." It stood on tiptoe to indicate that it tarried but a moment. Its feet were winged to show the speed with which it passed. Long hair hung down from the forehead, to impress the thought that we must seize the opportunity as it approached. The back of the head was entirely bald; enforcing the truth that when an opportunity is once passed it is forever gone.

The great truth that an Opportunity for salvation has been provided and that it must be seized now before it vanishes forever can not be too greatly emphasized, The history of the ages is strewn with bleaching skeletons of what were personal possibilities, dead and gone forever. There are not only privileges of personal salvation, but God calls His people to the glory of His own ministry. He said to the Father in reference to the disciples. "The glory which thou gavest me. I have given them." He sets His people in families; He calls them out in bands; He leads them forth as an army. The question of the ages in reference to the Church is, "Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, bright as the sun, fair as the moon, terrible as an army with banners?" Jesus Christ is, himself, the leader of the mighty host.

On this new year Sabbath, this message especially comes to us as a people — "Behold I have set before thee an open door." This means the call of God to the work of God. May I speak a little this morning, to those who are banded together for this work. Our friends who are here incidentally or providentially, will feel that it is the thing for us to look in the face the great work to which God has called us. Thy are interested and will appreciate that which is to us more of a family matter. For almost a week of years we have been directly engaged in this work, begun after a long providential preparation, and, one thing is evident to us and, I think, to all men who have given the matter sufficient attention to have formed a judgment — that it has borne the test of Gamaliel "If this work be of men it will come to naught. but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it." God called us to this work — a little band. The faith and heroism of that little company, looking into the face of that which they were undertaking can scarcely be appreciated.

Even more difficult to apprehend are the marvelous leadings and precious overruling providences which God has vouchsafed us. God has called us. Thus far the Lord hath led us. Astonishing to us as it must be to all who know the facts, this work is a movement.

Into it God hath called a multitude of His anointed ones. Thousands of people have been converted and sanctified, and yet it is evident that what has been a done has been largely preparatory.

Today the word comes to us with a force such as it has never had before — "Behold, I set before you an open door. We are placed in one of the chief cities of the Pacific coast and the way is open before us. Los Angeles is, emphatically, one of the eyes of America.

The call of God is to preach holiness; to gather in close fellowship where the experience of the baptism with the Holy Ghost can be enjoined and testified to and preached without let or hindrance, where men and women can be established in holiness. God is making this an example of what He

can do—even through weak agencies—where men and women, in the liberty of the gospel, are united in the Holy Ghost to build up His kingdom.

I would emphasize this;—God has called us, He has set before us an open door; we have a divinely appointed mission. This means something more than a mere preference for this church. We may prefer a place of large liberty, of spiritual triumph and victory—I do not wonder at this, I do myself—and some may come to us because of this, but if they are true to God, they will soon see deeper and further. Unless they have this further vision they miss the call of God and the spirit of this work. It does not matter what others have or do not have, what others do or do not do, God has called us to a work. Other battalions may fight well or ill, God has called us to bear on the banner. God calls us to do a work that he will have done. It is not simply a matter of convenience or pleasure that we are here only as the will of God is our pleasure, and His work more than convenience but because the call of God is upon us.

If any man or woman can easily be any where else, they have never heard the inner voice of God in reference to this work. The devil or some other folks may tell you that you live at a distance—it is inconvenient to attend—very good meetings may be had nearer home, etc, etc. If the call of God is upon you, it is not good meetings or convenience that you seek; but to build the altar of God where the fire from heaven falls. If you are so circumstanced that you can do nothing else, you can work by way of the throne; you can pray until heaven opens and the fire of God fills all about in saving power.

When Garibaldi was raising his army he said, "I have no money, no food, no clothing, no stores, no resources. Let every man who is willing to suffer poverty, shame, hunger disease, death follow me." God has called us to this work—to sacrifice and toil, to devotion and hardship; to prayer and supplication, to proclamation and testimony. He has called us to a movement from which nothing can deviate us.

We stand in the ranks, we wait around the Throne. We march with fixed bayonets of flashing testimony. Nothing can turn us from the appointed way. We go onward to victory.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 20

A MARVELOUS THING

TEXT — Herein is a marvelous thing. — John 9:30

The marvel is that men do not receive Jesus Christ; that they do not love light more than darkness — the mountains more than the swamps. The marvel is that men are not governed by the truth — by that which is to them the truth — and that their bad hearts ride roughshod over their judgment, take away their discernment and turn their acts into folly.

Heart folly is the most common and most fatal. The heart assumes the throne, it dominates the will and overthrows intellectual conditions. This is emphasized by the statement — "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God" — not in his head, it is utterly unthinkable. No man can stand in this universe and not feel in his highest, deepest convictions that God is. But the heart is not governed by intellectual conclusions. It moves out and on, with no recognition of such, and says, (so far as its own utterance or act — which is affection — is concerned) "there is no God." That a man does not set himself to have his heart brought into recognition of the facts is his folly.

But how shall a man deal with his master, in other words, bring the wicked, godless heart to recognize and obey God? It is here that grace comes in. The will turns the heart over to God; gives the heart to God — a bad, unloving, rebellious heart — and God gives him a new heart, a loyal, God-loving heart. This is the mystery of the new birth, and a man is a new creation, not in his intellects but in his heart.

The great difficulty with men is heart difficulty. When the heart difficulty is corrected and men are made holy in heart the whole man is made loyal to God and the veil is taken off from the intellect so that it more readily perceives spiritual truth, and the will is balanced so that it acts freely towards righteousness and the life is impelled in all the ways of godliness.

The marvel is that men do not bring their hearts to judgment, the judgment of righteousness, to the fountain provided for sin and uncleanness. That a man can not be righteous with a sinful heart is true, but he can bring, by force of insurrection, God helping him, that heart and deliver it a bound captive to God. It is the height of folly to say that a man is not to surrender to God until his heart is free to it. King James might just as well have said "I will never execute Monmouth until he is willing to be executed." If Parliament had waited to behead Charles I until he was willing to be beheaded, that scene of a scaffold and its royal victim in front of the banqueting house at Whitehall would never have been witnessed. If the human heart is never given to God for righteousness until it is willing, it will never be given.

That Jesus Christ is the Saviour of men; that He has opened up a way out of sin — a way of moral purity and spiritual transformation is conspicuously evident. That men do not bring their hearts, and yield them up to God for new life and love, is the marvel.

Jesus Christ is always convincing. Take His ministry here on earth. He himself said, "If I had not done among them the works that none other did they had not had sin." "But now they have no excuse for their sin." Since the resurrection and ascension of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Ghost, the evidence has been gradually transferred from the field of miracles to experience, testimony, and the voice of God in conscience, the evidence is, if possible, still more overwhelming.

Christ in this world and His power to save men from sin, is a fact which the eyes of men see as they see the shining of the sun. The Christly mission, His power to save, and the perversity of the heart of unbelief are clearly illustrated by this incident in His ministry. Here was a man born blind; evidently a fit case for miraculous grace, well suited to receive it and be a monument of it. As Jesus looked at him it seemed that the one end of his being was that the works of God might be manifested in him. The cause and purpose of his being blind are swallowed up in this one possibility of grace. The one fact that rises above all others, far above all questionings and theories — in reference to every immortal spirit blinded and wrecked by sin, is that here is an opportunity for the manifestation of the work of God. This man was born blind. The great difficulty with men is inherited conditions. It is not so much what you do today, or did yesterday — that is bad enough — but that it is in you to do it.

The sin of the world is not act but being. Man is bad not only in act but, what is infinitely worse, in being. The leprosy lies deep within. Speculate as you may, theologize as you will, the fact remains that man's being is bad; the fountain is bitter. One thing is certain, it is a magnificent opportunity for God. Here is a case for the work of God to be manifested.

Jesus gave a prescription "I must work the works of Him that sent me." "I am the light of the world." He proceeded to fill the prescription which was the application of Himself to the need.

This is the universal prescription, Christ Himself must do it. He only is the light of life. I may not understand the intervening links, nor the process, but it is Christ who doeth it. When that woman crept through the crowd and touched the hem of His garment, I only know she was healed; somehow, I know not how, out through that seamless robe, went the virtue from His great heart throbs of love and power. When He stood by the bier of that young man and took his cold, dead hand in His, and said, "I say unto thee arise," I do not know how it was, but the closed eyes opened and the dead man sat up. I have laid my hand on many a bier; I have seen many men do likewise, but nothing like this ever came to pass. But Jesus worked the work. As He sat at meat in Simon, the Pharisee's house, there is a strange scene: a woman has crept through the crowd, in through the open portal, and has come to His feet. The tears are falling, not tears of sorrow, but of love and peace and joy. See, she has broken an alabaster box of ointment, and is anointing His feet! She kisses them, her tears fall and she wipes them with the hairs of her head. Look at her, look deeper into her heart as the Master, Himself uncovers it. See that great love and joy. How was it done? We only know that deep down in her heart He had whispered the forgiving words, and from a forlorn, hopeless sinner she has come to be a joyous, loving disciple. I only know that He doeth it. So here in this case, I only know that

He did it. It is true He takes from His own lips and mixes with the dust and makes the soft clay with which He anoints the eyes; that He gives directions and the man hastens in obedience. These may be types; that which He takes from His own lips may represent His truth, the earth which He takes may represent the earthen pitchers who bear the truth, or into whom the truth comes; and, altogether, may represent the truth of Jesus mingled with human ministry. I do not know, I only know He did it. The man obediently washed, and, marvel of marvels, in through those sightless eyeballs the light of heaven shone and before them were the ten thousand images of beauty. The works of God were manifested in real change, in real experience, from darkness to light.

If this be a real figure or if it be but an illustration which I am permitted to use today, in either case it is full of truth. This is what Jesus still does — He anoints human eyes. His truth is still mixed with human agency and it is poured upon the blind eyes of men, and He who still works the work of God — who is still the Light of the world commands, hath thy soul in the Siloam of Atoning Blood, believe on the Son of God, and the obedient soul, wondering, looks up to the light of a new universe. I do not know how it is, but he is a new creature in Christ Jesus. There was no question concerning this man's sight. He knew, and all who came in contact with him knew that he could see. All who had ever known him saw the marvelous change.

All eyes see the works of God. They are manifest. An experience of the things of God manifests itself. All perceive at once, the difference between a man blind and one who sees between a worldly and a spiritual man. The new life declares itself as the lighted candle declares itself in a dark room, There is no counterfeiting light, and when the light of the world comes into a human soul that soul shines and all in the house see the light. God does not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick to shine. He not only says "I am the light of the world," but also, "Ye are the light of the world."

This man saw, he knew it and others knew it. He was not trying to see; he was not straining his eyes and saying "I hope I shall see" or "I think I see," "I trust I see." How calm he was, how comfortable amid all the quibbling. He knew it was all right. He knew he could see.

Wherever this work of God is manifested, there is likely to be much commotion. A good deal of fault finding; something done on the Sabbath day that ought not to have been done. So much noise around the altar. How is it brother? I'm afraid everything has not been done in order? I don't know about the order, one thing I know — I was blind and now I see.

The works of God were manifested through this man by his testimony. He would not be drawn away into argument, or discussion of questions of doubt. He simply said "I do not know." "One thing I know, whereas I was blind I now see." He did not wait to live out his experience.

In this day there is much discarding of testimony. "I will see how he lives." This man did not wait to live it out and prove by months and years of labor that he could see. He did not discuss the tomorrow at all. He simply said, "I have it now. It does not matter so much to me what you think, the unspeakable fact is mine. I have 'the blessing.' "

This man was beyond matters of policy, even ecclesiastical policy. His father and mother do not appear to have been what we could have wished. Indeed we might infer that they would have chosen for their son continued blindness, and the maintenance of their ecclesiastical standing in the old church, rather than have his eyes opened and ecclesiastical disgrace.

One would have supposed this miracle would have filled them with unspeakable joy and they would hasten to declare that this son, who was born blind, could now see; that he, over whom they had grieved and longed that he might see the sunlight and look upon their faces, had received the touch of Jesus Christ and was healed.

Even though they were cautioned to be careful — because the priests had said that if any confess Jesus to be the Christ he should be put out of the synagogue it would matter not. Sight is better than blindness; life better than death. We have lived in the old church, but if they put us out, because of our belief in Him and confession that He did this marvelous miracle, all right. Instead of this we find the parents governed by policy.

The man, himself, however utterly refused any such motives. Again and again he told the glad story — one Jesus made clay and anointed mine eyes, told me to wash: I washed and mine eyes were opened.

When they continued to ask him, not for information, but for quibbling, he said, "Will ye also be His disciples?" Here was the clear confession and so put as to be aggressive and make decision on their part necessary. Then they reviled him. "Thou art His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses, as for this fellow we know not from whence he is." The man said, "Herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence He is and yet He hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, He heareth him. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God he could do nothing."

"And they cast him out." He was not the last one that the touch of Jesus Christ has made unacceptable to a dead ecclesiasticism, as was Jesus himself. Some of the grandest souls of all the ages have been those that a dead ecclesiasticism thrust out — John Huss, Jerome, Ridley, Chrysostom, Luther, Zwingle, Savonarola, Wesley, etc., etc. It is still true that dead ecclesiasticism may have little use for those whose eyes have been opened by the anointing of Jesus Christ.

"They cast him out." Whenever this occurs walk carefully, for Jesus is sure to know about it, and there is one thing He is sure to do, i.e., to hunt you up. He did this in the case of the blind man and in a new and peculiar way revealed Himself to him.

"Herein is a marvelous thing" — the way men treat the light, the truth. Nevertheless Jesus passes by and some blind eyes get a touch of truth even through lips of clay.

Oh, that His Spirit, mingling with our spirit might be the clay which He will take and anoint the eyes of the blind, and that men, through His divine power, may see.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 21

THE LIFTING OF THE VAIL

TEXT — But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. — 2 Cor 3:18

We deal very largely in our preaching, with the settling of the sin question, because, with so many it is the present, vital question, and the one which must be so soon settled. Yet this is only an introductory question, and the experience, whereby it is accomplished only a preparatory experience. As the opening of the eyes of a blind man is the necessary preparation in order to behold the ten thousand things about him; so the settling of the sin question is the one [and] only way which prepares a man to behold the things of God and be filled with them. This can scarcely be called Christian experience; it is experience preparatory to it.

This text deals, both with Christian experience, and the initiatory steps of the Christian life, but more especially with the life itself. It leads us through the portal and along the transforming way. The apostle is here, through the figurative teaching of the Old Testament, showing us our privileges. He shows that as the people stood and worshipped and received the commands and teachings of the Lord, through the lips of Moses, that there was a vast difference between their experience and that of the great law-giver; but he goes on to teach that now that difference is done away. When Moses, after forty days of closest fellowship with God, came down from the Mount and began to give the people God's commands and directions, the Divine manifestations in him were too great for their eyes, so that, for their sakes, he put a vail upon his face while he talked to them; but when he turned and entered the tabernacle to commune with the Lord he took it off. This vail was not in reality over Moses' eyes, but over the people's. It was a covering to them and hid from them the Divine glory. Paul uses it as a figure to show that, through the ages, there had been a covering over the eyes of the Jews which had prevented them from seeing the full-orbed glory revealed in the Word of God. But, when they turn to Christ, it is taken away.

The same teaching is brought out in Hebrews where we are told that the vail which covered the holy of holies was rent by the death of Jesus, and that the way is kept open by His blood so that we can enter with boldness, and that the real glory which was prefigured by the Shechinah in the holy of holies is now open to every believer. If we would understand what the taking away of this vail from the hearts of men really means, we must see what privilege of experience God-ward there was for believers which tarried until after the work of sacrifice was accomplished on Calvary. It is clear that much of the benefits of the work of atonement was vouchsafed to man before the incarnation. If this had not been the case there could have been no incarnation.

The continued existence of the race on earth was a gift of atoning grace. The Lion of the tribe Judah had undertaken to break the seals of human destiny. The slain Lamb was before the Throne.

In connection with this was given the pardon of sins, and the possibility of walking in fellowship with God. Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Elijah, John the Baptist and a host of others of whom we know, besides a great multitude whose names are written only in the Book of Life, thus walked with God. The forgiveness of sins and a faith vouchsafed that made men and women heroes for God did not wait the accomplishment of the sacrifice on Calvary which was already offered in heaven.

But there were some things which waited. As Paul declares to the Corinthians, there is a wisdom unto our glory which was ordained of God before the world was and which none of the princes of this world knew. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." Paul also declares to the Colossians that his ministry is to make known the mystery, hid from ages and from generations but which is now made manifest to His saints. And in Hebrews, after making known the mighty faith and upholding power given unto the heroes of God through the ages, it is declared that God has "provided some better thing for us." I desire to emphasize that this "better thing" is not the forgiveness of sins; but is that which is found within the veil.

It is not simply the taking away of the veil, nor that there is a way of Blood into the holiest; all this is but the settling of the sin question.

The veil, over the eyes of a man surrendered to God is sin — not committed sins but the sin conditions which are his as a child of Adam. It blurs the vision, it hides God from the soul.

To any man who has not come into the mystery of the Gospel of Jesus, the Scriptures are a comparatively dim revelation. We are continually met with — "I don't see it." "The Scriptures do not teach to me a second definite work of grace." The veil, though rent, still hangs between him and the glory of the inner court.

The first essential thing for every Christian is that the veil be taken away. The conversion of the soul in the forgiveness of sins and the impartation of life in the giving of a new heart can scarcely be called Christian experience. It is the touch of God. Much of it is a sinner's experience. The repentance wrought by the Holy Ghost is the experience of one yet a sinner. The forgiveness comes to a sinner. The gift of the new life comes with the pardon that justifies a sinner through the Blood of the atonement. The work for us and in us which we call conversion is transitional. It lifts the soul from darkness to light, but it can scarcely be called in any complete sense Christian experience. So, also, with the marvelous work of entire sanctification. It is largely a dealing with sin. It is taking away the sin of the world. John said of Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Entire sanctification is primarily the final settlement of the sin question. Many things are resultant, some immediately so. The One who destroys carnality fills the soul with His own presence. The removal of the veil begins to flood the soul with light.

Our text not only refers to the taking away of the veil, but, especial, to the subsequent experience. It is Christ's plan to make short work of the settling of the sin question, just as when He raised Lazarus from the dead He made short work of the grave-clothes.

The great thing is Christian life — soul life. There is one Christian experience in this earth. We thank God for what there is. But I am more and more convinced that any thing like a creditable article of Christian experience is now and always has been a scarce commodity. Men and women who have passed the first and second stations of initiatory work, in whom carnality is destroyed, who are crucified to the world, in whom Jesus Christ lives His life on earth, who go on with steady victory through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony are not plentiful.

I examined with a good deal of interest Charles Wesley's hymns on consecration and sanctification as often in the Methodist Hymnal — about sixty of them. Their teaching is very clear in reference to the doctrine of entire sanctification. Over and over is repeated the deep, impassioned cry, the promise of God and the way to enter in. That men are to enter now, by faith, is plainly taught. They give rare, little glimpses of experience which comes after one has entered, but viewed more as a hope.

One of these hymns, "Wrestling Jacob," thought by some to be the greatest ever written, not only delineates the way, but dwells upon the glory and triumph of the obtained experience. But why the fact that all, or nearly all, of these hymns deal only with the transitional period, if it be not that this was the place where the church at that day largely lived?

The hymnology of the worship of holy hearts is scarce. The great hymns — those most familiar to us, which the fathers and mothers have sung — are mostly a cry out of the darkness, a cry for help; the cry of need. "Rock of Ages," "Jesus Lover of my Soul," and among another class of singers, "Nearer my God to Thee," and "Lead kindly Light," are all prized, but are they not chiefly a cry out of the darkness for light and help?

I hardly know whereto turn for singable hymns of real devotion. We have what is called a rich hymnology. But the hymns are so largely, simply sentimental, or descriptive, or the cry of an imprisoned soul for deliverance, or an endangered one for help! I admit, good in their places, but hardly the songs to be sung by holy hearts at the feet of Him whom we love better than all else. The songs of worship and adoration — where shall we find them? Now why this scarcity, except it be from the scarcity of soil out from whence such hymns spring? Much longing hunger, struggle, theology, but little real adoration. This is why we delight in such songs as that of Mrs. James' —

"Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus,
I've lost sight of all beside,
So enchained my spirit's vision,
Looking at the Crucified."

And that other little chorus, "Hallelujah Amen" —

"How oft in holy converse
With Christ my Lord alone,
I seem to hear the millions
That sing around His throne."

We have but little triumphant literature. It is true more than there is of hymnology as there is more of life than genius. We have biographies which burn and glow, not alone with service, but with red-hot devotion of soul to God. And now and then utterances, some have come down through the ages which are the thoughts of God melted and recast in human souls, but they are not plentiful.

We have testimony and living, in these days — manifestations of hearts which are burning furnaces unto God, sending out their utterances like red-hot fire balls, and their lives are rivers of life in this world — but there is not much of it.

There are churches which are Pentecostal, not simply in name, but in the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, where men and women walk in His fellowship and are filled with His heavenly comfort, to whom earth is a little antechamber to the skies, a little standing place to stretch their pinions for immortal flight — churches unworldly, heavenly-minded, divinely filled — but they are evidently scarce.

Our apprehension of religion, which gives to us our type, is low, almost, if not altogether, unworthy of Him who emptied Himself of the infinite glory to take our place; who though He was rich, became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich — He who wrought out in pain, in infinite heart agony, in sacrifice for sin, in the manifestation of Divine power; re-instated and re-endowed our humanity with eternal glory, and to make it effectual came as the Eternal Spirit to make men holy, that they might know Thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

We linger this morning near the gateway of this most excellent glory to say to men — the King invites.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 22

THE TRANSFIGURING GAZE

TEXT — But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. — 2 Cor 3:18

The removal of the vail signifies — as shown in the text, and dwelt upon in a previous discourse the taking away of that which dims our vision of the Divine glory. The works of regeneration and of entire sanctification are both divinely wrought in the soul. Both deal largely with the sin question. Of course pardon of sins is not regeneration more than pardoning a man out of the penitentiary makes him an honest man. But, when God forgives, the penitent heart longs to be free from sinful conditions as well as condemnation, and God gives him a new life within, a life which is lovingly loyal to the will of God. So regeneration, as popularly understood is the forgiveness of our sins and their removal by the cleansing of the conscience as to past sins and the implanting of the new life. In entire sanctification the remains of sin or the inherited sinful conditions are removed, such as the remains of anger, pride, worldly ambition, etc., and in their place comes a fullness of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Both of these works of grace deal largely with sin and bring the ransomed, blood-washed soul to the end of that question. That soul has demonstrated that Jesus Christ fulfills His mission in the taking away of the sin of the world; and, at least in some measure, is made a partaker of the Divine nature. The life within is "Christ in us."

There is but one way of life — the way of holiness. There is but one way of hope and victory and glory — the way of holiness. Every man should know his latitude and longitude in reference to the sin question.

Every Christian must have it settled forever; must walk in the light and know that the blood cleanseth from all sin. Little is really possible to Christian men until this is done. It is the especial provision of atoning blood. If a man does not seek and possess it, then, why? There can be but one answer — he yields to carnality, does not hunger and thirst after holiness and is ensnared by indwelling sin. He becomes, according to Hebrews, a fornicator or profane person of whom Esau is the type, who for the gratification of some appetite sells his birthright or inheritance in the blood of Jesus.

We are not, here, considering such a person further than to urge him not to receive the grace of God in vain — having put his hand to the plow not to turn back. We are to consider the earnest soul who has heard and heeded the voice of God; whose surrender meant surrender, and who, in accord with that surrender, has fully yielded himself up to the blessed will of God for holiness, and has through the blood of Jesus "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust;" one who has

come where, with the undimmed vision of a pure heart, he gazes into the Divine glory. It is to such that this text refers, who "Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory." The glory of the Lord is seen as in a mirror. The mirror reflects and shows us the glory. The glory of God is seen only in two ways — as light, which is seen only around a wick, or in a mirror.

The earth, with atmosphere and vegetation and ocean, is a mirror which reflects and thus reveals to us the light of the sun. Every world where the fire has gone out, or is so far cooled that it is covered up — as this earth its moon and the other planets of our solar system are mirrors and show us the light of the sun by reflection. When I look into the face of the moon or at Venus or Jupiter, or upon the mountains or ocean, or at the flowers, I see the glory of the sun in a mirror. When I look directly at the sun, which in my present condition I am almost unable to do, I see the light from the fire about the wick. These electric poles bear the wick aloft. These glass bulbs hold a wick, as do the lamps in our houses.

The apostle here teaches that the revealed truth — the gospel of God — is a mirror. God's glory has been and is revealed otherwise than in a mirror; there must be a light in order that it may be reflected. Jesus Christ is the central sun. Divine light burned about the wick of a human soul with indescribable glory. Like the brightness in Moses' face, it was too great for human vision and was veiled in flesh. Nevertheless it shone in utterances such as were never made before; in works such as were never before witnessed; in unutterable meekness and gentleness and sorrow and suffering and dying and resurrection power. He poured the light of His glory, not so much directly into human hearts, as into revealed truth, until the background of the Old Testament was covered all over with the polished surface of the new covenant of fulfilled prophecy and atoning Blood. Then he went away into the heavens, not to cease to shine but to open a new window through which to pour the light of His glory into the mirror of His truth.

Today this truth is not truth alone, but a divinely constructed mirror where, by the light of the Holy Ghost, God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ. I may not fully understand it but the bloodwashed so looking out through uncovered eyes, gazing into this truth sees God — "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" — sees Him, not in wonder works; the presence of this vision of God, in His truth by the Holy Ghost, even miracles are but as toys. It is in visions that men and women are transformed. It is in the vision of holiness that men put on holiness. It was when Isaiah saw the King and the Seraphim and heard them as they worshipped saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory," that his iniquity was taken away and his sin purged. Only as we get a vision of the holiness of God and of the holiness of true worship, do we cry out until the fire touches our lips. Likewise, it is only by the clearer vision of God that we are transformed from glory to glory.

When the precious second work of grace is accomplished in the human heart, every element of Christian life exists in completeness or perfection. Not the perfection of largest growth nor of greatest maturity, but the perfection which comes from the absence of antagonisms. Perfection may not depend upon size nor strength, nor quantity. A little rippling stream, that an ox might drink dry, may be as perfect water as the Congo where it is eighty miles wide. A thimble full of sugar may be

just as perfect sugar as a hogshead; a new born babe may be just as perfect in every organ as a full grown man.

Christian perfection is brought about by the second work of grace, and means, primarily that the antagonisms of sin have been removed and that the soul is filled with the love of God — the pure love of God fills a pure heart. All the elements of Christian Life are here in perfection; not perfection of strength, nor fulfilled possibility, but of freedom from antagonisms — faith unmixed with doubt; hope unmixed with fear; love unmixed with hatred. To such an one the veil is removed and he looks, with uncovered face, into the revealed glory. The mirror is the revealed Word of God. The person whose face shine in the mirror is Jesus Christ. The light of that face is so thrown into the Word by the power of the Holy Ghost that as the man looks with unveiled eyes he sees Jesus only; and to him, in all the Word, there is just one fact — Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, mighty to save, in whom dwells all the fullness the Godhead.

Beholding, this glory as in a mirror, we are transformed. This does not mean a change of moral conditions, but a receiving of the glory into which we gaze. The same Greek word "*metamorphoōmai*" here translated "changed" — R. V. "transformed" — is used of Jesus in the sentence "He was transfigured before them" — "changed," "transformed," "transfigured."

There was no change in Jesus' moral nature, but there was a revelation or manifestation in Him of divine glory. There are some conditions and tendencies to be overcome by this beholding in the mirror His glory. Entire sanctification does not save a man from all of the conditions resultant from the fall from which he needs to be saved. He is still dull of apprehension — sharpened somewhat, brightened somewhat, still dull. His intellect is weak, and, more or less inactive, etc. His will though freed from the power of evil and habit that caused it to act as a trip hammer toward evil, or weakly toward God and righteousness, now acts freely God-ward, yet it has not the strength, always, of an imperial purpose.

There are hereditary conditions of temperament and habit. His grandfather and father were behind time and this man seems to have been born late and never to have caught up. The slowness lingers in him. There is a condition of lack of industry, both mental and physical slothfulness, a more or less wrecked condition of brain and muscle, that purifying the heart and filling it with love does not in a moment fully cure. Though it properly centers the purpose, and provides motor power, yet there may be lack of such adjustments of the intellectual and spiritual machinery that the power does not get fully supplied. Then the capacity for the conveyance of power to the intellectual and physical faculties so as to produce the proper intensity is evidently too small and the motor too weak to receive power sufficient to run much of a business. Some have only a one horse-power motor, with a twenty-horse-power business on hand, and, of course, the power gives out, not because there is not an abundance at the central works, but, because there is no enlarged capacity to receive and use it.

It is evident that there is much to be done in, and thus through a man after he is sanctified wholly. The apostle says we are to behold, to gaze into the Word. We are to lay hold of it. We are to put our arms about the exceeding great and precious promises. We are to appropriate power of God by the faith which Jesus has already given us. It is no accidental or incidental thing for a sanctified man or woman to behold the Divine glory.

To behold means so much. It is not a casual look. It is a continuous gaze. It is putting things aside. It is the gathering up of our forces. It is the soul's longing passion toward God. It is being lost and overwhelmed in one great passionate longing Godward — a longing that would take advantage of every possible force and effort of our being to plunge deeper into the God-head's sea and be lost in His infinity.

Then comes the transfiguring power, by the Lord, the Spirit. The Holy Ghost will possess the impassioned soul. The intellect will feel its power. There will be acceleration and tenacity and firmness of grasp. He will overcome hereditary tendencies and temperament. He will engender intensity, enlarge the motor, and strengthen the conductors.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 23

THE TRANSFERRED IMAGE

TEXT — But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. — 2 Cor 3:18

The image of the Lord is to be transferred to us by Him who walketh among us, who ministereth to us the Spirit and worketh miracles among us. I concede at once, that no man can receive and bear the image of the Christ by any ordinary process; that it must be wrought upon the soul by the miracle working Spirit. And yet, as it is said here that we are to be changed into the same Image, it becomes us to humbly wait and reverently inquire — what and how? What does this strange, marvelous utterance mean in human experience, and how is it to be received?

In the previous discourses from this text, I have somewhat considered these questions, but further and closer attention will help us I note that there are some experiences which come from the blessings of the grace of Jesus Christ which, in themselves are epochs, and, that there are some which are eras — never ending eras. These words are so interchangeable that I am not sure that I speak with exactness, but I mean that there are experiences which come from a work of God, which work is done and completed within a comparatively brief space of time; and that also there are experiences which come with ever enlarging glory, experiences which have no other shore — the greater and the more complete they are, the more incomplete they seem as the soul looks out into greater possibilities. They may be compared to knowledge. The man who knows nothing, or next to nothing, sees little possibility and feels little lack; while a student of half a century is sensible of his emptiness, being overwhelmed by the vastness of untrodden fields. So with these Christian experiences the further we go out into them, the more we are lost in the vast unmeasured glory that lures us on.

The conversion of the soul is an experience which is an epoch — the work may be done in a little time. The entire sanctification of the soul is also an epoch — a work of comparatively brief time. The new born soul receives revelation of the holiness of God and sees its own uncleanness and cries out "I am undone," "I am a man of unclean lips." "Who shall deliver me?" And Jesus Christ our Lord touches him with his hand of fire and lo, his sin is purged — he is made holy. The work is accomplished. It is an epoch. A place to reckon from.

But the transfiguring glory, which changes the soul more fully into the divine image, is the work resulting from the manifestation in us of the divine glory — more and more marvelous, ever more and more complete and, yet seemingly, more and more incomplete, because of the added revelation of our possibilities and privileges in Christ Jesus.

There is no top to the divine heights, there is no bottom to the divine depths; there is no shore to the ocean of God's perfections. The soul bathes and drinks, and drinks and bathes, and says, "I know Him better and love Him more forever and forever and, yet, I stand awe inspired in the presence of the infinite glory, which, though I come nigh, is ever unapproachable; though I bathe my soul in it and am filled yet its measureless heights and depths and lengths and breadths overwhelm me.

What is the image which I am to receive by the Lord, the Spirit? It must be something like unto that which I have received in the baptism with the Spirit; indeed it must be the same — more abundantly the same, for the text says "from glory to glory."

When the Lord sanctifies a soul; that soul knows what the conscious indwelling glory is, but it knows very little of what the out-workings of that glory are, in being and in life. Glory as a joy, as a flame kindling and burning every sentiment and emotion is glorious, but glory in being, in character, in life is far more glorious. When Moses saw the flame in the bush and heard God talk to him and removed his shoes because the place whereon he stood was holy ground, he was surely moved by emotions which he had never before felt, and a transfiguring glory came unto his soul. But afterward on the mount the fire so continuously burned in him and about him that it permeated every part of his being. It was something more than emotion for he "wist not that his face shone." Out beyond emotion, there was a dominancy of divine glory more than will, purpose, emotion, character. Somewhat like unto this there is a glory that transforms the affections, directs the purpose and strengthens the will. It is enclosed, so to speak, in a rough non-conducting translucent manhood, but the transforming by the Spirit of God goes on and on, as we gaze into the glory of God as revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, in the mirror of His word.

We are to be "changed into the same image." All of His holy ones have something of it, enough for recognition. The two disciples who were arrested, so demeaned themselves, so spoke, manifested such a spirit that their resemblance to Jesus was at once seen — the Sanhedrin took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him". So it is with all who have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, there is such earnestness, firmness and gentleness of spirit and such peculiar light and love and strength and unction, that, if men discern at all they can but see it is not of earth.

While the sanctified heart has all of these elements in perfection, and the shine out distinctly, yet, the absorption and filling and possessing in permanency of all the intellectual and physical life — is a matter of continued and enlarged work. This will be seen if we look a little at the tracery of this image.

I heard that when Michael Angelo was old and blind he delighted to sit before a fragment of a broken statue by one of the old masters and hour after hour pass his fingers lovingly and carefully over it. And so we love to come into the presence of this living Christ as He shines in the mirror and behold His beauty and know that the Spirit is working His image out in us. There are some things which I discern:

1. A perfection of unswerving, unchangeable purpose. One of the things which glorifies the Christ, from a human stand point, is the steadiness and firmness of His purpose. No temptation moved Him. Satan's efforts in the wilderness were futile, and, in other instances, when there was the

shining forth of His might until men were aroused to come and co-operate with Him as a matter of person gain or national patriotism His eye was steadily upon the passion which He came to fulfill. Did the multitudes flock to Him — with much of self in their coming — He opened up to them a little of His great purpose and said that He came down from heaven to give His life a ransom for many and "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." This was to them "an hard saying" and they "went back and walked no more with Him."

Did He ride into Jerusalem, and the shouts of the multitude, the one deep and abiding note is His own agony for them because of their failure in their part of His great purpose. He had one purpose, one baptism, crying, "how am I straitened till it be accomplished?"

This one great purpose He works out in and through His holy ones. You may see it wrought out in every disciple who keeps his eyes fixed on the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

How prominent in Paul. The cry of his being was "this one thing I do." Nothing could turn him from it. He had one great passion — to fulfill the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus.

How it burned in that magnificent hero, Count Ziska, who took up the battle after the martyrdom of Huss and Jerome. How it shone in Martin Luther. When asked if the princes would defend him, "No," he replied. "What then will you do?" "Take refuge under the blue heavens" was the answer, and when he made his confession of the truth before the Diet he said "I can do no other, Amen."

The Holy Ghost works this passion just as mightily in the most obscure child of God. In youth, in age, in prosperity, in poverty, in health, in sickness, living, dying, one supreme purpose — not under the eyes of men, nor for the gaze of the world, but unto him alone — one all consuming purpose to glorify Jesus Christ in His own way as He leads.

2. A supreme all-comprehensive devotement of being unto the Father. This is so peculiar of Jesus Christ that it rises to be the supreme fact of His life. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." "I come to do the will of My Father." Every thing which Jesus Christ did or did not do seemed almost incidental to Him, and in and itself, often might be, one way or the other; that which made it imperative, which made it essential, was the will of the Father.

If you study the gospel carefully to find the peculiarities of Jesus Christ you will be surprised to see how steadily His gaze is into the heavens, how constantly His eyes are unto the Father. He insists that He is sent of the Father. He speaks the words of the Father. He doeth the works of the Father. He judgeth with the Father's judgment. He doeth and suffereth the Father's will. He looks with equanimity into any conditions, into any environment into any sufferings, throwing His arms about the Father's will. We see this in the supreme hour when the surging billows of the worlds sin are rolling around and overwhelming Him. When the agony of the world's despair is upon Him causing Him to sweat great drops of blood, just one fact rises supreme — the will of the Father — "Father thy will be done." Under this will He was adjusted to all earthly conditions and all earthly conditions were adjusted to Him. He was not an optimist. I search in vain in all His utterances for the rose-colored conditions of the Church or world — He said that he sent forth His disciples as sheep among wolves. Their enemies would be those of their own household. Their name should be cast out

as evil. They would be scoured in the synagogues, and some of them put to death; "but he that endureth unto the end shall be saved."

It is true He saw victory, and in the vision of that victory His heart beat with joy. Of one time it is written — "in that hour He rejoiced in Spirit" — it was the triumph of the agony of Calvary — and the coming of the Holy Ghost, whereby Satan was cast down that the poor and unlearned might see the way of glory — but, nevertheless He seemed to see that it would be one long continued battle. Yet, He was not a pessimist. Though the battle was hot upon Him and He saw that it would be upon those who should be His, He also recognized that God can not be defeated and that in this battle — necessarily permitted, that there might be a race of holy beings who choose holiness for its own sake — He holds the forces in His hands, and makes all things work in mercy, also in justice, and to the good of them who love Him. Jesus Christ never uttered a hopeless word. In the Fathers will there are no hopeless words.

It is this supreme loss of ourselves in the will of the Father that is the great part of this changed condition, this transfiguration glory which God puts upon His sanctified ones. Such an one looks to the will of God, rejoices in that will, is lifted above surroundings by it; and looks into what, to others would be the blackness of midnight and the most abject defeat with the same calmness of soul, spiritual waiting upon God, assurance and triumph that he would if conditions were different.

A holy man, may be possibly, for a little while, an optimist or a pessimist. But the transfiguring glory will surely lift him who is lost in the will of God, above it all. See this illustrated in that most marvelous man of the Old Testament, Isaiah. Or take a modern prophet, (they are not very plentiful, and yet, perhaps not so scarce as they seem; the world has little use for them, about the only use it makes, in any age, of a real prophet is a target for the stones. The world today as in all the past worships time-serving men), but take a real prophet of our own century, Mazzini, the prophet of Italy. When his efforts were failures; when friends were defected from him; when he detected distrust in those most dear to him, as to the motives and intentions which sustained and urged him on; when he felt that he was all alone in the world, there was such a void before him that he drew back in terror. But there came to him, in the touch of God, a new morning. He saw that life was not for happiness, nor for self — that it was a mission, and the will of God the supreme fact. He was not without sorrow, he says "I fraternized with sorrow and wrapped myself in it as in a mantle, but yet it was peace." Be learned that "God dwells above the earthly heavens and the holy stars of faith and the future still shines within our souls."

To gaze into the divine glory is to be transformed. There is a famous picture of the death bed of Saint Francis where his fellows are looking at the mark of the wounds in his hands and feet, which it is said, by such intense gazing upon the crucifix, he had transferred to his own person. I do not know as to that, but I do know that gazing upon the glory of God in Jesus Christ the Lord, the Spirit will put upon us His image deeper than outer marks or signs. "We shall be like Him."

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 24

THE CONQUERING WORD

TEXT — So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. — Isa 55:11

The going forth of the word of the Lord means a new day; the commencing of a new era; the beginning of new things. The going forth of the Word of the Lord makes new the face of the earth and changes the condition of every soul to which it comes. "The word that goeth forth out of My mouth." I have wondered if there can be the utterance of a greater fact, than that God speaks. Out of the silence of eternity he utters His voice. His words go forth out of His month.

The Word which God has given to men is not simply a literary treatise — an ordinary or extraordinary impartation of truth. The Word of God is a continuous, fresh utterance and is life and power. It is a fire, a hammer, a sword — the sword of the Spirit.

It is primarily a word of salvation. This statement of the going forth of the Word has to do with the fact that man is a sinner and under the condemnation of death and needs to find the way of life. This text is one of assurance in reference to the salvation of God finding men, and men finding the salvation of God, this the context clearly shows. I desire to call attention to a few things here spoken in reference to the divine utterance in this world.

I. It is a fresh utterance — "it goeth forth." It is not simply an historic statement of truth — even of a statement made to men by the Lord. In some sense this is such a word, but it is much more. I do not undervalue the Bible as a library of literary works — as history, poetry, treatises on ethics or eschatology, especially as a treatise on Christology — but, if the Word of God, in this world, is only a history of divine utterance, of divine teaching, although it would still be helpful to devout and studious men, yet I submit that it would be entirely inadequate to the work which must be done in this rebellious world and which Jesus Christ has undertaken to do. My text represents this matter in the true light. "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth." It shows that the Word of God is a present utterance from the Divine lips, that the message of God is spoken to the hearts of men by the Divine voice, and that now, although historic utterances may prepare the way and human hearts and lips may help, yet, through it all like the voice at the end of the wire, there is the Divine voice uttering His own message to the soul.

John the Baptist said that he was a "voice," not an empty voice, but a messenger sent from God, through whom He spoke. Jesus, himself, said "the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself, but the Father that dwelleth in Me He doeth the works." And He said to the Father, "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me." He said to His disciples "Lo, I am with you always —

go ye therefore." Why is He with us? In the fulfillment of His own mission to speak through us His own words.

II. The Word of the Lord comes freshly from His own lips to human hearts. To at least some hearts here today there is something more than a human utterance, some thing more than historic truth. Someway the door of thy being opens, or, the door being shut — still He comes in and stands face to face with thy being and says to thee words of infinite import. In a single moment there is uttered in thy soul a whole volume of truth — being; destiny; sin; judgment; love, infinite dying love Heaven; Hell. How God utters it! Whether you listen or forbear, God speaks. Not historic words, I could have put them away. But when — the doors being shut and bolted — the Lord the Spirit came in, unbidden, and, with awful majesty, and yet with infinite pity confronted me and spoke words right through me, it broke my heart.

III. The Word of the Lord is the continued going forth of His power. I am deeply impressed with the greatness and majesty of this statement by the Lord himself in reference to His own utterance in this world. It is not momentary, fitful nor temporary. The purpose, the plan, the execution are upon a divine scale. The whole matter He declares to be above human thought or ways. It is in reference to this matter of divine utterance that He says "My thoughts are not your thoughts." But He seems to brood over men and desire to give them, if possible for them to see, some insight into His incomprehensible way, and so He says, "As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven" ... "so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth." Did you ever think of how the rain and the snow come down? Of the infinite thought, the incomprehensible plan that is in it all? Try to go back a little way into the divine plan and see a little of the exhibition of the divine power in reference to this figure — the watering of the earth. Go back to the ocean, into which the waters are gathered. The ocean is salt. No doubt there is infinite wisdom in its chemical combination, but it is unfitted for fertilizing the earth, its touch would be barrenness and death. But God set the sun heating and expanding the surface of the sea and distilling the water until it should be lighter than the atmosphere, and then causing the air to lift it up, millions upon millions of tons of it, and then called forth the chariots of His winds to bear it away, sometimes to great distances, until in the upper and colder air He condensed it into drops, and some in higher altitudes He froze into snow, and, then, by the same perfect machinery, dropped them upon the earth, thus bringing to it the conditions of vegetation that there might be seed to the sower and bread to the eater. God says this represents the going forth of His Word out of His mouth. This shadows forth the untold, unutterable preparation for the divine utterance. Out of the great ocean of eternity, out of the great depths of the Infinite, mysteriously comes the divine message. Love brooded over the depths and mercy and justice found new relationship in atoning favor. On the wings of love and power the redeeming forces were borne to the altitudes of Calvary, where they were compressed by dying agony, and the Holy Ghost came to scatter, like showers, love and mercy and power upon the hearts of men. And these showers and tempests of love and salvation, these irrigating streams from the mountains of His holiness, find their way is a divine utterance to human hearts.

There is, to me, in this, one marvelous — almost awful thought. Back of the rain and the snow, the gentle showers and storms and water brooks, are all the forces of the infinite God. God does not fail. The rain and the snow come and the earth is made fertile and produces and no man can stop Him in His work. A man might undertake to thwart God's purposes. He might, by incessant labor, succeed

in keeping some little spot from producing, and, yet, a few feet away the grass would spring up to mock him. Every shower that falls, every murmuring stream, every blade of grass, every flower, head of grain and waving harvest laughs him to scorn, vegetation still goes on; rain and snow come and the earth buds. God is not dead. A man may not work with Him and thus starve himself, but the great purpose of God goes on. So it is with His utterance to men. Out of the depths of the heart of God, by infinite power and love, it comes, borne on the wings of the Holy Ghost, to human hearts.

This plan and work of God is too great to be successfully hindered or interfered with. "It shall not return unto Me void." You can abort every thing in the little patch of your life. You may succeed in the cutting down of every flower; in the hoeing up of every tuft of grass; the keeping out every head of grain. You may succeed in spite of rain and dew, in making the little patch of your life utterly barren. It is not much taken in a broad sense; it is much to you. A man may make a little spectacle of himself — he may declare that there never was any good in vegetation and that he will blast the sunshine and stop the processes which we call nature; but it would be still more difficult, if one impossibility can be more difficult than another, to dry up the fountain of the life of God which flows from His infinite heart by the power of the Holy Ghost.

IV. In this utterance there is something defiant to the powers of darkness. "It shall accomplish that which please." I do not suppose God means to say that His passion of loving desire for every one will be met. We know that this is not done. We see Jesus during His incarnation saying with tears — "How often would I have gathered you together ... and ye would not." And we know that the Spirit woos, sometimes, in vain. But he evidently does mean that the purpose shall not fail, that a new opportunity of eternal life shall be brought to men and that the Cross shall triumph over sin and hell — nothing shall hinder Me in filling this world with holy possibilities for men.

God has decreed some things. Down through the ages to the end of time, here and there, God has set a pillar, and to it the stream of human history must come. He declared to the dying Jacob that "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a law giver from between his feet until Shiloh come." This thing was sure and could not fail. God held the nation in His hand, prospering them in obedience and righteousness; in disobedience, trampling them beneath the hard iron hoof of contending armies, sweeping them with pestilence, carrying them away into captivity, bringing back a remnant; whatever was necessary that His purpose be carried out. To that pillar, the coming of the Shiloh, the nation was to be brought.

So, likewise, has God decreed that men shall have a new possibility; that from Calvary, from His dying Son, shall go forth to men the possibility of holiness and eternal life, and neither men nor devils shall prevent it. "Whosoever believeth on Him shall be saved."

V. There is also in this utterance a further word of promise. "It shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." There shall be prosperity in this new possibility. God has ordained a way of divine prosperity to His own utterance of infinite love, He tells us how it is — "Ye shall go forth with joy, and be led forth with peace." It is the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Jesus said, as He waited a little, talking to the disciples of the inheritance which He was about to bestow, "My peace I give unto you." And then told them further that they were to have a new deposit and a new endorser at the bank of heaven, and, that they were to draw largely that their joy might be full. Jesus

speaking of His presence in the Holy Ghost, said, "I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you." He began fulfilling this promise — to see them again — on the day of Pentecost and they began to be led forth with joy. There is a joy which means prosperity to the divine purpose.

"The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." This figure is wild, untamed, unchanged nature welcoming the touch of man. It illustrates humanity welcoming the touch of God. And there is transfiguration. Instead of the thorn the fir tree, instead of the brier the myrtle — the same Hebrew word that is translated "Esther" — "*Hadassa*," the lowly and unknown, becoming the queen.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 25

THE LAMB AMID THE BLOODWASHED

TEXT — For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. — Rev 7:17

The Revelation of the Lamb of God to His own holy people varies little in any world or any age. The heart of Christ is always the same. His love for His own is always the same. What He is going to do for them in heaven is — as far as their good will permit — what He does for them on earth. The great facts of eternal love and the power of an endless life are round about His own in all worlds.

More discipline, more pressure of circumstances may be necessary at some periods of life than at others. The child goes to school, under the authority of his parent; later, he toils in college under the passionate desire to be the most he may, and then plunges into business or professional life to learn and win his way, but, in it all the love of the parent is the same. So too, as Christians we may be under pressure of training and development, but the heavenly love, tenderness and care, and — as far as consistent with the discipline — comfort and blessing are in it all.

THE NEW JERUSALEM

The time will soon come when we shall see the glorified manhood of Jesus, and unless the day of grace soon close — will hear His mediatorial prayers, and with a clearer vision and an enlarged capacity will be enabled to lay hold and possess more and more of the divine nature; nevertheless, we now tread holy ground and Jesus Christ has taken up His abode in us, and, it may now be truly said, that the New Jerusalem in jeweled beauty is coming down from God out of heaven with its glorified King, with its blessings and privileges. It comes as a city with jasper walls and pearl gates and golden streets and great white throne, about which are the blended colors of divine glory. The city is here with its trees of life and silver river; with its sea of glass mingled with fire, with many standing upon it, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. All this is here, this side of death. It is the other side also. Death does not divide those who are one in Jesus Christ;

"Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now,
And we are to the margin come."

So this morning as I read this text, I am reading about heaven, but the heaven, the golden glory of which has dawned and into which, at least in some measure, we have come. Let us lift our unveiled eyes and look about us. Here is a great company of white-robed worshippers. I may not understand all that the elder said about them, but there are some things which are clear to me.

THE BLOODWASHED

They "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." A part of this bloodwashed, white-robed company is down here. You need not pass the portals of death to find some of them. The one fact emphasized as no other in all this universe is that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." It embraces within itself, in its concentrated glory, every heavenly evangel, all prophetic truth; the dawning glory of the incarnation, the earthly ministry of the Son of God; Calvary with its darkness and terror, also its sacrifice and victory; the grave and the resurrection glory; the ascension, and the coming of the Ghost most Holy; the application of the Blood to a human heart by the divine Spirit, and the coming into the cleansed temple of the Son of God to make it His own abode. Gather together all other facts which this world knows and, beside this, they are puerile and insignificant. There is one great utterance, the newest, sweetest, grandest fact in this universe — "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

That this is an experience here and now I need not wait to argue. The New Testament dispensation rests upon it. This is the keystone to the arch of redemption. Take it away and the arch crumbles into decay and ruin. Build the arch and crown it with this all embracing fact and it shines in this world in glorious reflection of the rainbow about the throne, full of the unbraided colors of divine glory. Here and now, is at least a part of the Bloodwashed company.

VICTORY

They are a victorious company. They have palms in their hands. The Bloodwashed people are always a victorious people. There is victory in the new covenant experience. There is that which makes him who possesses it an overcomer, and more than an overcomer. The victory is He himself — the Mighty Conqueror. He, who has overcome the world and the powers of darkness, is in us. He, who is all power, has taken us into His bosom — may I utter the incomprehensible mystery; — He has come into our bosom. Our experience is itself victory. Our defense is impregnable, our arms are invincible. The sword of the Spirit and the artillery of heaven are our weapons, and our refuge is the munition of rocks. Our victory does not depend on the weakness of the foe, nor the conditions and environments. It is already won by the power of our Christ. There is but one way that a holy man can be defeated and that is to take his eyes from off the King, and depart from the Mighty to Save.

To be of Christ possessed is not only assurance of victory, but is victory itself. There is a sense, or realization of victory — such a sense of resources — "Christ liveth in me." The friendly dynamites of the eternal God are in position in the soul, and about it. What can conquer God? And yet He must be conquered before one hid in His pavilion can be touched. No wonder the soul, feeling the thrill of the infinite glory of the Eternal Presence, shouts victory. No wonder Paul as he looked out into the thick darkness of the conflict shouted — "who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" "We are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." We do not wait until tomorrow when the battle is ended for victory, we have it now. The

Bloodwashed wave their palms of victory. We not only sing "Then palms of victory" but "Now palms of victory."

BEFORE THE THRONE

This is the place of the Bloodwashed. They are before the Throne. We have come to all that the throne represents, of government and power and care and ministry of blessing. The word "throne" has a mystic meaning. Where the king is, and ministers government, there the throne is set up. Where God ministers His justice, His judgments, His mercy, there is His throne. Justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne. We are urged to come boldly to His throne, called "the throne of grace." We bow our knees before the throne. We wait amid the ministries of Jesus Christ. We look up into the face of the King. The Bloodwashed know their location before the throne.

THEY WORSHIP

There is considerable thought given, in these days to forms of worship, men and women have wrought them out. We call them a litany or a ritual. Some churches are called ritualistic, because they have prepared forms of expression which are read from a book or recited from memory. The forms of worship in churches not ritualistic are sometimes considered "bald" and sometimes in their assemblies they almost cease to worship. Their meetings are seasons of instruction and entertainment and sometimes not much even of that. So while ritualism runs easily into formality — indeed seems to invite it unrationalistic meetings degenerate into education, or entertainment and sometimes into folly.

Worship rises high above all forms. If it attempts to find utterance through them it will set them on fire, and glow and burn in their consuming flame and rise as incense to God. If it starts out with the impartation and the receiving of the great thought of God; if it waits to hear His infinite will and eternal love, it spreads its pinions to fly to His bosom, there to breathe out its unutterable devotion. We have here the way of worship. They cry with a loud voice, saying "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." It is not the learning of some new song; not a new shading of some thought which is a matter of interest; it is not the repeating parrot-like of some written form. But it is the cry of the soul, deep, earnest, intense, loud, the farthest removed from what might be regarded as cathedral service, with the intoning of prayer and praise, and where the light falls but dimly, the muffled music and sentiment rolling back upon the mind in subdued sensibility.

I suppose this is about the best earth-born, man-made form of worship one can find. But that which is here described is something altogether different. It is also equally far removed from a gathering of the people, who, without solemnity or soul earnestness wait to be sung at, and prayed at, and preached at, until the time comes when they can decently get away.

The worship here seen rises from every soul; it is the out-bursting passion of every heart; it breaks forth like a pent-up storm; it rolls forth like a mighty tornado. One thing seems certain, the worship of the Bloodwashed company is not the still small voice.

We often hear God speak to us as Elijah heard Him — "in the still small voice;" but nowhere in the Bible is our worship to Him described in that way. It is as a "great thunder" and "the voice of many waters." One thing not to be lost sight of, the angels do not sing the song of redeeming love; that they can never do. But they do stand about the Bloodwashed company and fall upon their faces and worship God, saying, "Amen," "Amen."

When we were children we were taught to sing:

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand;
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand."

If we really would worship as they worship, we'll do as they do — fall upon our faces in the dust and cry as they cry "Amen" and "Amen."

THEY SERVE

They serve Him day and night in His temple. Almost if not altogether the greatest characteristic of the immortal God, or of mortal man is, to serve. It might almost be said that the very meaning of the word God — taken from good — is one who serves. God is the greatest servant. He serves everywhere. It is said God is love. To love is to serve.

When Jesus Christ came He came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Trace the prophecy of the coming of the Christ, the one name into which all others crystallize and which is emphasized more and more as His coming becomes clearer and clearer is — the servant, "my servant." The lines of the Divine Presence have gone forth through the heavens, and the voice of God to the ends of the earth and His eyes look through the earth to show himself strong towards them that love Him. All this is to serve. But His glory is seen especially in Jesus Christ, because in His face the love, the service shines in more full orbéd splendor. But Jesus declared — "as I am so are ye in this world" — it must be so in all worlds. He that will be great among you, let him be your servant. This service is the heart bursting forth with the fullness of divine love. The great heart throbs never die. Day and night in His temple the Bloodwashed serve Him. Isaiah saw a little of this service, as the Holy Ghost said to him — thy heart shall throb and be enlarged and then shall come the liquid glory.

THE DIVINE PRESENCE

The great glory of the Bloodwashed company remains to be told. It is the glory of the Divine Presence. It is told here — "He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them;" literally, "shall spread His tabernacle over them." Holy men have sung in all ages, "Lord thou hast been our dwelling place." "I will abide in thy tabernacle forever." "In the day of trouble ... in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me."

But in the manifestation of God in Jesus Christ is our chief glory. The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, or before the throne, in the midst of the Bloodwashed ones, feeds them and leads to

the waters of the fountains of eternal life. In the New Testament there are two different words which are translated, "Lamb." One is used in such passages as — "Behold the Lamb of God, etc." The other is found exclusively in the book of Revelation, except once in John, 21:15 — "feed my lambs." This word is "*arnion*" the other is "*amnos*." "*Amnos*" means the sacrificial Lamb. "*Arnion*" means endearment, and signifies the endearing relation in which Christ now stands to us. Christ and His Bloodwashed ones have a relation of endearment which is supreme. He loves them. They love Him. He shall feed them — Shepherd them. Christ does feed His own flock. They go in and out and find pasture. He provides a table for them in the presence of their enemies. He leads them to eternal life's fountains of waters. Here are two great thoughts — Christ's leadership and the great blessings which come to us through it. Christ alway leads. He came to lead. The Dayspring from on high came to show us the way when we sat in darkness and the shadow of death, and no sooner did we begin to follow than we began to taste the sweet eternal waters. And more and more as He has led have blessed fountains broken forth in our souls.

GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY ALL TEARS

The tears come. It seems sometimes as if as we lift our eyes to heaven the heart tears so press that it seems as if they would blind us; but Jesus' own wounded hand wipes them away, and pours in the light of His love and joy.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 26

THE GLORY OF A TRANSCENDENT PURPOSE

TEXT — But none of these things move me. — Acts 20:24

If one walks a high and narrow way, and many difficulties, with untold depths on either side, it is imperative that he take each step with care and that his gaze be up and on.

The Christian's pathway is high and narrow, beset by many difficulties. He needs to recognize the dangers, and to be sure that he treads in the footprints of Him who has gone before; and then with steady gaze into the face of Him who holds his hands, press upward and onward.

Paul was sensitively alive to the very great difficulties and dangers which beset the way of his high calling, but he was full of confidence in Him who had called him through His grace, to this experience of love and ministry of life. He heard the voice of his infinite lover — the great Commander — saying, "forward to the battle," and looking into His face, he said, "yes, Lord, I delight to do thy will," then regarding for a moment the foe and the untoward conditions about him, he exclaimed with triumphant victory — "none of these things move me." This may not be the battle cry, but it is the battle condition of every soldier of Christ. It is the voice of spiritual manhood.

CHILDHOOD

The childhood of spiritual life has in it fear, questionings and doubt. There are times of bravery and certainty and assurance, and there are times when they are absent. It is so with all childhood life. When the sun shines and the house is near — papa or mamma within sight or call — the child is brave, ready and longing for some hair-breadth adventure in order to distinguish himself by his bold and daring courage. But if the house is lost sight of, or darkness falls, it needs but the rustle of a leaf or the hooting of an owl to scare him half to death.

So, too, spiritual childhood is happy, glad and courageous, when conditions are fair and pleasant; but when clouds gather, and storms beat; when afflictions come, and seeming defeat and overthrow, then the child experience gives up discouraged and cries "it is no use." There is a place for children. They are a precious heritage, but their place is not in the face of the enemy, before the canon's mouth. "Woe to thee, O land when thy king is a child." It would be ill with a people whose armies of defense were children or men with the childish heart. There is a place, a very large place in the Church for her spiritual children — happy is that church which hath her quiver full of them. But their place is not in the front of the battle. It is at the altar of God. Jesus taught us this and said — "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." Spiritual manhood is the fullness of God. Carnality ever holds the elements of weakness peculiar to childhood, and no one can be a man or woman in Christ Jesus without the Divine baptism.

AMUSEMENTS AND ENTERTAINMENTS

It is the nature of childhood to seek amusements and entertainments. Every nursery has its playthings it games — dolls and hobby horse, checker board and Noah's ark. But when children become men and women, the nursery and every thing pertaining to it is left behind. It is so in spiritual life. You never hear of Paul seeking entertainment for himself or trying to give it to others — he was not in that business. He never arranged with a lecture bureau to receive a hundred dollars a night for "His experience at Philippi" or "His few days at Athens" or "Echoes from the Athenian Babbler." No: such things remain for preachers of the twentieth century to do.

He was not even a sight-seer. He only saw men — lost men. His spirit was stirred, not with admiration at the beauty of art at Athens, but with sorrow that the city was given over to sin.

CHILDHOOD, HOW TAUGHT

Childhood is taught by authority. Things are so because some one, father or mother, said they were so. Some teacher stated things as facts and they were so received. Blessed is that child into whose life the great truth comes with authority. But there comes a time when one must know truth from the great fountains and not from the cisterns of authority. This is peculiarly true of religious truth, as it is so much more important than all other truth, so much the more it must be known from the sources of certainty and not alone from authority.

It is a precious thing for a child to be under the authority of a Christian home, but there comes a time when that child puts off its swaddling bands of religious authority. He may do it ever so lovingly and reverently, but still he does it. There comes a time when it is not enough that his father and mother believed and were Christians. He can not thus take the truth second-handed. His soul becomes unloosed from authority. He has been taught many other things that were mythical. As a child of older growth, he holds things as tentative — he doesn't know. In this condition he is unnerved, unarmed, without strength of purpose, or clear vision.

EXPERIENCE

There is but one way to learn religious truth and that is by experience. Experience is a great teacher; a great expulsive and infilling force.

Paul had received much authoritative teaching. He was thoroughly saturated with Jewish exclusiveness and hatred for the Nazarene Prophet. His impetuous nature was under its control, and yet there was the rising up in him of desire to know the truth. And in answer to this desire Jesus Christ walked out into his life. He looked up into His face and the glory of the Lord blinded his eyes. He heard the divine utterance; he felt the overwhelming glory of His presence; surrendered to Him his life, and received from lips of flame, his commission. He was led by the hand and tarried in prayer until that same Jesus baptized him with the Holy Ghost. Forever after, Jewish authority, priestly criticism, arguments of learned doctors of the law were nothing to him. He had seen the King. He knew that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

Any man into whom the Holy Ghost has come deals in certainties. It does not matter to him what the higher or lower critics may say, he has seen the King.

SERVITUDE AND FAITH

This utterance of Paul is not only the manly utterance of intellectual certitude, but it is the voice of calm, yet impassioned faith. It was made just at the time when he wrote that marvelous epistle to the Romans, in which he said that "neither death, nor life, ... shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." He stood face to face with the experience which the Holy Ghost unveiled to him, as he was making his last trip to Jerusalem — that in every city chains and imprisonments awaited him. He knew full well that the enemy would smite down Christian life in every way possible, and yet, as Jesus Christ held him in His strong embrace, he said, from the very depths of his soul, "none of these things move me."

THE ENEMY'S TACTICS

The devil with all his smartness does not seem to learn easily. He is evidently blinded by his badness. His hatred and rage clouds his vision. He was long in learning that "the blood of the martyr's is the seed of the church," until the Roman blade entered the breast of millions of God's redeemed people, and the blood thus sown brought forth such a crop that it swayed the Roman Empire. The devil seems to have been so surprised that he could scarce learn that he could not destroy the Church of Jesus Christ by bloodshed. Then for centuries his method of warfare seems to have been unsettled. It was hard for him to relinquish the method which his own meanness prompted, but at last he changed his tactics, he seems to have recalled his first success, how he overthrew our first parents through the eye and taste; and began a more settled policy of attacking Christians through the attractions of the world.

Whenever a new anointing comes upon the hearts of men, he seems to forget himself — in his anger and fury — and stirs up some persecution; but he soon remembers his folly and begins his settled tactics of worldly favor, honor, place, etc., etc.

It is said that Alexander never despaired of taking a city through whose gates he could get a mule laden with gold. Satan seems never to despair of making ineffective a church upon which he can confer worldly favor. The conflict of a Christian soul today is largely with worldliness. Of course every sanctified soul becomes a conqueror over it. A soul in its consecration counts all things loss and is crucified to the world and the world to him, but still the attempt is, to capture him through art and taste.

CHRISTIAN KNIGHTHOOD

The Church stands in need and must have a new order of Christian knighthood. Jesuits without Jesuitism, Franciscans without fanaticism. When Ignatius — the founder of the Jesuits — an ambitious young soldier, wounded, lay long in recovery, he turned to read of Jesus Christ, and when well enough went to a Benedictine Abbey and having confessed his sins, hung up his sword and dagger above the altar, and sought a rocky cavern to give himself up to prayer. St. Francis, as a young

man, pressed by his father to either go back home from what he considered his divine call or sign away his claim to his great inheritance, gladly did the latter and, taking from his pocket the little change which he had, he handed it over to his father saying that he was willing to undergo anything for Jesus Christ.

The light shone dimly on these souls and the darkness led to fanaticism, and because of the lack of clear light they seem to have lost the way; but the Church needs an order of knighthood that shall as thoroughly renounce the world as did ever Ignatius or St. Francis. Those who are in the world but not of it, who use it, but do not abuse it. Those who are utterly without love for its wealth or honor or place. Those who are as completely separated from it as if hid away in a monastery or convent, possibly a thousand times more so — and yet in it to bear the messages of divine love to men.

First of all this world must have a thoroughly Bloodwashed race. This the holy people are assaying to be. But will you bear with me this morning if I say that I fear it often occurs that the death to this world is only a kind of hypnotic stupor or suspended animation, and that in many of us it is easily awakened to life. The death distance between us and this world is not as impassible as the way back from the cemetery to the old home. Jeremiah lamented that the hurt of the daughter of his people was healed but slightly. We are to be so dead to this world that its allurements will have no more charm for us than has the offal of a scavenger's wagon.

A soul thus dead to this world can be filled with God. He will not be known by the world — the world knew Him not. God's elect, anointed heroes have been madmen in the eyes of the world, from the beginning until now Jesus was regarded as beside himself — as filled with demoniac possession. Paul was said to be mad. The followers of the Nazarene — the people of the way — were regarded — before the close of the first century from Babylon to the pillars of Hercules, as a pestilent set, to be killed off from the face of the earth for the world's good. The Christianity which has been popular and eulogized in this world has been semi — or even anti — Christian.

The devil today is waging, through the power of worldliness, warfare against Christianity. He is saying today something as he said to Eve at the beginning — "This is beautiful to look upon, cultivate the artistic, seek beauty, gaze upon it. Build fine churches, let the soul be lifted up by the great in architecture, especially cultivate art in song. Get the finest singers. People will come to hear the singing and may get something from the preaching."

I heard of a great artist who painted a picture, the central thought of which was the face of our Lord. He invited a friend to see it, who as he looked began to praise the beauty of some part of the drapery, instantly, the artist seized his brush, dipped it into the paint, dashed it across the canvass saying, "If ought here attracts from the face of my Lord I will have none of it."

If architecture is to be the attraction I'll preach the rest of my days under the blue heavens. If it depends upon singing to draw the people, I'll have none whatever. If carefulness of thought or speech is the thing sought, I'll speak in the most common place jargon. Let all this and every other thing die. There is but One whom I would make known and the Holy Ghost knows how to reveal Him.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 27

THE HEAVENLY VISION

TEXT — I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. — Acts 26:19

We hear much of master motives; but there are no motives which necessarily control human life and destiny.

Volition is the arbiter of being.

Life is governed by will and not necessarily by the strongest motive. If this were not true, if men were governed by the strongest motive, I could make every man in this world a Christian as soon as the opportunity afforded. As soon as I could turn on to men's minds the light of truth; as soon as they saw the revelation of God in Christ Jesus; as soon as they beheld the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that follows, every man would be a Christian.

God will have a race, who, of their own free will, choose holiness. If men were governed by the strongest motives they would have no more free agency than the needle that is drawn by the strongest magnet. It is true God appeals to motives but not in such a way as to control will.

Truth is set before men, destiny is somewhat uncovered; the plan of salvation is unveiled; the way of God is made plain; the way of sin, as the way of death is shown. Things are not hid. They are so plain "that he may run that readeth," but they are not brought to bear in such a way as to coerce the will. The ways of life and death are set before men, and the notice is clearly posted "Choose ye this day."

Men are to see the truth but they are, also, of their own volition, to obey the truth. The prophet said, that the people had committed two evils — they had forsaken the fountain of living waters and had hewed them out broken cisterns that could hold no water. So today the people, many of them, do not desire to know the truth and when they do know it they care little for it. They are heedless or reckless or defiant. This depraved condition is the devil's vantage ground, and fills hell with victims.

The proper attitude of man is earnest anxiety to know the truth — especially great, vital truth that affects being and destiny — and absolute loyalty to known truth. The lack of this is what makes preaching to sinners so unavailing. They are not desirous to know the truth, and are not loyal to it when they do know it. It was because of these conditions that Jesus said "Without me ye can do nothing," and that He insisted upon the disciples tarrying until the Comforter should come. He was to convince the world of sin, i.e. stir up men's deeper life to a realization of the damnation of sin and quicken their desire to know the way of escape from the wrath to come. This, too, is the reason why

it is not only the duty of the church to preach Christ to sinners, but also to be an abiding place of the Holy Ghost, who will work in the deeper life of desire and will.

Saul of Tarsus had one desire, an earnest wish to know the truth, and a loyalty to the truth as he saw it, also a radical determination to be faithful to whatever truth he might find.

It is not sins that so utterly blind, but that sin-condition which does not desire the truth, and is not obedient, and without intention to be obedient to the truth known. It is vain to preach and testify to such a man. The added truth is no more to him than that he has already received, and only serves to thicken the crust that surrounds him. His only hope is a changed condition, by the touch of God.

You say, you might be converted if you had a vision such as Saul of Tarsus had. Stir yourself up. Earnestly seek to know, and call upon God to show you the truth and you will have a vision at least as clear as his. For, to a man intensely loyal to the truth, as he sees it, and radically determined to obey all truth that shall come to him, and earnestly anxious to know and to be the highest truth, to such an one, God will, some way, bring the light.

Saul saw something of the glory of Jesus Christ. He heard His words, and learned something of the broadness of this salvation. If thou art here in this condition of desire to know the truth or if thou wilt stir thyself up calling upon God, thou shalt have a vision, equal if not superior to that of Saul — it shall be up to thy need.

Saul saw "a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun." The revelation of Jesus Christ to Saul of Tarsus was that of overwhelming light. In connection with this Jesus Christ spoke to him, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Saul said, "Who art thou Lord?" And He said "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise upon stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." Here was Jesus Christ, luminous, calling, directing. It was a marvelous revelation with wonderful results. It was Jesus Christ standing face to face with an intense, honest man.

You say that you would be glad to be a Christian an if thus clearly called, and so, by implication, lay the blame of your sinfulness and eternal loss on Him whom you virtually accuse of partiality in His way of calling men. Friend, hold thy face up toward the sun and say "I am as honest, as earnest, as ready to receive the truth, to listen to the call of God, as Saul of Tarsus was," and thou shalt have light as bright, hear His voice as plainly, and see the way as clearly as ever he saw it. My brother, the light of God, which is upon you, is greater, far greater than fell upon the eyes of Saul that day. Jesus Christ pours light upon your eyes with which a score of wonders could not compare. It is the light of nineteen centuries of molding, transforming, transfiguring power. He has shown himself to be "the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, lifting the gates of empires from their hinges; turning the stream of human history out of its course; and blessing the world." Jesus Christ comes to you today with the light of the testimony of a million miracles. This Jesus Christ stands before you who has conquered millions of hearts and they all love Him and would give their lives for Him. This Christ, the Mighty to save, comes to you today fresh from His conquests with the untold millions of His trophies, those in whom He has wrought the mightiest miracles ever

known in this universe. If you will turn your eyes this day out over the history of these ages, and up to heaven, you shall see the innumerable company of men and women who follow the Lamb, and if you have intensity of soul enough to ask "who are these and whence come they?" thou shalt know that these are the redeemed from among men, that this Christ has washed them in His own blood; that these "were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." But after the kindness of our God appeared they were saved, according to His mercy, "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Jesus Christ comes to you today not simply with a wonder in His hand, but as the head of a new race. He stands in His glory in the midst of the unnumbered revelations of His God-head; in transfigured souls and transformed lives.

Jesus Christ is before you today in overwhelming evidence that "He receiveth sinners and eateth with them;" that He forgives sins and sanctifies believers. He overwhelms any honest enquirer's so with the fact that He lives to save. Carlyle and Emerson were standing together looking over a bit of landscape. Just below them was a church. Carlyle said, "Jesus Christ built that kirk." Jesus Christ has changed the face of this earth. The light of Jesus Christ shines upon you with a glory a thousand times brighter than upon Saul of Tarsus.

The Lord spoke to Saul. There seems to have been indistinctness in the utterance so far as others were concerned, but not with himself. It was a personal utterance to Saul. It was an appeal to him. It was a question of why? "Why persecutest thou me?" The deeper import of the question is in the "why?" The act of antagonism is incidental, the antagonism itself, was the real question. The same question comes to you — "why?" "Why, over against Jesus?" That is the question He presses upon you. Saul made thoughtful enquiry "Who art thou Lord?" Here was reverence and earnest honesty.

Do not the overhanging heavens of nineteen centuries, the concentration of ten thousand voices into one intense, awful utterance as the voice of ten-thousand thunders, saying, "why?" bring to thee no awe? Does not the voice move thy soul? Look up into the moral heavens which the Son of God has created in this world; see the light of His face brighter than a thousand suns; hear Him say "why?" Why art thou lost? Why in rebellion? Why will ye die? Does it not fill thy soul with reverence? Wilt thou say honestly, "who? what does it all mean?" Art thou ready to know the truth? He said to Saul, "I am Jesus." It is Jesus Christ who shines upon you, who speaks to you, who presses upon you with light and truth like air upon a vacuum. "I am Jesus" — I am here to illuminate thy soul, to help, to lead thee. The way thou art going is a hard way. To fight heaven is to beat thy life out in hopelessness and despair. It is hard for thee, Heaven pities thee, infinite love bleeds for thee.

Then came the crucial words of surrender — "what wilt thou have me to do?" Oh the depth of that heart act — the going over to Jesus! The yielding of himself to His complete control! The unreserved giving himself up to Him! From the depths of his soul, he said, "I give myself to be directed and guided and controlled by Thee. In my nothingness take me, in my ignorance show me, in my weakness guide me; Lord I am thine, entirely thine."

"What shall I do?" And the Lord said, "stand upon thy feet." At the command of Jesus he rose from that improvised altar in the dusty highway, and the light of heaven dawned upon his soul. He says that the vision was "heavenly." Up to this point it was full of terror. Under its awfulness he had fallen to the ground, but now he arises to new life and Jesus said, "go into Damascus; there it shall be told thee" — there thou shalt receive the deeper experience and be more perfectly fitted and instructed. Then the Lord opened up to him, just a little, of that which the Holy Ghost was to teach him more fully; something, just a glimpse, of the depth and glory of Christian experience and service — "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." The light of Jesus Christ, the touch of His hand, His coming unto thee, and into thee, is, to make thee — create thee into — a minister and witness.

The representatives of Jesus Christ in this world are God-made. All the forces of the world — education, culture, social standing, etc., etc., can not do it, earth-made men are, beside them, as a painted statue beside a living man. Christ makes men into His representatives for the purpose of testimony and ministry. Saul of Tarsus needed no human hands laid upon him, he only needed the transfiguring, anointing power of the Holy Ghost, for which he was directed to tarry at Damascus.

This dual work — testimony and ministry — is for every saint. One says, "I am not a Saul of Tarsus, I am not educated" etc., etc. Such excuses are a stench in the nostrils of the Almighty. Has He not clearly said that He has "chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things which are mighty;" and that, of set purpose, the wine of the Kingdom is "in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us?"

In this tracing of the out-line of Saul's work, is the rising up of the new life and its privileges:

I. To open the eyes of men. Men's eyes are opened by pouring upon them the light of heaven, and by the touch of God — wherever you come men are to see.

II. To turn them — that they may turn from darkness to light. The testimony message is an enabling act — the Holy Ghost being in it — so that men may turn to God. There is power imparted this day, as Jesus speaks and you may turn "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God."

III. "That they may receive forgiveness of sins." We do not bear the made out certificate, we only tell men that they may receive it from the central office.

IV. "And inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." The inheritance is in the relationship of a sanctified soul. The pure in heart see God. What is our inheritance? It is God Himself.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 28

CONSUMING FIRE

TEXT — For our God is a consuming fire. — Heb 12:29

This is the crowning statement of one of the very best utterances in reference to Christian holiness. The book of Hebrews is a treatise on holiness — as are most of the other Epistles. This book begins with a statement of God's revelation of Himself to men through the ages and His permanent manifestation in these last days through Jesus Christ. Reference is then made to the way of Christian experience until Jesus brings His disciples into the Holy of Holies. The author then defines the way of faith and gives illustrious examples, telling of their transformed lives and triumphant death. Then he proceeds to say that God has "provided some better thing for us," referring to the baptism with the Holy Ghost, thus revealing in us the mystery "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He then discusses, and urges upon all Christians this "better thing." He shows how clearly it is testified to; urges the laying aside of all that hinders and the getting rid of the besetting sin — carnality. He shows how the faith for it, is wrought in us and perfected. He gives Jesus as an example of heroism in this matter. He shows how the Lord chastens His little children that they may be "partakers of His holiness," declaring that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. He shows how he who neglects it becomes profane as was Esau — selling his birthright. He tells of its privileges and the way God leads, shaking men out of the world, and then the world out of them. He tells of the kingdom received which cannot be moved which enables us to serve God acceptably. Then we are told the procuring agency — "For our God is a consuming fire."

The subject really involved in this is the relation of the indwelling Holy Ghost to Christian life. When we try to think of the infinite personality, and especially the work of this blessed Spirit in reference to us, we clothe Him in imagery. In His revelation of Himself to us He speaks of Himself through imagery. Thus we are told that God is light, love, fire, etc., etc. In this text we have Him in His work of transforming and filling the souls and lives of men, under the figure of fire. This figure is the more impressive because it was in connection with the appearance of fire that God had frequently manifested His presence.

When Abraham asked God whereby he should know that he should inherit the promised land, the Lord told him to take a certain sacrifice; this he did, and "laid each piece one against another." And it came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. When God led His people from Egypt to Canaan it was a pillar of fire that made the desert nights all glorious; and when he spake to them from Sinai, the "glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mountain." When God spoke to Moses at the back-side of the desert, it was out of the burning bush; and He answered Elijah's prayer on Mt. Carmel with falling fire. When Isaiah prayed for a clean heart, God's touch upon his soul was emblemized by the fire upon his lips; and the manifestation of the Divine Presence in the Holy of

Holies was the flame of glory between the wings of the cherubim upon the mercyseat. When, in that upper room, the great promise of the Father was fulfilled, the Holy Ghost was imaged forth by tongues of fire. The promise of God to His ancient people was, "I will be a wall of fire round about thee."

We need not wonder, then, that here in this vivid description of the saving of men up to the point where all sin is destroyed and the kingdom of heaven set up in the soul, that the Divine Presence, who doeth this work, is likened, or set forth, under the figure of fire. I would like that we might, fully see the meaning of this imagery; for that which it means in human experience is an abiding fact. This Divine Presence is connected with the kingdom which we receive. The fire manifestations in the Old Testament had to do with things which were more or less typical and were preparing the way for an abiding manifestation of the Divine Presence which is here referred to. In the beginning of the epistle, its author says, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." Jesus Christ continues in holy manifestation by the Holy Ghost, as a burning fire.

This brings us to consider, with a little more preparation, the relationship of the Divine Presence to Christian life. It brings us to emphasize that the salvation of God in Jesus Christ is a continual manifestation of God in love and power to the souls of men. But this burning Presence refers especially to the reception and the abiding, immovable glory of the kingdom, which we receive in connection with the cleansing from all sin — the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

It is evident that the incarnation of this kingdom has close connection with the fire. Now if we might only see, clearly, what it all means — what, the antitype of all the Old Testament figures and fiery manifestations! What, the real, permanent, fiery glory! That there is such a fact the New Testament clearly teaches — "Our God is a consuming fire." If our God is, and if He is present in the fulness of His salvation, He is evidently a consuming fire. If we go to the ushering in of the new covenant — the abiding covenant in Jesus Christ — we find the one fact declared of Him, by His forerunner, to be that "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire." This he said in connection with his own message to men, of repentance and cleansing from their sins. In connection with this he spoke of the further, deeper purification that should be accomplished by the Christ whose coming he heralded by his baptism. That there might be no mistaking his meaning, he illustrated by a threshing-floor.

A great deal precedes a floor filled with threshed grain — sowing, watering, reaping, threshing. The figure here is of a harvest gathered and much that is worthless taken away; of humanity redeemed — who have heard the proclamation of divine favor and have repented of their sins and have had the bulky straw of their own sinning taken away. The converted heart is the Lord's threshing-floor — the chaff still with the wheat — that which has been closest about the life and which could not be raked away with the straw. Jesus is represented as coming to separate the chaff from the wheat. He comes with a separating instrument — not to separate the unrighteous from the righteous, but to His own people, to separate from them that which has been close about their hearts and lives, but which is now loosed. The winnowing fan can do nothing for wheat about which the enfolding chaff still clings. The supposition here is, that the truth of God has broken the embrace of

sin. God can do nothing toward sanctifying you wholly if your carnality holds you — if you are trusting to your own righteousness, or if you are looking to grow out of it, or to have it gradually taken away.

The threshing process may be somewhat severe, but God puts us under the *tribulum* until we so hate the carnality of our being that we give ourselves up to Him to be made holy. The truth, which is sharper than a two-edged sword, cuts to the dividing asunder between the soul and carnality; then the Holy Ghost, like the wind, can separate the chaff of inbred sin, and the presence of God as consuming fire destroys it.

What would God do with carnality? The very removal of it, by the breath of His presence, burns it up. This was the promise of the baptism; Spirit (wind) and fire under the two-fold aspect, the wind separates and the fire destroy's. This is a very strong figure — a threshing-floor of threshed wheat. In the Bible, a threshing-floor is a place of special prominence. When Joseph and those who were with him went up to bury his father Jacob, they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, where they made great and sore lamentation. In the earliest history of Israel, the threshing-floor was a place of devotion, where was made the heave offering of the first fruits. It was sometimes a place of battle. In David's early history the Philistines came down to Keilah and robbed the threshing-floor. It was sometimes a place of sacrifice. In the time of the Plague, the Lord, by His prophet Gad, told David to go to the threshing-floor of Ornan and build there an altar unto Him. David made known to Ornan his desire to buy the place of the threshing-floor that he might build an altar unto the Lord and the Plague be stayed. But Ornan said, "Take it, ... lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for meat offering. I give it all." David answered, "Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price; for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings without cost." So David bought the place for six hundred shekels of gold by weight, and built there an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt and peace offerings and called upon the name of the Lord; "and He answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering."

It was also a place where mistakes were made. It was at the threshing-floor of Nachon that Uzzah put forth his hand to steady the ark, for the oxen shook it, "and there he died." This illustration of the threshing-floor is very striking — the Lord's threshing-floor, rendered up to Him by the man himself, and bought by the King at highest cost; full of wheat which the enemy has tried so hard to capture, where so many and often fatal mistakes are made, where the blood of the sacrificial offering flows.

To this floor the Lord is represented as coming, coming with a separating instrument in His hand. This separating instrument is the gospel of holiness! The soul which becomes His own willing offering He holds up before high heaven, — as the man holds the grain with the shovel, up to the breath from the skies, and the wheat falls here clean and pure, and the chaff is blown yonder, — and he is thoroughly purged. The work is complete. "He shall thoroughly purge His floor." Jesus Christ does a thorough work of separation — not as we know, not after our pattern. but after His own ideal.

Then comes the destruction of the valueless stuff — "the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable." "Our God is a consuming fire."

The baptism of fire referred to by John is a very blessed work. It is clearly stated by him, and to make the statement other than is made by him is a perversion of the scriptures. Is this the end of fire in the experience of the Christian life? Oh, no; we have but just begun our close relationship to Him who is "consuming fire." He consumes carnality and continues to burn after all sin is destroyed. The same fire that burned up the offering and the wood on Mt. Carmel, found a way to burn in the acacia bush and yet not singe a leaf. The presence of God who burns up carnality, burns in a holy heart in unutterable glory.

Isaiah asked the all important question — "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" And answered it by saying — "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks." His eyes shall see the King in His beauty.

The baptism with the Holy Ghost is the baptism with God. It is the burning up of the chaff, but it is also the revelation in us and the manifestation to us of Divine personality, filling our being. A man without this baptism is a man. A man with it is a divinely anointed, impelled, strengthened man, through whose voice God talks. His language may be broken and lame, his thought halting and weak, but somehow the Divine voice gets through him to men. He may err, both in thought and utterance, but some way the King of glory is in the crippled vehicle to scatter the golden coin to men.

It is true then — there is a baptism with fire. My friends, no man can have the baptism with God, which means the entrance of the Divine Presence into the soul as its abiding King, enthroned for two worlds, who does not receive the heart of the infinite fire into his being. Talk about a further baptism than the indwelling God! Oh, no; he who needs that needs all; he who could desire it does not know the billows of glory which His fullness of presence is.

SERMONS

(Abridged)

By

Rev. P. F. Bresee, D.D.

Sermon 29 ONE THING

TEXT — But this one thing I do. — Phil 3:13

Half-heartedness is no-heartedness. Human intuition and the divine heart agree in the abhorrence of half-heartedness. No one wants a half-hearted love, or friendship, or service, and it is the one thing which most disgusts Heaven. It is another name for lukewarmness, God's aversion to which is shown by the statement, "Because thou art lukewarm ... I will spew thee out of my mouth."

The religion of Christ is very wide in its embrace, but, at the very basis is the earnestness which it puts into men. It is an abiding, permanent intensity. Salvation is enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm is from "*en*" and "*theos*," and really means "full of the god." This is what salvation is — full of God.

In the very beginning of the work of the Holy Ghost upon the human heart men are divinely aroused, and filled with intensity. A seeker after God is an intense being. Jesus represents the man who really found justification as standing, overwhelmed with his sins and unworthiness and crying and smiting on his breast. Men were urged to seek "early" — the first business of life — and with all the heart. Nothing can be more comprehensive than "all the heart," every passion of the being goes into it. They are as men who seek silver and hid treasure. How intense is the passion of such an one, how unconquerable his purpose!

The Spanish conquests in America, with all the hardships endured and all the sufferings inflicted upon others were the result of intense passion for gold. Cortes and his band, in their almost superhuman efforts to conquer Mexico, were impelled by this passion. Pizarro and his followers — determined even to the desperation which with bloody hands captured Peru — were moved by this passion for gold. When, as they stood on that Pacific island, hungry, almost naked, nearly dying, help came to take them back to Panama, Pizarro drew a line in the sand and said to the others, "on this side is home, and food, and rest, and friends, on that side is Peru with its golden treasure," and calling upon his followers to choose, he said, "As for me, I go south." He then stepped across the line and his comrades followed him, to be left alone, to struggle along as best they could — all for gold. This seeking for silver and hid treasure is God's own figure of the earnestness which He inspires in a man to seek Him.

When he finds God and abides in Him and Christ is revealed in Him, then he has enthusiasm — *en-theos*, God in him, or full of God — and he has divine intensity.

This text is very peculiar. The authorized version reads, "But this one thing I do." "This," and "I do," you see, are italicized, showing that those words are supplied leaving the clause to read, "but one thing." In the original the thought is expressed by two very small words, "en de." The "*de*" is the conjunction "but." The word "*en*," as here used, is very comprehensive. It means at; in; near; upon; resting upon; encompassed with; ensphered by. And so we have this, Paul's peculiar expression, in reference to himself.

He had been touching on his past experience — his complete consecration — "What things were gain to me I counted loss for Christ." The end he had in view being, as he says, to "attain unto the resurrection of the dead" — older manuscripts have it, the resurrection out from among the dead" — referring to the first resurrection. He had alluded to the way he had come; to the fact that God had laid hold of him for glorious destiny, and of his own effort to lay hold of that for which God had laid hold of him. He then looked into the future, and says "forgetting those things which are behind," he reached forth to those which were before.

But between the past and the future, between those things which had come to him and those toward which he pressed, he waited to give this emphasis to his then present condition — "en de." The most vital thing with him was his present experience and relation. He says, "I am now in a condition and position. I do not live in the past nor in the future. I live in the present. I dwell upon one thing. I am filled with it. I am environed, ensphered by this one fact. My present experience absorb's everything. It gathers the past into its bosom; it stretches its hands to the future.

It is to this all-absorbing, present condition that I invite your attention.

This little Greek word "*en*" is a word of locality. It means, as I have said, near, at, upon, resting upon, etc.

Paul had reached a place of restful activity; of glad, joyful worship, of blessed service.

This place to which he had come is of great interest. Out of the darkness of superstition; out of the prison house of legalism and formality; out from the enchanted grounds of worldliness, he had come to that peculiar and blessed place where the saints of God abide before the throne.

Every Bloodwashed spirit has his place before the throne, where he worships God day and night in His temple and where the sun and heat of the world do not smite him, and the Lamb which is in the midst feeds him and leads him unto living fountains of water, and God wipes away all tears from his eyes. The position of the Bloodwashed soul is very peculiar. He always dwells in the holy of holies. He is always in the royal Presence. He always has the ear of the King. There is no trouble about the place of any child of God on coronation day. He always has his place close to Jesus.

No wonder then, that Paul waited in the procession of thought, between the past and the future to say "*en de*" — but in — there was a past; there will be a future, but there is, now, a place where my soul abides.

This "*en*" is not only place, but also a matter of experience: "*en*" — at, upon, resting upon, etc., means, in a peculiar sense, resting upon the bosom of God and knowing, feeling, being filled with the fullness of His love. Paul had just been telling us somewhat of his experience. He said that to know Christ, to have that knowledge of Jesus Christ which is so excellent, he gave up all. In comparison to this knowledge he counted all else but dung — he reckoned all things loss, even the things that were gain unto him. That was the price he paid for this experience, the knowledge of Jesus Christ — not an intellectual knowledge that could have been won at much less price, but a knowledge by experience. It was the incoming of the power of Christ's resurrection.

As an intellectual thesis the power of His resurrection is a nothing, but as an experience — being planted in the likeness of His death, and raised upon "the likeness of His resurrection," or literally, "be of His resurrection" — it means that the same power that raised up Christ from the dead has raised us up in newness of life and imparted to us "abundant life", and is "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus."

It is this knowledge by experience which Paul says absorbs him, impels him. I am impressed with this fact as I study Paul's life. From the day of his conversion, when on his way to Damascus, the glory of Christ dawned upon him, until that day when the wounded hands placed the crown upon his brow there was just one passion that filled him. It rounded out with remarkable strength and glory the whole circle of his life. Jesus, the Lamb of God, the mighty to save was all and in all to him. How God filled his life with His own strength and burned through it with His own glory!

Some of the things which came to Paul must have been more fearful than beatings, more terrible than stonings, more dreadful than deaths oft. One of them was the waiting. See him as he lies in prison at Cesarea. With the highest statesmanship he, evidently, had planned to plant the gospel in all the great centers of the world. Rome was in his vision, and on to western Europe. But here he is in prison. One month passes but Paul still lies in chains, thirty days! — we think how long it must have seemed — another month, then another and the twelve months of the year have gone — another year begins — one by one the months go by and the second year is ended — yet Paul is still in prison. Once in a while he was led out, to answer some frivolous question of Felix. It does seem that it would have been unbearable, with the pressure upon him of his expectancy to preach the gospel. But there is nothing in the history indicating that the time seemed long. There was no worry. "*En de.*" He was gazing at his Beloved; he was in His hands; He had made the world; He had redeemed him; He, any day, could shake down the prison walls and liberate him. The work was God's work, and when He saw best He would set Him free, and bring him forth. In the meantime, he was resting in Him, abiding in Him, filled with Him. I reckon every day was too short, every night too brief for his communion with His Lord.