

**WESLEYAN HERITAGE Library**

*Sermons*

# **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

**And Other Radio Sermons**

Compiled By

*J. W. Montgomery*

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

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

Wesleyan Heritage Publications

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# **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

(Author of Personal Evangelism)

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## **COMPILER'S PREFACE**

The purpose of this little volume is twofold. First, the messages herein contained have been given over the air by various ministers with the thought of encouraging the Christian in the Holy War, or of warning the sinner of the danger of his way. If messages thus prepared and given proved a blessing to those who heard them they will be a blessing to them and to others who may read these pages. In the second place, the collector and compiler of these sermons entertains an earnest hope that this little volume may serve to deepen the interest of our people generally in spreading the gospel of Christ through the ether waves. While this method can never affect people with the same force that the gospel preached to a mass meeting will do, the scope is so vast that some will be won and it is a means of advertising and of approach to multitudes who are sick and shut in that we cannot afford to overlook. We offer the little book in the sincere hope that it may awaken Christians to greater possibilities in the vineyard of our Lord, and serve to warn erring souls to flee from the wrath to come.

**J. W. MONTGOMERY**

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

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### **FISHING ON THE AIR**

By **RAYMOND BROWNING**

You have read in sacred story  
How One walked in Galilee,  
Called the brawny fishers to Him,  
"Leave your nets and follow me;  
Henceforth you'll be mighty fishers,  
And you'll cast the net again;  
But that net will be my gospel,  
And the fish you'll catch are men."

Often have I watched the fishers  
Cast their nets into the stream,  
And have seen the haul of fishes  
Like a mass of silver gleam;  
But our net of song and sermon  
Tenderly we cast with prayer,  
Out from this broadcasting station  
And we're fishing on the air.

Here I stand each Sunday evening,  
Preaching to this microphone;  
Sometimes smiling, sometimes weeping,  
Even when I'm all alone;  
But a mighty congregation  
Seems before me all the while,  
And those unseen earnest faces  
Answer back with tear and smile.

Yonder is a lonely widow  
Left to battle for her brood;  
Weeping over little children  
Looking to her for their food,  
Sometimes she is worn to breaking  
And she's tempted to despair;  
But God sends some word of comfort  
While I'm fishing on the air.

See that aged, feeble brother  
Lingering on the shores of time,  
Wife and children, all have left him,  
Gone, maybe, to fairer clime.  
Now the dreary hours drag slowly,  
Friends are few who seem to care,  
But he gathers hope and courage  
From our fishing on the air.

There's the black sheep of the family,  
Willful, stubborn, likes to roam;  
Memories begin to haunt him,  
Now his thoughts are turning home.  
Mother's face is smiling toward him  
Though he's silvered her dark hair;  
On his hands hot tears are falling,  
While I'm fishing on the air.

Fishing on the air takes patience,  
Our nets can't be drawn to land  
Until angels come to help us  
Drag them out on golden sand.  
Hardships then will be forgotten  
As the fishermen compare  
What the far-flung nets have gathered  
From our fishing on the air.

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

By **DR. J. B. CHAPMAN**

(Station WOWO Fort Wayne, Ind., May, 1934)

On board the ship returning from the British West Indies a few weeks ago I had a conversation with a man of letters who, while a formal Christian, was decidedly uncertain about practically everything. He even doubted the existence of the material universe and confessed a decided tendency toward pessimism. He classed Jesus Christ with Plato in making up his list of the ten great men who have appeared during the centuries of human history, but claimed to be hoping for an even greater one to arise at any time within the next ten million years. He honored the Bible simply as the world's best book on religion, and thought of Christianity as merely the best guess it is possible for us in our present state of mental and spiritual haziness to make. The masses, he contended, do not matter, and must be tolerated only because from among them, we know not when or how, a great one who really knows may at some time arise.

But his contentions held good only in relation to the philosophies of men, although in liberality, we may admit that they include the abstract theories of the Christian also. Even though one's premises may be correct and his reasonings true, his conclusions are still subject to the same laws of experience as are those of other thinkers. And should I come here today to discourse on the historic background of Christianity I should have to meet all the tests of proof that would be required of the secular historian. Should I come to speak of the Christian philosophy of life I would have to observe the same regard for values that would be demanded of the economist. The search for what Henry Drummond called the summum bonum, or the highest good, is really a matter of doubt until it has actually been apprehended. So that during the search all men are called upon to be flexible and considerate. There is virtue in the saying that "One man's opinion is as good as another man's opinion," only so long as all are still in the realm of mere opinions. When the time comes that one man has followed a given road until he has reached a certain promised destination, then that man can speak with authority that is impossible to one who is still on that same or some other road and has not as yet arrived. This is why the apostles of Christ could not accede to the demand of their persecutors that they cease to preach and testify of Jesus. The reply of the Christian leaders to such a demand was, "We can but speak the things we have seen and heard." That is, what they were saying was not a matter of speculation, but a matter of fact, and all men are bound to say what they know to be true.

But I am speaking today of the certainties of the Christian. I present two words from the third chapter of the First Epistle of John. In verse 14 he says, "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And in the 24th verse he says, "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."

No sane person has ever claimed that becoming a Christian would give a man a college education, or even that it would give him immediate ability to solve the mysteries of wisdom and knowledge in all the scope of science, philosophy and art. It is not even claimed that the Christian, just because he is a Christian, will immediately become a theologian or an accomplished Bible scholar. The processes of ordinary learning apply to the saintliest person, and the storehouse of knowledge of nature and men and God will yield its treasures only to the persistent student.

But there are a few things of which the Christian is sure or may become sure. I mention some of these by way of example without any thought of attempting to cover the whole list of Christian verities.

First, the Christian has knowledge of guilt and pollution of sin. And I do not speak of the common knowledge gained through the study of the Ten Commandments, The Sermon on the Mount or the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. I speak rather of that inward consciousness which is when the Holy Spirit reproves of sin. One may defend himself and excuse his shortcomings until the Holy Spirit comes to awaken. Then he is forced to confess himself "the chief of sinners." Chambers said, "When one sees himself under the light of the Holy Spirit's reproof he is driven to the desperate choice between repentance, suicide and insanity." Perhaps the language is strong. But the genuine Christian has no debate concerning the guilt and pollution of sin, and the prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," is or has been a personal prayer with him.

Second, the Christian knows that his past sins have been pardoned and that he is now a redeemed and adopted child of God. I am speaking of experience, not of interpretations, therefore I cannot emphasize the prerequisites which led up to the reception of this knowledge nor to the manifestations which accompanied or followed the conversion of any certain individual. But "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Third, the Christian knows that God is with him in spiritual presence, and that he is not alone. Someone has said that modern thought has carried the idea that God is in everything so far as to make the popular concept of God pantheistic. Men have, so to speak, brought God so near that they have in reality bowed Him out of His universe and destroyed the hope that prayer can avail anything, and in so doing they have driven the knowledge of God from the minds and hearts of men. But the real Christian has fellowship and communion with God. When he prays he does not simply listen to the echo of his own voice, as some have dully claimed, but God answers him back in language which he can understand, even if he cannot interpret it. A teacher was asked to speak before an assembly of high school students. To their surprise he chose to speak on the subject of prayer. And to their further Surprise, he commenced with the simple testimony, "I pray every day, and it helps me." But this is the testimony of every true Christian. Prayer is not so much a method of getting things — it is much more than that, for it is a method of communion with God and of bringing the infinite God into the sphere of human apprehension.

Perhaps you will bear with me while I make a brief statement of my own experience. I was a member of a large family which was not a religious family. Our early religious education was very much neglected. But in the winter following my ninth birthday I became stirred with my sense of personal sin and need and desire for God, and used to pray every night. But one night my eldest

brother discouraged me, and I became indifferent. At the age of fifteen, however, my sense of sinfulness returned, and at the public altar I sought God in the forgiveness of sins. Much of the instruction given was not intelligible to me, but I appreciated the interest and prayers of the Christian people. At last it seemed to me that I stood upon the rim of a precipice and was possessed with an urge to step off. I knew that to draw back in fear as I had done many times before would not bring any peace of mind. And finally I did step off in the desperation of faith. I had no former experience with which to compare what happened that night. But there streamed into my soul a blessed sense of peace. The peace quickly arose to the status of overflowing joy and ecstasy and I am sure that I had been supernaturally changed. I have not for one moment, so far as I can now recall, doubted that God by the operation of His Spirit initiated me into the Christian experience that night. Though it is scarcely within the scope of this testimony to tell how I sought and obtained a definite baptism with the Holy Spirit a few hours after my conversion, I cannot forbear to state that this did occur in a manner no less real than the former experience.

It is now thirty-five years since that memorable night when "the burden of my heart rolled away." I have passed from the period of early youth to the noontime of life. But along the way my soul has felt and known the joy of communion with God. I have been ordained to the Christian ministry, but my honor is that I have fellowship with God. I may sometimes make mistakes in my interpretations, but I am not mistaken in my facts. I know I have passed from the death of sin into the life of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ. I know He abideth in me by the Spirit which He hath given me. I believe the doctrines of Christianity, but I am certain of its experiences. I accept the history of the Bible as true, and the science of the Bible as correct. But my very heart and soul rest in the assurance that the God of the Bible has heard my prayer and given me His Spirit.

I know that our early training is likely to modify our creed. I know also that our comprehension of truth is sometimes reflected in our conduct. And so for the moment I desire to make no tests of intellectual concepts or of sacramental observation. I know too that one's temperament has much to do with his expressional life, so I do not ask whether you have ever shouted aloud or made other strong manifestation of your inner possession. But I do ask this afternoon if you have ever really and truly met God in the experiences of your inner heart and soul. Have you ever known the joy of sins forgiven? Have you ever felt the bliss the blood-washed know? Have you ever been into that secret chamber of intimate communion with God where there is fullness of joy and pleasures forever more?

Speculation may amuse and interest, but it cannot assure and comfort in life and in death. It takes the face of the unveiled Christ to enable one to say with Job, "I know that my redeemer liveth," and to pass on into the valley of shadows sustained by His comforting rod and staff. O my friend, whosoever you are that hear me this day, I beseech you to take upon you the yoke of Christ and learn of Him. Then you shall find rest for your soul. To know God and Christ whom He has sent is to have everlasting life. To know God is to be strong and able to do exploits.

— General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene —

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

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### **A SOUL-WINNER IN ACTION**

By **RAYMOND BROWNING**

(Delivered over a Columbus, Ohio, Station)

The greatest task that God has ever assigned to His children in this world is that of winning souls. The command to do this is so definite that no Christian can ignore it and the rewards for soul-winning are so tremendous that our enthusiasm should never wane. For instance in Daniel 12:3 are these beautiful words: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Compared with this promise everything the world can offer fades into littleness and insignificance. Herein lies an opportunity to build for one's self a monument more enduring than the pyramids, more beautiful than Solomon's temple, and more satisfying than all the accumulated pleasures that the world could ever produce. In response to a lady's request to write something in her album the great missionary, Robert Moffat, penned these words:

My album is a savage breast,  
Where passions dark and shadows rest  
Without one ray of light.  
To write the name of Jesus there  
And see that savage bow in prayer  
And point to worlds more bright and fair,  
This is my soul's delight.

In thinking over the books that have been written on soul winning and personal work it occurs to me that the most definite, the most concise, the most practical, and most illuminating treatise on the subject is found in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, verses twenty-six to forty. In this story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch is found every necessary qualification for leading men to Christ. Other elements might be helpful and interesting, but I call attention to the seven that are necessary:

1. The soul-winner must be clear in his own experience. We read in Acts 6:3 that Philip was one of the seven men spoken of as being "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." Many of these elaborate plans for organizing personal workers prior to an evangelistic campaign are disappointing, because workers cannot impart what they do not possess. Until the Holy Ghost comes upon men and women any kind of religious organization, however well intended, is just a body without a soul. Today in our churches we have endless organization, committees within committees, wheels, program chasing program in endless succession, together with institutes and inspirational meetings ad infinitum. It reminds me of a squirrel in a tin cage racing the roller round and round but getting nowhere. Apply the Bible test of wisdom, "He that winneth souls is wise," and the emptiness of the scheme is

revealed. The solution of the soul-saving problem will not be found in further plans and schemes but in men and women filled with the Holy Ghost.

2. The soul-winner must be under the direction of the Spirit. This incident begins with the angel of the Lord saying, "Arise, and go toward the south" and then in verse 29, "the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot," and again at the close of the story, "the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." Better than any scheme or plan that we may advise is the mind of the Spirit. If Philip had followed his own judgment he would probably never have gone down to the dreary desert with its blistering heat. He would have remained in the city with its large crowds and apparently large opportunities. He did not know that the Ethiopian eunuch thirsting for God was going through the desert, but the Holy Ghost knew he was there and knew just what he needed. Into the unlovely and uninviting situation the Holy Ghost sometimes leads us that we may do the greatest work we shall ever do. Philip did not realize that morning when he listened to the gentle whispering of the still small voice that he would do something that the Holy Ghost would write down in the Scriptures to stand forever as a monument to his faithfulness and also as a perfect example of soul-winning. The adulation of great congregations, the itch for newspaper publicity, the love of comfort and convenience, and bad judgment of even good friends often conspire together to restrain us from deserts where largest and most precious diamonds are to be found. David Livingstone buried himself in Africa, but his dust lies in Westminster Abbey and his name is immortal. William Booth left the regular ranks of the ministry to mingle with the scum of London, but God raised him up until the whole world knew him and mourned when he died. Wilfred Grenfell left the allurements of civilization to practice medicine among the poor fisherfolk of Labrador but his name is fairer than the ice fields of that dreary land. Dr. John Brasher conducted a revival in a schoolhouse on Sand Mountain in Alabama when the winter wind was blowing cold and the congregations were small but it was a wonderful revival meeting. It gave the holiness movement of this day three remarkable preachers, the Owen brothers.

3. The soul-winner must be obedient. In verse 27 we read, "He arose and went." If Philip had been like some of the workers of today he would have said, "I feel that I ought to be going down toward Gaza today but this is such a busy time with me; think perhaps I will wait until next week. I'll phone my pastor, and maybe he will be going down in that neighborhood and can attend to anything that is necessary." If Philip's obedience had not been prompt, the eunuch would have driven on uninstructed and maybe never would have been saved. This would have been no small loss. The Scripture says he was a man of great authority, that he was in charge of the treasures of a kingdom, and that he was on his way home after a fruitless endeavor to find God in the regular church services. One of the further evidences that he was a great man is shown in the fact that he was diligently studying the prophecy of Isaiah while being jolted in a springless chariot down the hot, dusty road of the desert. If Philip had been stubborn or sluggish the eunuch might have gone back to Ethiopia and said to the queen, "I saw the great temple at Jerusalem, I heard some eloquent preaching. The great choirs sang beautifully. All the appointments for worship were elegant and expensive beyond description, but somehow I didn't get very much out of it." What he really said was probably something like this: "O Queen of Ethiopia, a most wonderful thing happened to me. I left Jerusalem a disappointed man, my heart was as empty as it had been before I left home. I was driving along the road trying to get some comfort by reading something from one of the old prophets when all of a sudden an odd-looking fellow came trotting along by my side and asked me if I understood what I

was reading. To make a long story short, this man proved to be a holiness evangelist named Philip. He explained the scripture to me and led me to Jesus. Glory to God! I lost all interest in that big temple at Jerusalem and told Philip I wanted to be a member of a church that had the kind of religion that made people anxious to tell about Jesus. Right then and there he baptized me and gave me the right hand of fellowship and then I took another shouting spell and when I came to myself I was hugging the chariot driver and Philip was gone."

4. The soul-winner must be an enthusiast. We read in verse 30, "And Philip ran thither to him." This intense faith that makes the walker run marks the difference between the ordinary Christian and the enthusiast. There is something wonderfully attractive and commanding about a person who is on fire with zeal for saving souls. A living bush is certainly more attractive than a dead one but a living bush that quivered with wreaths of flame is what caught the attention of the mighty Moses. This holy enthusiasm leaps the barriers of the ordinary and commonplace. It makes God's men and women brush aside trifling conventionalities and unfetters them from the chains of worldly custom. Those four men at Capernaum who brought their sick friend to Jesus pushed past every hindering protest and tore up the roof of another man's house. It was a rather irregular religious service. There wasn't anything like it in the prayer book, but it saved the man and pleased the Lord. One of the greatest indictments that stands against our theological seminaries today is they rob our young preachers of their enthusiasm. They remind us of the old slaketub in my father's blacksmith shop. I have seen the steel or iron at white heat and scattering little stars of fire plunged into that old tub. There was a commotion for a little while but the glow soon faded. Thank God for our holiness schools and colleges and seminaries whose energies are not spent in reducing spiritual temperature.

5. The soul-winner ought to have a tactful approach. Philip said, "Understandest thou what thou reatest?" He began with something that interested the eunuch. Dr. John Matthews, a famous old Methodist pastor, once said, "I have spent more than a half a century studying the easy access to the human heart." If our business is to love people and to help them to know God we ought to be very careful not to offend them at first approach. Philip did not begin by telling the eunuch that he ought not to wear finger rings and lodge pins. He did not discuss bobbed hair, short skirts, or silk hosiery. He did not ask him what he thought about fundamentalism and modernism pre or post millennialism, evolution, or other controversial subjects. A good pilot knows where the rocks and reefs are located, but he keeps the ship as far away from them as possible if he wants to get the vessel into port. For more than twenty years I have been relentless against the tobacco business as a whole and yet I rarely mention the subject to any unconverted person with whom I am dealing. It seems to me that it is far more desirable to lead the man into a blessing which "will change the color of a man's spittle" than to run the risk of getting your finger bit off while trying to extract tobacco from some fellow's mouth. In Kipling's poem entitled "If" is the term "the common touch." That common touch is a great thing. It is hard to explain just how to sit down on a rail fence alongside some old mountaineer and borrow his knife and whittle a stick and listen to him talk about his little farm and family until he will listen to you talk to him about your Lord, but it can be done. It is hard to tell anyone just how to go into a cotton mill and encourage an unlettered and maybe, a reckless boy to show you the working of the fine machine that he operates until he will feel that you are not superior, or patronizing and will come to hear you preach, but somehow, love can do it.

6. The soul-winner ought to know the Scriptures. We read that "Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture." It is not necessary that a person know all the Scriptures in order to lead a soul to Christ, but the more one knows of the Scriptures the more skillful he will be saving souls. It is amazing how little a newly converted person can know of the Bible and yet lead souls to the Lord but certainly ignorance is no qualification for soul-winning. God blesses the efforts of the earnest Christian in spite of his ignorance and not because of it. The command is very clear in 2 Tim. 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The thing that has made Uncle Buddie Robinson such a great soul winner is his wonderful grasp on Scripture more than his tender sympathy or his inimitable humor. Fortunately for the eunuch Philip was not a modernist and did not deny the inspiration of the Old Testament or try to explain to him that the prophecy of Isaiah was a highly colored form of Hebrew poetry which should not be taken literally. Philip simply picked up the old telescope of prophecy and turned it toward Calvary and let the eunuch see the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

7. The soul-winner's constant theme is Jesus. "Philip preached unto him Jesus." It doesn't matter so much where we begin in the great circle of truth if we go back to the center which is Jesus Christ. Some years ago there was a student conference held in the mountains near Asheville, N. C., and one day some of us were talking to Brother Tokio Kugimiya, a minister from Japan. He said to one of the young men, "Brother Brockman you have finished college. We need you in Japan. Why don't you go?" Brockman replied, "Well, I haven't taken my seminary course yet. I need to study theology before I go to the mission field." Brother Kugimiya put his hands on Brockman's shoulders and with tears gathering in his eyes said, "Brockman, Japan doesn't need theology. Japan needs Jesus Christ." How many times those words have rung in my ears. "Japan needs Jesus Christ." If all our missionaries had realized this truth our mission fields would have been spared endless dissension. If our preachers at home had clung to this truth many churches of our country would not be worldly and fruitless and discordant. Our imaginary needs are many, our real needs are few, but our one supreme need is Jesus Christ, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

— Pastor First Church of the Nazarene, Columbus, Ohio —

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## **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHRISTIAN**

By **DR. R. T. WILLIAMS**

(Message delivered over Radio Station WOWO,

Sunday afternoon, March 11, 1934)

TEXT: By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:34, 35).

Self-preservation is usually accepted as the first law of life. By this principle, the poets, sages and philosophers of the earliest civilizations molded their characters and directed their lives, not even dreaming, then, that a higher standard would ever be proclaimed and interpreted.

Under the law of the Old Testament an eye for an eye was accepted as a rule of conduct. Jesus presented a new law of life, a new philosophy, a different standard, both for inner character and ethical conduct, and, in doing it, He revolutionized the thinking of mankind and gave power for moral and religious achievement never before possible.

Hear Him say, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Love your enemies." "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."

What marvelous words! What lofty conceptions! This standard was more than a mere improvement over the old standards: it was something different, new, radical, revolutionary. One philosopher before Christ had a golden rule, but it was negative. "Do not unto others as you would not have them do unto you."

Jesus gave us a positive golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Here is a law of love that is to be fulfilled both in negative and positive attitudes and actions.

The disciples of Jesus are expected and commanded to live under this new and higher law, which fact will distinguish them from all other men and prove their divine relationship and honor the Son of God.

Love in the heart and manifested in the life of the Christian is both God's test and proof. No substitute is needed, nevertheless many substitutes have been offered and emphasized. Note some of the common evidences of Christianity that are frequently offered.

One is our own particular interpretation of the teachings of the gospel, and of these interpretations there are many. A person's attitude toward ethical or unethical conduct is another evidence often presented. Another is positive conduct, which we all know may itself be actuated by motives partly

or entirely selfish, while the conduct itself may be good. Religion must not only deal with acts, but motives back of the acts.

Then again, we are all more or less prone to evaluate people by their zeal for certain causes or institutions, forgetting that zeal may be for a good cause or for an evil one, or it might be misdirected or misguided. Again, it is very easy for us to think well or evil of a person according to his stand, for or against, that which we ourselves believe. Finally, it is common for us, consciously or unconsciously, to estimate the quality of one's religion by certain spiritual or emotional manifestations. All of these evidences are insufficient, though they have in them an element of truth and are to some extent relevant to the question under consideration.

The great Teacher of all ages presents love as the final and sufficient evidence of real Christianity in the hearts and practice of the disciples of Jesus. By this shall all men know. Here is certainty. No doubt remains. The evidence is clear, unmistakable and infallible. Love is the supreme test and the supreme proof; love in the heart and in all human relationships.

As an abstraction, love has absolutely no meaning for the mind. It is not and cannot be something purely impersonal, that is separate and distinct from a person. There can be no love without a person, any more than there can be mercy or justice without a person to administer mercy and justice.

New Testament religion has a person as its center. In fact Christ is Christianity. Christ is a person and manifests His love in relationships with persons. Love in the abstract means nothing but love in a person and manifested in relationships means everything.

It should not be overlooked that this divine love required of Christians as evidence of their discipleship, is not an achievement, nor an attainment; it is an obtainment, a gift from God. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us, and certainly the infinite God has plenty for all. This divine love is the most effective, the most practical, and the greatest thing in the world. It will lift every human being into a realm of happiness and service where the very atmosphere is tempered and perfumed with the spirit of romance.

Every child of God must express his love in relationships and service. No man can be right with God and wrong with his fellowmen. He cannot render service to God while he neglects the needs of men. We cannot be ethical with God and unethical with one another. Christ prayed that His disciples might be one, and, as a result, He would not be ashamed to call them brethren.

But, love not only demands unity among the followers of Jesus, but energy and action in giving the good news of salvation to all men of all nations. How can anyone whose heart is full of the love of God withhold that love and good news of the gospel from those not yet touched and evangelized? The love of God is not static; it is dynamic and creative. It reaches out to the uttermost bounds of human needs. It clamors for, and demands expression, in service to others. No true disciple of Jesus Christ can ever be perfectly contented to remain inactive as long as there are other human beings on earth not evangelized.

The hope of the world is in the gospel as presented by Jesus. Here is a salvation for all men, a salvation from all sin through the merits of Christ.

The grand old book, the Bible, the love of God, faith in God, divine life in men, salvation from sin, respect and reverence for God, and respect for divine law are the hope of the world. Nothing else offers any solution that is dependable.

God and the Bible can meet the world situation and solve the problems of the nations. "Back to God and the Bible." Let this be our battle cry.

This poor old heartbroken, and bankrupt world offers a pitiful sight today. Everywhere there is confusion and unrest. Many solutions for present social conditions have been urged.

A few years ago great educational leaders made the challenge that education was entirely adequate for the situation.

"Give us money, great educational institutions, huge endowments, ample facilities for research, and we will do three things for you. First, education will forever end war. Second, it will abolish crime. Third, it will annihilate poverty. Think of the promise. Abolish war, crime and poverty."

We furnished the money, taxing the people and seeking huge gifts for erection of buildings and for endowments. What are the results?

With all this effort, we now see more preparation being made for wars than before 1914. We have more crime than ever before in the history of the nation, and there is more poverty than we have had before. Has education failed? No! Education has not failed.

But it has failed to make good its challenge and promise to do three things. First, to end war; second, to abolish crime, and third, to eliminate poverty. In that respect, education is now on the defensive. It has not made good its promise to solve our major problems in society.

Why?

The answer is simple.

There is no solution of social problems, without the gospel of Christ. This nation must look to God and the Bible for its permanency. We need a revival of old-time religion. Back to God, and the Bible, and the old-time religion — that is our need. No, not back but forward with God, and forward with the Bible and forward with the old-fashioned revival of religion.

Faith in God, belief in the dignity of man, respect for law, a God-consciousness in society; these are the essentials of abiding civilization. The love of God in the heart will make for happiness, bring peace on earth and good will to all men, injecting mercy and justice into all human relationships, economic, social, industrial, political and otherwise. It is needed in the home, in the school, in the

shop and factory, in the church, in business and everywhere. This is the salt that will stop decay, light that will dispel darkness, and the Lamblike spirit that will supplant the devouring nature of sin.

**GOD AND MAN.** These are the two great themes of themes. God loving men and men loving one another. What else matters if these two themes are left out of the curriculums of life.

Without God, a personal God, a holy God, a wise God, creation has no meaning. Without man, the rest of creation would be without logic and sense.

God in His tender love has undertaken the salvation of all men. Let the Christian give proof of his own redemption and advertise his gospel, and honor his God by manifesting this supreme Christian quality, Love.

It was love in the heart of the Father that sent Jesus to the world to save men. It was love that led Jesus to the cross to die for men, and it is the love of God that sends the divine spirit to every human being to lead him to life. Love in the heart and love in all of the relationships of the Christian is imperative.

**LOVE IS POWER.** It is a solution for our problems. It will save when all else fails.

There is a story told of three young men, on a lake, riding in a small boat. In the late afternoon a storm arose, catching them far off shore. They tried to reach land against heavy wind and waves, but failed. Their boat was capsized, throwing them into the water. The storm became a terrible blizzard, while they held to the sides of the boat trying to outride the storm, through the tragic hours of the long night. Two of the young men, during that fatal night, both of whom were single, froze to death and sank. The third, a married man, and the father of a little boy, was found the following morning, still holding on, though near death from exposure and exhaustion. He was taken to a hospital.

When sufficiently recovered to talk, he was asked to explain why he survived, while the two other young men, equally strong and healthy, perished.

He said, "That is easy to explain. During the night I practically froze to death twice. Both times I was ready to give up and go down, when I saw in my vision, my little cottage, my sweet young wife, standing in the door holding my little boy in her arms, weeping and saying, "Oh John, don't die, we cannot give you up!" Then my boy reached out his little arms and said, 'Daddy, come back, we love you.' Love in my heart for my wife and boy boiled the blood in my veins, which ran hot through my whole being, melting the ice from my body and enabling me to tighten my grip for further struggle."

It was love that saved him.

Yes, love for God will enable us to stand the cold winds and storms of adversity and sorrow, and love for one another will give us inspiration and courage to fight through the most difficult battles.

My dear friend, listening in this afternoon, if not a Christian, why not kneel down where you are and give your heart to God, and then arise to be a true disciple of Jesus, with love in your heart for God and man, and then give proof of your discipleship by showing this love in your actions?

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

This is your test. This is your proof of divine life in the soul. Love, love to God and love to man!

— General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene —

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# **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

## **THE WORD OF GOD**

By **REV. A. L. PARROTT**

(Delivered over WTAX, May, 1934)

TEXT: Hebrews 4:12.

The Bible is the most wonderful book in the whole world. It has wielded an influence far greater than any other or any dozen of others, and has for more than thirty centuries.

I like to think of the Bible as a great tree, as a gigantic oak of the forest, whose roots penetrate the hills of eternity and fasten themselves around the "Rock of Ages," its sixty-six books forming the great trunk until the adverse winds have been unable to shake it down across the centuries. Its eleven hundred and eighty-nine chapters each form a link, and its thirty-one thousand one hundred and seventy-three verses each a twig, and each of its three million, three hundred, sixty-six thousand and eight hundred and eighty letters a leaf with its sentiment forming fruit and flowers and fragrance all towering heavenward and the heart or pith of the tree is the "Lily of the Valley."

Again, I like to think of the Bible as a well and in this connection it perhaps was fifteen hundred years in the digging. Moses struck the first blow in Genesis and John the last one in Revelation. It is a wonderful well and very deep, so deep that none have ever reached the bottom nor exhausted its supply. My friend, if you will but dig deep you will find water. Some have put down their little human scoops and brought them up, to find nothing but dirt and have declared that it is not the infallible Word of God, but their trouble is in the fact that they have not digged deep enough. Go down beneath the surface, down past all human strata and into the realm of the spiritual and you will find water for your famishing soul, yea "with joy will you draw water out of the wells of salvation."

Contained in my text are a few things about the Book worthy of mention: In the first place we are told that the Book is quick. Now the word "quick" is an old English word whose meaning has changed. It originally meant to be alive. It is the same word translated in Rev. 4:5 where it tells us that when He shall appear that He will judge the quick and the dead, meaning of course the living and the dead. So we see the Bible is a living Book.

It is living because it has survived the centuries and today it is sold in greater numbers than ever before in the world's history. Millions of volumes of other books have been written and read and in many instances reprinted and distributed, but finally they have passed out of print and have died, but not so with the Bible; it is alive today. It is a Book of principles and these fit this complex civilization of today as well as in Moses' time.

It is living because it has survived the onslaughts of the enemies in their heavy attacks upon it. The Bible has been fought and ridiculed as no other book, yet it stands firm as Gibraltar, undaunted

and unmoved, while it bares its bosom to the beating billows, dashing waves and howling winds. Voltaire said he would utterly destroy it, yet we are told that the very building used to house his printing press at that time has been secured by the American Bible Society and is now stacked with Bibles from cellar to garret. Bob Ingersoll said he would do away in three weeks with all it took the disciples a life time to build up, and when Ingersoll died he did have five hundred infidel clubs to carry on his destructive work but every one of those clubs has long since ceased to exist, while millions bow daily at the shrine of Jesus Christ and before an open Bible. False prophets have assailed the Book but have failed to disprove one single statement. It reminds one of the little mouse that decided to gnaw into the great iron safe. Mousey gnawed away for a while and then congratulated himself on his success as he looked down at the pretty shavings at his feet. He worked on later to find that it was his own teeth that were wearing away and not the safe.

The Bible is living because it can arouse the conscience of men. You may read Shakespeare or Browning or Tennyson and not be disturbed about your sins, but when you read the Bible you are disturbed. This Book will arouse the sense of "ought" in you as no other book will or can. It is the living Word of God.

Then, too, we notice that the text declares that it is not only the living but the powerful Word of God. In this connection, I shall not confine myself to the written Word but the spoken as well. It took power to create a world, throw it out into motion and keep it whirling as the centuries come and go, yet God spoke and this world came into existence and it is upheld by the power of His Word.

It takes power to put life into a dead soul yet when God speaks it is at once made alive. I have often thought of Ezekiel's vision of dry bones. That valley was filled with dead, dry, bleached bones. The prophet began to preach the Word of God and soon they began to move and to show signs of life and finally they became a great army in the hosts of God. Mary Magdalene was dead and cold and lifeless so far as spirituality was concerned and possessed of seven devils but Jesus spoke and they disappeared. Saul of Tarsus was breathing out threatenings against the Church but God spoke to him on the Damascus road and immediately he became a new man the mighty Apostle Paul, who brought life and salvation to the multiplied thousands. Well, too, do I remember when my own heart was cold and hard as a stone, but Jesus spoke and peace possessed my heart and salvation flowed like a river over my soul.

It will take great power to raise the dead on the resurrection morning in the last day and to usher in the judgment. But the Bible plainly teaches that God will speak and that the graves will open and that the dead will come forth and be ushered to the solemn assemblage and the judgment will be on.

All this and more will take place as God speaks.

The text also declares that the Word of God is sharp — sharper than any two-edged sword. It is a cutting Word. It will cut you loose from your sins and eradicate carnality and perform a perfect operation in your soul. Yes! If you will obey the Word it will cut you loose from your past life and completely slay carnality in your soul. A beautiful picture is given of this in Samuel's dealings with Saul when he had spared Agag. The prophet Samuel had told Saul to slay utterly the enemy. King Agag as well as oxen and sheep were spared. When Samuel heard the bleating of the sheep and the

lowing of the cattle and learned that Agag was yet alive, Samuel ordered him brought forth and God's prophet hewed him to pieces with the sword before the Lord in Gilgal. So will He deal with sin. The Word is not only sharper than any Damascus blade, but it is a two-edged sword. It cuts going and coming. With one edge it cuts to save and with the other it cuts to damn. It is either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. This is what makes preaching and hearing such a solemn thing. The very message that you are bearing is going to bless you or curse you, is going to lift you or weight you down. Another point in the text worthy of mention is that this Word is pointed. It is not only alive, powerful, double-edged and sharp, but it is pointed. It is calculated to prick and pierce and probe and penetrate the soul. It will separate the good from the bad. So perfect are the workings here that it divides asunder the joints and marrow, the bone and nerve. Many of us know what it is to have affected nerves. A poison let loose in your system will result in rheumatism, neuritis and kindred ills. People have these troubles religiously, but if the Word of God is followed minutely it surely will perfect a cure. Like filling a tooth, it is quite a painful process, while it is going on, but it will save you untold suffering later. If we would but read the Bible and fashion our lives according to its precepts our problems would be solved and a perfect spiritual cure would be brought about. I believe that there can be found in the Bible a prescription for every need of the soul. Let us peruse its pages and ply its promises and not be afraid to take literally what God says.

In conclusion allow me to ask from whence came such a Book? A Book that is alive despite the frequent and heavy blows of its enemies. A Book that possesses marvelous power. A Book that is cuttingly sharp, double-edged and pointed. A Book that can probe the soul and separate one from his sins. Where, I repeat did it spring from? Is it the production of man or is it the Word of God? We agree that it is none other than the unchangeable, immutable, eternal Word of God. I believe it from Genesis to Revelation. And when the time comes for me to cross the line of worlds and I find myself in the "valley and the shadow," I want no softer pillow on which to lay my head, I want no sharper sword with which to fight life's last great battle and while in the throes of death's fiercest struggle, I want no cooler water with which to slake my thirst, I want no more dependable map to guide me through life than mother's old Bible.

— Pastor Church of the Nazarene, Springfield, Ill —

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

### **A DANGER SIGNAL**

By Rev. **J. W. MONTGOMERY**

(Delivered over WOWO, Fort Wayne, Ind., April, 1934)

TEXT: Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people (Prov. 14:34).

With those familiar with sacred and profane history, there is no need of argument. The truth of this text has already been established among them, and emphasized again and again.

The records in every courthouse, from the smallest county seat town to the national department of justice, point to the reproach of sin in humanity. They also emphasize the exalting effect of righteousness among men. It is well that our laws are thus founded upon principles of righteousness, for lasting honor and security can come only to individuals and nations who respect such principles.

We cannot measure our strength by the number of young men who make up our army and navy, nor by the millions of dollars we spend in the building of warships. We cannot determine our powers, even by the amount of wealth that we are able to temporarily extract from the earth. Neither can we obtain a permanent position among the nations of the earth through art, science and philosophy. A permanent society cannot rest upon the genius of its members alone, nor upon weapons of war, nor human treaties of peace. Such must rest upon the foundation of righteousness, which alone can stand the storms, criticisms and attacks of the enemies through the ages.

Without this righteousness, which the wise king declares will exalt a nation, no kingdom will ever be built strong enough to defend herself against her foes, within and without, through the centuries that may come.

Nebuchadnezzar ruled the greatest of all earthly kingdoms. He was a world dictator, and his word was law in every known country under the sun. Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive. His lords as well as his servants were compelled to worship the gods of their king, and the image that he made. He boasted that his kingdom extended to the ends of the earth, and reached to the heavens. He declared that the mighty Babylon which he had built would protect his majesty forever.

Why should he not feel secure? He was not only clothed with the greatest powers that could be bestowed upon a living king, but was also surrounded with the greatest stone walls that could be built by the genius of man.

The front of his palace was six times as great as St. Peter's church in Rome. It was four times as long as the capitol building in Washington. The great structure was surrounded by three walls, so high it would take thirteen men, standing erect, one above the other, to reach the top. The outer wall

enclosed more ground than Central Park in New York City. This palace was situated in a great city, fifteen miles square, with a stone wall on every side, at least fifty feet thick, and higher than a modern sky-scraper, with armed watchmen on the walls day and night.

It would not be humanly possible for one to better prepare himself to leave God out of his plans, and to continue on in safety. Yet Nebuchadnezzar was not safe.

This mighty king and his lords made the same mistake that hundreds of other prosperous rulers have made; namely, they forgot that sin is a reproach to any people. They forgot the fact that a leader can be protected and secure only by the wall of righteousness and integrity that his people are able to build around him. They even encouraged the gratification of every sinful passion and desire, and discouraged every protest on the part of godly men against it. They attempted to destroy by fire those who would warn them of the evil of their ways.

God could have sent an earthquake at any moment to shake the foundation of the mighty Babylon, and to cause every building to tumble in a heap, like so many child's blocks in play. But, instead, He revealed His power and revenge in a more miraculous way. He confused the mind of the world dictator, and gave him the mind of a beast. With his majesty gone from him, the king drifted from the courts of his palace to the wilds of the meadows and the forest, where he crawled upon his hands and knees, and ate grass like an ox. Through him the Lord gave to the world an object lesson entitled, "Sin is a reproach to any people."

When king Nebuchadnezzar came to himself, and to his senses, he was as humble as though he had never ruled the earth. He left on record the clearest testimony of the power and sovereignty of God to be found in the world.

But, in spite of his sad experience with the reproach of sin, and the clear testimony to the power of God that he left on record, his young son, Belshazzar, mounted his throne after him, with an air of pride that impressed a God-forsaking and pleasure-loving age with the thought that Babylon would still remain intact forever.

He belonged to the proud race of the Chaldeans, whom the Hebrew prophets describe as tender and delicate, and given to pleasure, dwelling carelessly, and trusting in wickedness. Their young men were full of show, sensual and self-indulgent. They enjoyed dramatic entertainment, in which female singers and dancers appeared in the nude on the stage, with lewd songs and sayings for the amusement of wild and half-intoxicated young men. All this can be shown from the Hebrew prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as well as from Greek historians. No doubt Belshazzar was perfectly familiar with the warnings of his old father, who had faithfully pointed out the danger of defying the God of heaven. Still he gives way to the pride of life and the lust of the flesh until he invites wild night life in his own courts, with idle women and ease-loving men, participating in every known vice, under the full protection of the strong arm of Babylonian laws.

But the day of doom is not far from a nation when her young men become tender and delicate, given to pleasure and afraid to work. Nothing worse could happen to our country today, friends, than

to have a generation of tender and delicate young men, without energy, without principle, without conscience, but with money enough to support their leisure and their vices.

Belshazzar had everything to flatter his pride and indulge his passions. He was an absolute monarch, holding the life and property of his thousand lords and countless people entirely at his disposal. His servants were princes. His concubines were daughters of kings. His capital was enriched with the spoils of nations. His land was cultivated by captive people. No one could have felt more secure than did this young king on the night of his feast for his thousand lords.

He lifted himself up against the Lord of heaven, and he despised the kings and armies of the earth. He declared the warnings of his father, and the religion of the prophets were ill out of date; and encouraged his subjects to be broad-minded and modern, and to follow the leadings of their own desires. His lords and ladies were only too glad to follow the example of their handsome young king.

But the handwriting appears on the wall! God has spoken. The wrath of the Lord is again kindled against Babylon. Belshazzar drops into an easy chair, and his knees smite together for fear. The spirit of frolic and air of pride disappear. They call for a servant of the living God, for the king is in trouble. Daniel, the servant of the God whom Belshazzar so recently denounced, is now a welcome guest at the scene of the wild Babylonian party. Daniel understood the meaning of the king's plight but arrived entirely too late to save him from it. The high-minded lover of sin soon pays the awful price of forgetting God. During the same night in which the gay party was staged in such splendor, and with such air of security and independence, Belshazzar wallows in his own blood, dying in the streets of the fallen city, and in the ruins of a once powerful kingdom. Once more an object lesson is given to the world, emphasizing the truth of our text, "Sin is a reproach to any people."

It is a reproach to America the same as to Babylon or any other nation.

We will never, as a people, solve our problems merely by kicking out the Republicans and putting in the Democrats, nor kicking out the Democrats and putting in the Socialists. Sin has the same effect on one political party as it does on the other. It takes something more than another party movement to save the day. We cannot drink and waste our way to a permanent prosperity. We will never get rich as a nation by destroying our wealth. We will not find our way to peace and happiness through brain trusts and increase of federal debts. It will require a mighty revival, and a turning to God, and a deep regard for His righteousness in the earth to bring us, as a nation, to the place we should fill in the earth. For "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

— District Superintendent, Northern Indiana District,  
Church of the Nazarene —

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

### **THE HEAVENLY DOVE**

By **REV. H. B. JENSEN**

(Message delivered over WJBL, Decatur, Ill.)

One of the most beautiful and significant symbols of the Holy Spirit and the sanctified life is the dove. Matthew, Mark and John say that when Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit "like a dove" descended upon Him. Matthew and Mark say that Jesus saw the dove, and John says that he saw it.

The nations of the world have their emblems, some object that is taken to express their national ideal. Our national emblem is the eagle, the monarch of the air. England has the lion, the monarch of the beasts. China the dragon, and so on. These emblems express the ideal of physical strength, the ideal of force.

At the time Jesus set up His kingdom, the Roman empire was supreme. The emblem of the Roman empire was the eagle, symbolical of physical force embodied in a system of militarism that has never been surpassed. Material force is still the world's ideal of government. When Christ started His kingdom He adopted as His emblem the dove. This expresses the ideal of His kingdom, the ideal of love, the very opposite of material force. As Bible students know, the dove is a beautiful type of the Holy Spirit. It is also a most significant type of the sanctified life. The Holy Spirit was well symbolized at Jesus' baptism by the dove. Those who have the Holy Spirit possess the dovelike nature. Some seem possessed of the eagle and want to fight and contend. Some seem possessed of the hawk and want to rob and steal. Others are possessed of the buzzard disposition. They want to unearth every scandal and foulness, and delight to feed upon it.

The Talmud translation of Genesis 1:2 reads, "The Spirit of God like a dove brooded over the waters." Bringing order out of chaos, light out of darkness and life out of death. A beautiful picture of the work which the Holy Spirit performs in a human soul. He faithfully convicts the sinner of his sins and need of a Savior. The Holy Spirit also helps the sinner to repent and believe in the blood of Jesus. He regenerates the heart, transforms the life, and later, as a second definite work of grace entirely sanctifies the soul. At the time of the first resurrection, He will glorify these mortal and corruptible bodies. Jesus performed no miracles till the Spirit like a dove came upon Him. Then he preached the gospel, overcame the devil, performed miracles, suffered for our sins and rose from the dead, and told the disciples to tarry until they were filled with the Holy Spirit. This tarrying is described in the first chapter of Acts. In the next chapter we are informed that, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit," marking the birth of the Christian Church and the beginning of the Holy Ghost dispensation. God still blesses and uses the Church that honors the third person of the Trinity.

The beautiful characteristics of the dove typify the manifestations of the Holy Spirit and the sanctified life. I will deal with the sanctified experience of holiness demonstrated.

The dove is clean in nature. The Bridegroom speaking to the Bride in Song of Solomon 6:9, calls her, "my dove and undefiled." Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it, thus presenting to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). The baptism of the Holy Spirit cleanses the heart from inbred sin, and fills it with the heavenly dove nature. The pure in heart shall see God.

The dove is gentle and harmless; has no claws, but has soft feet and beak. There is no fight in its nature, and nothing to fight with on its body. A beautiful illustration of the Spirit-filled life. It has no armor against the ravens and vultures, but her wings to flee away. God's children's best armor when they are wronged is by prayer and faith to mount up to God. Included in the beautiful cluster of the fruit of the Spirit is "gentleness." Jesus practiced nonresistance, and taught His followers to "resist not evil" and "avenge not." The dove's feet have cushions under them, therefore are soft. You cannot hear them. Possessors of the dove nature do not consume all the time in conversation, boasting and bragging on themselves; their ability and accomplishments. But would rather remain quiet and listen to another narrate what God is doing for and through him. Naturalists tell us that the dove has no gall. Gall is mentioned twice in the New Testament. Peter in Acts, chapter eight, told Simon Magus that he was in the "gall of bitterness." The naturalists of old taught that the bitterness of the gall was supposed to infuse itself into the spirit. Jesus on the cross was offered "vinegar and gall," sourness and bitterness, illustrating what the world has to offer. Thank God for an experience that takes out of the human heart the carnal fight, revenge, the bitter and the sour, and fills the heart with that divine love "that suffers long and is kind."

The dove is faithful, true and constant in love. They do not believe in nor practice family quarrels. See them as they feed side by side. No nagging, fussing or criticism, but carrying on a lovely conversation. In honor preferring each other.

They mate forever. If one dies, the other never remates, but goes through life alone. It will melt your heart to see it sit and sing its sad song of lonely love. When the Holy Spirit comes into a human heart He intends to abide forever, but as the earthly dove is sensitive, so is the Heavenly Dove sensitive. He can be grieved away. See the poor, unhappy backslider. Pretending to be happy, but can never be happy while alone, and apart from God, and remated to the world.

The dove is neat in appearance. I cannot think of Jesus other than having been neat in appearance when He walked the dirt roads of earth. Some of God's people may be poor, and that is no disgrace, but no matter how poor, they can be neat and clean in person and home. It is a bad advertisement for holiness or a holiness church to have individuals on the front seat shouting and testifying to second blessing holiness and as you come close to them discover that their clothes and person are dirty. Discover that some of their garments have open seams, or holes in them, or their hair disheveled. Go into their homes and the odor and dirt will repel you. No, no, the dove experience is clean inside and outside.

The dove is also particular about its food. The raven and buzzard may feed on carrion, but the dove must have pure food, as seed and water. The goat may eat paper and corn shucks, as I have witnessed, but the sheep is very particular about its food. Our attitude toward the spiritual determines

the genuineness of our religious experience. I read of a man who made an artificial bee, that could buzz and move around. He placed it on a table beside a real bee and then challenged anyone in the group to tell the difference. A man secured a drop of honey and placed it upon the table. The real bee went directly to the honey, while the artificial bee continued to buzz and walk about. A Spirit-filled and directed life seeks the spiritual. It will hunt up a spiritual church, revival and campmeeting. The Spirit-filled man is everlastingly on the stretch for more of God. His pastor does not have to urge him to go to the prayermeetings of the church. He delights to pray and fast, and the preacher cannot preach too straight for him. He pays his tithe and in addition gives liberal offerings. He fellowships with the most spiritual people in the church. He is found on one of the front seats in the meeting house, with a shine on his face and a shout in his heart.

The dove is swift of wing. The psalmist prayed in Psalm 55:6, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! For then would I fly away and be at rest." The wings are the strength of the dove. The dove can fly many miles and very swiftly. The Holy Spirit is equally swift in all His transactions. Dr. Nansen, the Arctic explorer, was caught in ice floes and bergs for thirty months. He released carrier pigeons. From his window they flew three thousand miles over mountains, seas and continents to Dr. Nansen's home in Christiana, Norway, and lighted on the window casing of Mrs. Nansen's room. Mrs. Nansen was aroused by a gentle tapping on the window pane. She raised the window and received a message from her beloved. Our Lord and Master went across the frozen regions of death. But today he would send you a message of love and salvation by the Dove, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. He is tapping on the window of your heart. Arise and let him in.

The Spirit-filled man is alive to God and the interests of the kingdom. The last days being on us, and the King's business requiring haste, he is kept so busy for God that the devil cannot seduce and overcome him. The dove is very fruitful, hatching young almost every month. The Pentecostal church, born in a red-hot revival, functions well only in that kind of atmosphere, and keeps adding to its membership such as are being saved. Jesus said, "Follow me and I will make you to become fishers of men." Returning from a fishing trip, your friends are not much interested in what you have to say about the number and kind of fish in the lake, how they bit, and about the big one that got away. They look for your string. Any church that is not constantly winning souls is either dead or dying. The dove is a lover of men's dwelling places.

Carry them away many miles. Liberate them and they will immediately soar into the heavens and fly directly and swiftly to their owner's home. The saints love the house of God. They are or should be as much interested in keeping it clean, beautiful and in as good repair as their own homes. They will attend its services, and encourage others to attend.

The dove is social in habit. They fly in flocks. The Holy Spirit lives in the company of the redeemed. Christ said He would pray the Father that another Comforter may come, and "that he might abide with you forever." Four times Christ spoke of the Holy Spirit as a Comforter. God's saved and sanctified people love the company and fellowship of others of like faith and experience. They cannot fellowship with the cold and lukewarm in an ecclesiastical refrigerator, they will seek out a company who have "tarried until," a people who have received the Holy Spirit since they believed. They are spoiled for any other people, except those known as the "holiness people."

The dove is a very sensitive bird. We are commanded to "grieve not" the Holy Spirit. Grieve is a love word. We can grieve only those who love us. The Holy Spirit shrinks from the least opposition or unwillingness. The Lord is a jealous God, and will not bear to have men's hearts shared with a foe. He will never break companionship. He never leads into sin. If we go, we go alone. It is stated that a feather from a hawk will frighten a dove. The saints should be frightened at the presence of sin. Many souls have grieved the Heavenly Dove from their hearts forever. Disturb a dove on its nest and it will flutter and fly away, but will return. The second time it is disturbed it will do the same. But the third time it is disturbed it flutters, makes a peculiar noise, flies away, never to return. If the Holy Spirit is resisted continually, it can be grieved away never to return. If Jesus needed the baptism of the Spirit before He entered upon His public ministry, how much more do justified believers need to tarry until the fiery baptism cleanses the heart from all carnality, and fills it with the Holy Spirit. This filling gives power for service, and enables us to live the Heavenly Dove life.

— Pastor West Side Church of the Nazarene, Decatur, Ill. —

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# **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

## **WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?**

By **REV. ARTHUR L. LEACH**

(Delivered over Radio Station WZKO, February, 1934)

TEXT: What must I do to be saved? (Acts 16:30).

Every man and woman who finds salvation from sin sooner or later asks the question of my text, "What must I do to be saved?" Why? Because down deep in the natural heart of man is the knowledge that in the natural state he is unfit to stand in the presence of his Maker, whether it be on earth or in heaven.

Men may walk in sin for years, but suddenly awakening to the fact that they are lost, they, like the jailer at Philippi, will cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" Time permits but a brief discussion of the text, and in our approach thereto we advance a proposition relative to sin and what must be man's attitude toward it. Proposition: "Salvation from sin, being of and from God and revealed through the teaching of the Bible, one seeking salvation from sin must take that way and that method that God the giver indicates, directs and reveals, in order to become the recipient thereof." To the one who does not accept the Bible teaching of sin, this proposition will mean nothing; to the one who does accept the Bible teaching on the subject of sin, this proposition is self-evident.

A further thought: The Bible presents the thought of salvation in several aspects. Many people have run amuck in their faith, experience and ethics just because they have failed to recognize this fact, and as the proposition advanced suggests, if we are going to be saved we are going to have to take God's Word in the matter and follow the direction and teaching of the Bible on the subject. To take just one isolated scripture and shape our lives thereby will be fatal. One scripture may give but one aspect. To obtain the full picture, as well as the experience of salvation, the Scriptures as a whole must be considered as well as accepted. Now for our text, "What must I do to be saved?" First, one must confess his sins:

1. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). Notice here that it is clearly indicated that confession of sins on our part precedes any forgiveness of our sins on God's part. Confession here is basic and fundamental; without it no man's sins are forgiven and no man can be pardoned for his sins. Notice, that in Proverbs, twenty-eighth chapter and thirteenth verse, we read, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." The aspect of salvation here is twofold, (1) Confession, (2) Forsaking, or turning away from sin: that is, to be identified with it no more.

2. A second answer to the question of the text, "What must I do to be saved?" One must be born again. Our authority at this point is the Gospel according to St. John, chapter three. Here we find a discussion by the Master that has since become a classic on the experience theologians have called

the new birth. Here we find treated the fact, process and experience of being born again or regeneration. Emphatically it is stated, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Again, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." And, "Ye must be born again." This second aspect of salvation teaches us that there is to be wrought within us a supernatural experience that brings us into right spiritual relation with God.

3. A third aspect entering into this matter of getting saved is brought to our attention in Romans 10:8-10. Here the Scripture is called the Word of faith. Also, that there is to be a "confessing with the mouth the Lord Jesus Christ." In other words, there is to be in the heart the conscious confidence of assurance based on the Word of God and on our lips a definite testimony to the saving grace of God.

Everything alive gives forth some vibrant expression. When Jesus was on earth He touched the tongue of the dumb man and the fellow went to praising God, and when Christ has really touched your life you will go to praising God for His great salvation. In the kingdom of true spiritual life, there are to be no cripples of any kind. Another thought suggested in this scripture is that our trust and confidence are based on Christ's resurrection from the dead. "Believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead." How emphatically is our salvation based on Christ's resurrection. If you cannot believe this and have no confidence in it, there is no hope of salvation for you, and how important our confession of Him! Here we are not confessing sins but Christ. Here the Christian, the one born again, is not seeking for forgiveness but to lift up before an unbelieving world that Christ who has been faithful to His word and fulfilled His promise and saved the life from sin.

4. A fourth aspect must be considered in closing, none the more important, none the less important than that which has been mentioned. That to which we especially point, is "faith." In answer to the cry of the Philippian jailer, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "Believe in thine heart" (Romans 10:9). "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (v. 10). Friend, you cannot be saved without faith; faith in God; faith in Jesus Christ; faith in His atonement for your sin; faith in His resurrection from the dead; and faith in God's promise to forgive your sins.

You ask the question, "How can I have faith? How can I believe? I want to, but how can I? Is it a mental assent to the truth?" Answer: It is more than that; it is obedience to the truth. The Prophet Isaiah says, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the fat of the land."

If you will obey God and hearken to His Word and confess and uncover your sins, faith can and will begin to operate. If you will ask, He will give you the "new birth." "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Salvation is predicated upon obedience to and acceptance of the truth of God's Word. Many want to believe, but they have failed to take God's way to establish faith in the heart; therefore they have a profession but no vital testimony; no lasting joy; no conscious victory over sin. No definite Christian experience.

The very attitude and acts of this Philippian jailer indicated that he took this very way. Notice:

1. He came trembling — here is conviction.
2. He fell down — here is contrition.
3. He washed their stripes — here is conversion, the new birth.
4. He was baptized — here is confession and faith.

"What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

—Pastor Church of the Nazarene, Kalamazoo, Mich. —

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# **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

## **THE SHEPHERD AND BISHOP OF THE SOUL**

By **REV. H. V. MILLER**

(Sermon preached over Station WGES, Chicago, October, 1934)

So marvelous is the atonement of Jesus Christ that the exhaustive penetration of the scholarship of centuries has never yet revealed all its meaning and beauty. One cannot help but wonder sometimes how much of its meaning we really grasp in spite of our long familiarity with the gospel story. So once again I want you to draw up close to the shadow of the cross in order that we might meditate beneath its towering glory on the words of the Apostle Peter, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Peter 2:24, 25).

Hear the glad news once again, there is a Savior from sin! "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body." There is a plan of salvation. But thank God we are not saved by a plan but by a Man, the Man Christ Jesus. The plan of salvation did not die for us but the Son of God himself, "The brightness of his glory, the express image of his person." "Who loved us and gave himself for us." That of which I am speaking today is greater than a philosophy; more than a mere theology. O the glory of it all. As one has described it — an artist takes a hundred dollars worth of stone and out of it carves a statue worth a thousand dollars — that is art. Jesus Christ takes a human life morally worthless and out of it makes a priceless character of surpassing beauty and godliness — that is salvation.

Peter declares four great facts about the atonement in the verses already quoted. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree that we being dead to sin." Thank God, He breaks the penalty of sin (Eph. 2:12-17). A number of years ago Adolph Beck was in prison because he was confused with another man. When his innocence had been confirmed his government tried to make amends for the disgrace and injury which his family had incurred. Mr. Beck received from his majesty a free pardon. This pardon meant more than one in the ordinary sense. It came from the secretary of interior or home secretary. On the face of it was the following statement, "A free pardon issued by the king, not only forgives crime, but wipes out the whole conviction, and obliterates every stain the law had attached to the alleged offense." This is the pardon that God offers. He not only forgives the sins of our past life but wipes out the whole conviction and obliterates every stain the law had attached to our wrong doings.

But read further, "That we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness." Not only is the penalty of sin gone but, thank God, its power is broken. "As many were made sinners, so shall many be made righteous." This is more than imputed righteousness. J. C. Holden tells us of a man coming to him after a convention in Glasgow taking exception to some things that he had said. "It's all very well for you men to preach holiness but I have got all this in Christ," said the man in a rather

pompous strain "Yes," said Holden, "but have you got it in Glasgow?" Thank God we can have salvation in Chicago. There is power in the blood. A native Chinese attended a Christian mission for quite a while and found it very difficult to grasp the meaning of it all but one morning he came to the missionary in a very happy mood. Said he, "I dreamed last night and now I understand it all." He said he seemed to have fallen into a deep pit. Lying there helpless we was unable to rise. A priest of Confucius leaned over the edge and said, "Let me give you some advice, my friend. If you ever get out of your trouble never get into it again." A priest of Buddha came by who stopped and stretched his arm over the edge of the pit saying, "If you can manage to climb up so I can reach you I will pull you out." Then Christ came by. He climbed down into the pit and took him out. The dream of the Chinaman was true. He brings us up out of a horrible pit and places our feet on the Rock.

Thank God for the freedom from the penalty and the power of sin. But there is yet more in the atonement, there is freedom from the principle of sin as well. "With his stripes we are healed." I am confident Peter was thinking of Isaiah 53 when he wrote the words of our meditation. How true ring the words of the psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." These words are often used as a reference to bodily healing. The healing of the physical is wonderful but the healing of the soul is far greater. Jesus said as He ministered to the bodies of men while on earth, "Greater things than these shall ye do." In God's sight we are without soundness from head to foot. The loathsome disease of leprosy is God's type and picture of sin. Thank God, He can and will heal your sin-sick soul. That terrible disorder of disobedience will be removed; that awful palsy of sin taken away. How much are we like the man in the tombs whom Jesus healed. Jesus spoke the word and behold, he who could not be bound or clothed sat at the feet of Jesus clothed and in his right mind. He will heal our vacillating wills. He will suborn our wild, outlawed affections. He will cure our poisoned imaginations and cleanse our foul desires. Thank God, the day star has truly arisen with healing in His wings.

He will take our feet out of the paths of sin, "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." He takes us up out of an horrible pit and establishes our goings. He puts us on a path that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. He leads us on a highway that is called the highway of holiness. All because He came and sought us who were as sheep gone astray and who had turned everyone unto his own way. At Kingston, New York, a man disputed with a gypsy chief over the possession of a fifteen year old girl. The chief claimed her as his own child while the man insisted she was his daughter. The girl recognized her father. She had disappeared a few years before from her home in St. Louis, having been enticed away by an old woman. At last, after patient search, the police with the assistance of the father found her in an eastern city. He came and released her from the gypsy chief. He found her because he sought after her tirelessly and persistently. Thus Christ seeks after us until He finds us. Remember that when the ninety and nine lay safe in the fold the shepherd went forth and sought until he found the lost sheep.

Oh, the wonder of it all! The greatest story that has ever been told or has ever fallen upon the ear of man. It is the revelation of the love and power of God. Hear it again today my friend, believe it, receive it. Through Christ find freedom from the penalty, power and principle of sin and then one of these days He will deliver you from the presence of sin. He will take you away from the sight and sound of every temptation; away from every allurements of this world; and from every sense of the

curse. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him will he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." I leave with you my friends of radio land these words from the Book of God, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

— Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Chicago —

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

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**J. W. Montgomery**

### **THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR**

By **DR. O. J. NEASE**

(Delivered over WEXL Royal Oak, Mich., October 21, 1934)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the conquering [R.V.] power of his might" (Ephesians 6:10).

This statement is the parting injunction of an old warrior. Each battle scar of this veteran commands respect and hence adds meaning to his words. He is no novice. From his ripened experience he gives advice invaluable to the great hosts of Christian soldiers that would follow him.

All of life is a battle. The battle for physical existence enlists its warriors at their birth. They utter their war cry with their first breath and clench their chubby fists defiant to every enemy of health and life. From the cradle to the grave the physical warfare is waged. Disease, privation, hunger and death are the enemies of the body, against which man must wage his war.

Of far greater moment are the battles of the soul. He who would gain a victor's crown must give a faithful account of himself upon life's battlefield. God must have soldiers, and the only way He has of making soldiers is by putting them into the battle.

The veteran, Paul, has inscribed counsel that volunteers with whatever generation of soldiers they may be identified for Christ may well heed. He has in this sixth chapter described the character of the foe that the Christian warrior must meet, the type of weapons that will be sufficient for battle and the spirit of patriotism and devotion necessary to successful soldiery. In this central statement which we have chosen as our text it would seem that the old soldier has gathered his waning strength for one last instruction. His word issues as brief and terse as a military command — "Be strong in the Lord."

The Bible voices many emphatic commands from the Lord. The commands, "be ye holy" and "be perfect," lift a standard of motive and conduct in Christian endeavor that is high and exacting. But, as emphatic as are these statements, no utterance of God through inspiration to men is more exacting than the language of our text. God commands strength. The strength and cunning of the foe of righteousness demand strength and cunning upon the part of any who would successfully meet him upon the field of combat. The Christian has no ordinary foe to meet. This foe, unseen but very real, conceals himself amidst the very circumstances of life that make up the normal and legitimate experiences of the everyday. In home life, in business life, in church life and in private life this astute enemy of all righteousness will entrench himself and "deceive, if possible, the very elect."

Christian, do not make the unwary mistake of under-estimating the craftiness and strength of your foe. The devil is powerful and experienced. We as Christian warriors must be well trained and armed

if we would successfully meet him. The strength of the foe demands strength upon the part of the Christian.

A weak soldiery is a reflection upon the provisions of a mighty God. He has placed at the disposition of the Church the unlimited resources of His infinite grace. The unmeasured promises of His Word assure us of ample aid in the hour of need. He who would fight in the name of God but refuses the strength and accouterment of God, not only lays himself open to defeat but casts reflection upon Him who has provided so liberally. It is God's warfare and not ours, and when we fight in His name and fail because of our unwillingness to make use of divine provision, we put the name of Jehovah and Jehovah's Church in disrepute. The ample provision of God demands that we be strong!

If our strength as Christian soldiers is to be derived from human sources, we can be no more strong nor no more successful than human abilities will permit us. Too often the forces of righteousness have failed, having leaned wholly upon the arm of flesh. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," and, again, "it is not by might nor by power," as a thing of human origin and manipulation. Too often we have depended solely upon organization, ability and gifts. The source of our strength must be the Lord! Our weapons are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," and this warfare must be prosecuted "by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Our first need is God. Too often we have fought for Christ without the Spirit of Christ — we must be made powerful in the Lord!

The command then is to "be strong," but, "strong in the Lord." What strength is at the command of the soldier as he stands upon the battlefield? What are the resources of this warfare? How often the Christian soldier must be called upon, so far as human companionship is concerned, to stand alone, and he is often tempted to question the sufficiency of the divine grace that has been promised him. What is the measure of the Christian's strength? Note the language of the inspired command of the apostle, "Be strong in the Lord." This is not only a command, it is also a promise. It is a command so far as human attitude is concerned, but it is as well a promise exposing the attitude of God. The measure of our strength, therefore, when upon the battlefield for God is not the limitations of human ability, but rather is to be found in the exhaustless resources of Him whose cause we fight and whose soldiers we are. Ask the lone doughboy upon the battlefields of France. What is his strength and what are his resources. He could point with pardonable pride not only to his personal prowess and abilities which of course must be enlisted in devotion to the fray, but to every soldier in the great army of General Pershing, to the President of the United States, to all the power, genius and organization and physical resources at the command of the Congress of this great nation, to every home and to every patriotic heart beating in unison with the heart of that boy in the front line trench. He is not defeated until the resources of these United States are exhausted and every drop of blood is drawn from the veins of the one hundred twenty millions of our patriotic citizenry. The United States of America was the measure of this doughboy's resources.

Lone Christian upon the battlefield of God, what are your resources? While what you are and have must be devoted to the warfare, this does not exhaust the resources at your command. The God who sent you forth into battle and whose battle you fight has put His unlimited resources, yea, all that He is, behind the soldiers in this glorious war. His unlimited resources, yea, all that He is, behind the

soldiers in this glorious war. Take courage, buckle on your armor a bit more securely, clasp your shield more firmly, unsheathe your sword and rush forward to face the oncoming foe with the battle cry upon your lips and the assured confidence within your soul that you are the soldier of the most high God.

There may be hardship, privation, long marches, and hard-fought engagements, but to the soldier of the Lord who will draw upon the unlimited resources of the God who has called him to this soldiery, there can be but victory in the end.

The veteran warrior, Paul, draws the mantle of his robe about him, covering the many battle scars which he has received in service for the Lord Jesus and as memories of the victories of a thousand battles throng upon him, he lays his hand upon the shoulder of all of us who are enlisted in this cause; and though we be but rookies, novices in this battle, yet he affectionately identifies himself with us in this warfare by calling us "brethren." We are fellow fighters with the sainted Paul! We fight the same foe, encounter the same hardships, march under the same battle flag, have before us the same great cause and, thank God, we have the same Captain who assures us of the same victory that Paul knew! He cries in triumph, "I have fought a good fight ... henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

— Pastor, First Church of the Nazarene, Detroit, Mich. —

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# **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

## **OUR CHRIST AND HIS NOBLEST DEFENSE**

By **REV. SELDEN DEE KELLEY**

(Preached October 28, 1934, over Roger Babson's Station,  
WBSO, Wellesley, Mass.)

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you (John 14:1, 2).

Their hearts were troubled. Their expectations had not been fulfilled, and they were believers in God, the God of the chosen people. Had not their God delivered their fathers out of the long night of Egyptian slavery? They were the sons of Abraham and the faithful keepers of the Mosaic law. They had never doubted the fact of God. But for four hundred years God had not spoken to them by a prophet. Every faithful mother of Israel had waited, prayed and hoped that her firstborn would be the long looked-for One. Now He had come, born of the virgin, the Messiah, the hope of Israel. He had fulfilled their expectations in every step from Nazareth to Jerusalem. In His travels over a community no longer than the state of Vermont had He not lived up to His first message delivered in the synagogue on the Sabbath day in Nazareth? He had preached the gospel to the poor, he had healed the broken-hearted, he had brought recovery of sight to the blind, he had given liberty to the bruised. It was a ministry of mercy. This much was done.

But they were troubled. He was to die. Had he not said so? The hopes of the acceptable year of the Lord were growing dim. They had waited long for this year of jubilee, the year of liberty. To the Jew every fiftieth year became one of freedom and grace for all suffering, bringing not only redemption to the captive and deliverance from want to the poor, but also release to the whole congregation of the Lord from the sore labor of the earth, and representing the times of refreshing which the Lord provides for His people, for in this year every kind of oppression was to cease and every member of the covenant people find his Redeemer in the Lord, who brought him back to his possession and family. But how could this year of liberty come as long as they were a subject nation? Was not this new prophet, this Messiah, this Son of God, to break the yoke of Roman bondage? They thought so, but He now is to die. It is an awful thing to have hopes blasted.

But hear His answer: "If it were not so, I would have told you." It is the testimony of one who desires confidence and trust. That is, "I have always been fair with you, I have always told you the truth. I can do no less now. Review my life with me and see if faith will not come back."

### **I. IN TIRELESS EFFORT HE RELIEVED AND PREVENTED HUMAN MISERY**

His spirit was always moved by human suffering. "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Thou who slayest the prophets and stonest the messengers sent to thee: Oh, how often have I wished to gather your children round me, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not come!" Hunger

and pain, sorrow and strife prompted Jesus to action. The record says that "he went about doing good," feeding the hungry, healing the sick, consoling the mourners, reconciling the estranged, and preaching wonderful words of life. He accumulated no wealth and shunned special privilege. Indeed He manifested little concern about His own comfort and was tireless in His ministry of mercy.

He sought also to arouse his fellows to similar activity in behalf of the distressed. Numerous warnings were uttered against self-centeredness and self-seeking, and frequent appeals were made to throw life into the struggle against the forces that produce suffering and misery. "You know that the rulers of the heathen lord it over them, and their great men tyrannize over them. It is not to be so among you, but whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to hold the first place among you must be your slave, just as the Son of man has not come to be waited on, but to wait on other people." And when Jesus saw the crowds, "he was touched with pity for them, because they were distressed and were fainting on the ground like sheep which have no shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is abundant, but the reapers are few; therefore, entreat the owner of the harvest to send out reapers into his fields.' " It was after this teaching that Jesus selected the twelve and sent them forth. Had they soon forgotten it and now desired to sit on thrones.

## II. HE REJECTED ALL CONTEMPORARY PROPOSALS

The intensity of Jesus' concern for those in distress makes all the more remarkable His choice of methods. He never tried short-cuts to the goal, but always selected means which were consistent with the desired end. To catch the real significance of Jesus' strategy we must keep in mind the situation with which He was confronted.

Four proposed solutions for the ills of the Jewish people were being offered in the days of Jesus by revolutionaries, conservatives, legalists and ascetics. The Zealots attributed the troubles of Israel to the foreign conqueror and were able to establish a strong case. The Romans were everywhere and all-powerful. They ruled with moderation and permitted a generous degree of self-government as long as they were rendered obedience. But they were ruthless in suppressing opposition and in crushing rebellion. The power of the Romans to appoint and remove the sacred high priests was regarded as sacrilege by the Jews.

The Zealots maintained that the situation was utterly intolerable and could be remedied only by armed revolt. Plotting was continuous and rebellions frequent. During Jesus' boyhood the neighboring community, Sepphoris, was the scene of an uprising under Judas of Galilee. The city was razed and its inhabitants sold into slavery — that is, all except two thousand who were crucified. The crowd clamored for the release of Barabbas because he was a patriot rebel seized in a revolutionary riot.

The conservative Sadducees and Herodians viewed with alarm the disruptive activities of the Zealots. They composed the office-holding and proprietary class and, being the beneficiaries of Roman rule, counseled caution and compromise.

The Pharisees hated the Romans as venomously as did the Zealots, but did not share the faith of the latter in revolutionary tactics of violence. They were legalists and ceremonialists, believing that salvation would be found through observance of the law and adherence to the ritual. Their predecessors and successors were legion in all lands, men who maintained the form of religion but lost its vital spirit. In seeking to protect the Sabbath, they often failed to provide for the needs of sufferers. Preoccupation with ceremonial duties frequently caused them to "pass by on the other side" of human misery.

A fourth proposal was that of the Essenes, who counseled escape from misery and corruption of the age. In seeking to avoid contamination, they withdrew and formed ascetic communities of their own in desert places where they held all property in common.

All Jews were united in the hope and expectation that the Messiah or Deliverer would soon come and throw off the conqueror's yoke. They disagreed, however, as to the part to be played by the Jewish people in preparation for His coming and in rendering support after His arrival. The orthodox maintained that if all Jews would strictly observe the ceremonial law for twenty-four hours the Messiah would come immediately.

None of these proposals was accepted by Jesus, none of them went to the roots of the problem. All combined could not remove hunger and pain, sorrow and misery, barrenness and futility, enmity and strife, sin and death. And so He refused to follow the pathways of violence, compromise, legalism and asceticism.

Had they so soon forgotten this? "If it were not so I would have told you."

### III. HAD THEY FORGOTTEN HIS SUPREME RELIANCE WAS UPON THE WAY OF LOVE?

After years of contact with human suffering and long vigils of brooding over human agony, Jesus came out of obscurity with a flaming new message and program: "The purpose of life is to help create the family of God, where all men will dwell in filial relations with the Father and with brotherly affection for each other; the method by which the desired end is to be reached is to live constantly as a good member of God's home, live day by day as if the ideal society has already been achieved; run the risks, accept the penalties, and rely upon this manner of life for victory." Here is the most radical program ever offered to mankind. Within a few years its advocates were to be spoken of as "those who turn the world upside down." Well may Jean Paul Richter exclaim, "Christ who, being the holiest among the mighty, and the mightiest among the holy, lifted with His pierced hands empires off their hinges and turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages."

This entire teaching of Jesus is an interpretation of what is meant by living as a good member of God's home. "You must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole soul, and your whole mind." That is the great, first command. There is a second like it: "You must love your neighbor as you do yourself." These two commands sum up the whole of the law and the prophets."

His warnings are against attitudes and practices which disrupt and embitter family relations: covetousness, greed, envy, hypocrisy, anxiety, ingratitude, cruelty, adultery, hatred and revenge — all these are obviously inappropriate in a harmonious household. The virtues which He commends are those which constitute the cornerstones of a happy family: reverence, meekness, sympathy, affection, purity, mutual sharing, yearning, forgiveness and sacrifice.

In Jesus' time, friend and foe were placed in different categories. The ancient rule was, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But Jesus insists that you must "love your enemies (even the Romans), do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. As you would like men to do to you, so do to them."

According to the popular conception, Christ was to inaugurate the kingdom of heaven. Christ was to save the lost sheep of Israel, to save them in the last moment from impending destruction. Now Jesus knew quite well that His way was not simply one way to save the children of Israel, but the one and only way. Jesus knew that out of His life and death there must come the spiritual rebirth of the people. He was once asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not now coming visibly, and the people will not say, Look! Here it is! or There it is! For the kingdom of God is within you."

The disciples had forgotten the message of His ministry. They were to live as if the ideal society were already here, even if it led to death. It did the latter for each one.

#### IV. THE COST OF FOLLOWING THE WILL OF THE FATHER

Society is more afraid of the prophet than of the criminal. As Jesus went about doing good, He aroused furious opposition. The teaching of Jesus to the Samaritan woman at the well contained dynamite: "Believe me, the time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor at Jerusalem ... but a time is coming — it is already here! when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and sincerity, for the Father wants such worshipers. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship him in spirit and sincerity."

Jesus went to His death with wide open eyes. His followers should have understood it was coming, and coming soon. At the very outset of His ministry He faced the various alternatives during a long struggle in the wilderness. The first tempting suggestion was that He should concentrate primarily upon a ministry of healing; the second that He should seek spectacular short-cuts; and the third that He should compromise with evil and adopt either the policy of the Sadducees and join forces with Rome, or that of the violent revolutionaries who sought by armed rebellion to restore Israel's glory. Several times it was necessary for Him to change His base of operations, slipping away to less dangerous regions. Four times He warned His disciples that doom was imminent. The evidence was now conclusive that unswerving allegiance to the way of love would cost Him his life. The last and most terrible moment of testing came in the Garden of Gethsemane where He had gone with His disciples, following His great defense in the upper room. "Arise, let us go hence." And in the darkness and loneliness of the night, Jesus wrestled until the blood stood out on His brow. Which is more important, life or a way of life? No decision in all history was ever so fraught with meaning for mankind as was the decision Jesus reached in that hour of agony.

As soon as it was daylight, the high priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and they and the whole council bound Jesus and took Him away and handed Him over to Pilate. Pilate asked Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

He answered, "Yes."

Death was the penalty, but hear ye Him — "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

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## **CHRISTIAN CERTITUDES**

And Other Radio Sermons

Compiled By

**J. W. Montgomery**

### **GOD — A GLORIOUS REALITY**

By **J. E. WILLIAMS**

(Given over KFOX, Long Beach, Calif.)

In a world of changing standards, opinions and modes of living, God is the one Eternal Reality. The existence of God need not be proved; it is a self-evident fact. Every storm cloud and whispering wind, fragrant flower and rippling brook, the sweet song of God's myriads of feathered songsters or the stars that shine on the bosom of the night — all declare that God is and has every right to be. While standing on the rim of the Grand Canyon, that mystery of all geological wonders, lost in the wonder of its mysterious shadows and lights, its gold and purple and glory, the guide was heard to say, "There is no reason or answer for all this." But across the centuries came the echo to me that morning, "God is the answer." "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The reality of God is the answer to every wonder the world has ever known. All nature declares the handiwork and the glory of God.

From the pages of sacred history a Mary Magdalene, cries, "I met God in the way and lost my burden of sin." Hear the song of the multitudes — the halt, lame, blind, leprous, sinful, despairing, who having found God to be real, rejoiced in their poverty and that they had found a treasure "that fadeth not away."

The incarnation of Jesus was the majestic plan of God to reach mankind in the exhibition of God's love and grace. Follow the pathway of Jesus and always you find the heart-cry of a Father who wants to know you and love you. Jesus came to show you the heart of God and to make God real to you.

Wherever you look in the Bible you find this accent. Forty times in the Gospels Jesus declares, "The Father sent me." He is not a mythical, faraway someone in the Beautiful Land of Somewhere, but He is here and wants to live in your heart, your home and your life. As Bishop Quayle once so beautifully said, "He wants to camp right down in the back yard of your own soul." He wants to share your sorrows, your burdens, your disappointments. When your little world is tottering around you and your hopes are dead and life seems to become a broken and spoiled thing, He wants to become more real than them all and slip His strong arms around you, saying, "Lo, I am with you." Nothing else matters. Have you discovered that sense of reality and found that He knows when your heart

aches, and when the cares press in upon you like a flood and there is no way to turn and the cheeks are wet with tears of grief? He knows, cares and understands, and would say to you:

Child of my love, lean hard,  
And let me feel the pressure of thy care.  
I know thy burden, child; I shaped it,  
Poised it in mine own hand, made no proportion  
In its weight to thine unaided strength;  
For even as I laid it on, I said,  
"I shall be near, and while she leans on me  
This burden shall be mine, not hers,  
So shall I keep my child within the circling arms,  
Of mine own love."

Then He becomes a glorious reality. No other God can be adequate for us. For all around us are people completely at sea concerning God. Once God and heaven and things eternal were real, but the waves of skepticism and modernism have long beaten upon its foundation and walls and nothing more is sure. The faith of our fathers has become legendary. God wants men to be more than fundamentally religious. He must become the transforming power and dynamic center of men's lives. He who was the "friend" of Abraham wants to be your friend.

A minister in New York tells of a dream: He seemed to hear a voice saying, "Help yourself to God." At first he was shocked, the words seemed almost irreverent, yet he repeated them over and over again. "Help yourself to God — help yourself." Gradually a sense of peace and joy filled his heart when he realized how near God is. Must you face financial problems tomorrow? Help yourself to God. Or perhaps to the operating table or maybe even out to "God's half acre," then help yourself to God. You remember He said to Asher, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days so shall thy strength be."

Pepys' diary tells of the writer's visit to an old shepherd on Epsom Downs, who wore great woolen stockings and whose shoes had iron over the toes and heels. The old man explained that the Downs were full of stones and these shoes would make them fly before him until they sang. Obstacles turned into anthems, singing stones.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a skeptic declared the mission of the twentieth century would be to discover God and that when God was discovered, it would be found that He did not care. But that was a rash statement indeed. It is a fundamental law that the measure of greatness in any living thing is sensitiveness to suffering. A stone suffers not at all for it has no life. The oyster suffers just a little for it has a single nerve. The bird is a higher order of life than the oyster and suffers perhaps for several days when its nest is robbed. Higher still the deer whose suffering lasts for weeks. Beyond that the Indian mother and beyond her the Christian mother and beyond her, what? Unless the law breaks here, then God, who loves us and cares for us exceedingly because He is more sensitive to our needs than we are ourselves. Help yourself to His care. Make Him real in your life today.