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Trenchant Truths

It is not the number of sermons, but the number of souls, that counts.

It is possible to know a thousand things *about* Jesus, and never to know HIM.

LET us look after the primaries of Christianity, and the secondaries will care for themselves.

WE all want power. But are we willing to pay the price of power? That is the acid test of our sincerity.

CHRISTIAN service is a question that concerns only Christian disciples, for none other have Heaven's high commission to do anything for God.

THE danger spot of this movement is not in the laity, but in the ministry. Our peril lies not in what the membership may do, but in what we fail to do.

BROTHER PREACHER, are you feeding your people with the bread from heaven or with the bread from earth—human thoughts, human quotations, human philosophies, human futilities?

ARE your converts *converted*? Our distinctive doctrines are essential; we believe in and love them. Our understanding of prophecy is important; we revere it and should study it more. But what will all this avail if the soul is not regenerated? What eternal profit is there in mental assent without spiritual transformation? We live in a godless age when genuine conversion is rare. God wants subjects for His kingdom; and only twice-born folks will enter there.

WE need to be constantly reminded that growth, numbers, and material equipment are not trustworthy evidences of God's benediction, nor do they constitute evidence of truth. In 1906 there were 635 Christian Science churches with 85,717 members, while to-day there are 1,912 churches and 202,098 members. Let us stress statistics less and "the truth as it is in Jesus" more.

TRUTH is eternal, while error passes with the exposure of time. Truth has nothing to fear, for it is bound to survive amid the collapsing ruins of unsound argument, untrustworthy evidence, and distorted facts. Therefore the challenge is to scrupulous fidelity in the presentation of God's final proclamation of His truth to men.

INVENTORY time in business? Why not in the personal life of the minister? Retrospect and prospect, assets and liabilities, inventories and balance sheets in evaluation. Where stand we? Let us individually seek an answer in the secret presence of our God.

THE central principle of Christianity is Christ's death for us and our acceptance of Him as our Saviour. Such is the heart of this threefold expansion of the everlasting gospel.

EVEN we who are preachers of the word can keep our souls alive only by daily, vital contact with Him who is the way, the truth, and the life.

EVERY minister should be an active recruiting agent for the ranks of the ministry. Look out young men of promise and encourage them.

NEVER trim your message; God wants men with a spiritual backbone.

(Concluded on page 5)

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Editorial Keynotes

The Tragedy of Stagnation

WHEN a man ceases to grow, he begins to stagnate, his vision shrinks, his mental outlook shrivels, his ideas become sluggish, his initiative dwindles, and he eases down. Lack of results discourages him. He is a defeated man, and ultimately an unneeded and unwanted man. Unless we individually and personally take ourselves resolutely in hand, we shall in our program of pressure and insistent go, unavoidably prepare ourselves for admission to this most unenviable class. Many are sacrificing their future usefulness to the cause through their present programs. It is a tragically short-sighted policy, but it is undeniably operative, especially in middle age. We shall some day reap the sad harvest of our sowing — unless we change.

It is perilous to fill every hour of the day, and part of the night, with routine toil without the requisite time for intensive Bible study and prayer and intellectual development,—reading, studying, informing, preparing, researching for enlarged service. There is danger that not a few will be shelved at the very time ripened experience and consistent preparation would have fitted them for the greatest usefulness, for no matter how capable the younger man, nothing can take the place of experience, and one should do his greatest work after sixty.

Every forward-looking worker in this cause owes it to himself, to his conference, to the cause at large, and to His God to give the most in this larger way. There are too many still in life's prime who are involuntarily inactive chiefly because they failed right at this

pivotal point. The times demand an informed, studious, progressive ministry; a prayerful, Biblical, spiritual ministry; an alert, resourceful, growing ministry. Therefore, Association Member, "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2: 15. Thus shall we help to avoid the tragedy of an unprofitable ministry.

L. E. F.

Be Ye Therefore Perfect

SINCE the work of every individual laborer is soon to be weighed in the balances of heaven, we cannot too carefully keep ever before us God's own standard of judgment. All about us men are lowering the true moral and spiritual standards or substituting human ideas and opinions, and our only safety lies in knowing the requirements of our Master.

"God will accept only those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under obligation to do his best. Moral perfection is required of all. Never should we lower the standard of righteousness in order to accommodate inherited or cultivated tendencies to wrong-doing. *We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin.* All righteous attributes of character dwell in God as a perfect, harmonious whole, and every one who receives Christ as a personal Saviour is privileged to possess these attributes."—"*Christ's Object Lessons,*" pp. 332, 333, edition 1923.

"Be ye therefore perfect," is the standard of Scripture. How many times we have wondered what these words mean. Perhaps we have re-

garded the expression as an isolated statement that must be understood or explained away by various other scriptures. But it does not appear so isolated when we place it beside other injunctions on the same subject. Note a few:

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48.

"That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Col. 1:28.

"And this also we wish, even your perfection." "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace." 2 Cor. 13:9, 11.

"Always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." Col. 4:12.

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." James 1:4.

"Behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? . . . Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me." Matt. 19:16-21.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2 Cor. 7:1.

"By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:14.

"The disciple is not above his Master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." Luke 6:40.

"If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." James 3:2.

"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect." 1 Cor. 2:6.

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:17.

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Phil. 3:15.

Many others might be added to these fourteen in which God sets forth His ideal for His people. We are exhorted to be pure, "even as He is pure;" "righteous, even as He is righteous;" holy, for He is holy, and "to be conformed to the image of His Son." How could the Lord more explicitly and positively set forth His standard for those who are admitted into His heavenly kingdom?

The question of supreme importance is, How am I to attain this perfection, to reach this holy standard which God requires? The answer to this question is the very essence of the gospel. It is righteousness by faith. "In His borrowed goodness good," we may be perfect in our sphere, even as God is perfect in His.—"*Mount of Blessing*," p. 118.

There is great danger in making excuse for sin. A brother told me that he was greatly troubled in regard to his temper. He had prayed and struggled and tried to gain the victory, but would still give way at times to violent anger. He went to a minister about it for help, but the minister told him not to worry; that Moses lost his temper too, and yet the Lord accepted him; and David committed a great sin, and the Lord forgave him. So if he did his best, the Lord would take him through all right. The danger in this lies in the fact that there is an element of truth in it, as well as one of error. Of course God does not forever reject a man because he falls once. He may fall a thousand times, and be forgiven. But God did not excuse Moses for sinning.

"The burdens placed upon Moses were very great; few men will ever be so severely tried as he was; yet this was not allowed to excuse his sin. God has made ample provision for His people; and if they rely upon His strength, they will never become the sport of circumstances. The strongest temptation cannot excuse sin. How-

Trenchant Truths

(Concluded from page 2)

ever great the pressure brought to bear upon the soul, transgression is our own act. It is not in the power of earth or hell to compel any one to do evil. Satan attacks us at our weak points, but we need not be overcome. However severe or unexpected the assault, God has provided help for us, and in His strength we may conquer."—*"Patriarchs and Prophets,"* p. 421.

To make the sins of Moses or David or any one else an excuse for our continuance in sin is simply a weak surrender. It is an expression of our willingness to remain in slavery to the power of sin, and that in the light of God's provision for victory. Yes, more, it is presumption.

"God's ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning.

"The tempter's agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. *It is these excuses that lead to sin.* There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God.

"The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. As the Son of man was perfect in His life, so His followers are to be perfect in their life."—*"The Desire of Ages,"* p. 311.

MEADE MACGUIRE.

As soon as you feel too old to do a thing, do it.—*Breed.*

SOME folks are not actively harmful; they are simply passively harmless. God give us the power to grip and lead all to the transforming Christ.

NEVER should we introduce personalities into our discussion of great principles, else we weaken our case. Prejudice and suspicion should have no part in the defense or investigation of truth which transcends time and men.

HEAVEN save us from the blight of cramped and contracted heresy hunters that have marred other movements,—men who are forever whetting their theological razors to split ecclesiastical hairs. Let us exclude nonessentials from the arena, and hold unitedly to the great verities upon which we are united.

PREACHERS are human, having "like passions" in common with other men. And our allotted work brings its temptations. Therefore in dealing with members of the other sex, we must guard so carefully the barriers of Christian reserve that every thought, word, and act shall be spotless in purity and integrity, and our reputation untarnished, even though we must deal with sin and sinners.

SOME men are reputedly better speakers than others,—more interesting, forceful, persuasive. But this is not simply a matter of natural endowments. It is the outgrowth of deeper study, clearer vision, better organization of material, keener understanding of the laws of effective approach to the mind, and above all, abandonment to the operation of the Holy Spirit. We must never be content with less than our best.

L. E. F.

"HE who wins co-operation, is stronger than he who forces conformity."

Forward and Upward

Inspiration, Counsel, and Caution

"Think It Not Strange"

(Lesson From 1 Peter 4: 12-14)

BELIEVED, tempted child,
Why think it strange,—
As though thy Lord did not appoint
For thee thy lot
Nor choose thy way?
Why shouldst thou not be glad?
Why shouldst thou not rejoice
To know that in the trials sore,
And in the bitter pangs,
There's given thee the highest meed,—
To suffer with thy Lord?
And this, my choice for thee,
O child of earth,
Is given that His life in thee
May shine,
And in the one who bears His name
His glory be revealed.
For this be glad, my child;
Exceeding joy be yours.
And though reproached and shunned by
men,
Rejoice in this, to know
The dart that's hurled to do thee harm
Doth wound thy Lord divine.
If thou wilt meekly drink the cup,
Reproaches bear, and ne'er repine,
He'll take the sting of every thrust,
While on thy part,
Thus living true,
Thy Lord is glorified.

FRANCIS M. BURG.

College Place, Wash.

The Task Supreme *

BY N. J. AALBORG

I BELIEVE that the greatest danger and cause for concern among Seventh-day Adventists lies not without but within the church. Our chief cause for fear is our own spiritual condition as a church and as individuals,—the crisis in our own hearts and lives. The vital question for each to answer is, Have I that living connection with God which will keep me true in the hour of trial?

We do thank God for the large class of loyal believers in the church to-day. We meet them everywhere,—faithful,

* Presented at the Central Union Ministerial Institute.

earnest, devoted souls. We have great confidence in these members. But what about the many careless and indifferent ones in our churches, the men and women who have lost the advent hope out of their hearts? What can we say or do to arouse them from their stupor? Their feet are treading the downward path, and unless they can be aroused, they will be found among those who oppose God. A great work needs to be done in all our churches for these lost and straying ones. A great spirit of true, spiritual revival and evangelism must fill our hearts, and we must reach out, not alone for the lost in the great world, but for the lost among our own professed brethren. The time is here for us to seek to save those of our own number who are as verily separated from God as those who have not known Him.

We must serve the churches through evangelism, and evangelism and Pentecost are inseparably linked together. As the result of the preaching of the gospel on that day of Pentecost, three thousand souls were brought into the kingdom of God. The present need makes an evangelistic advance imperative. Evangelism must be a passion with us to-day as it was in the days of the apostles. Evangelism is the first work of a Spirit-filled church, and what Jesus made primary His church dare not make secondary.

Where the church membership is enlisted for service in an evangelistic campaign, new spiritual life and power become apparent. The spirit of lethargy is removed, and gives way to joy in the glorious endeavor of Christian service. The church members realize that religion is not only real, but that

it is the one thing necessary. And as new groups of believers are added to the church as the result of the united efforts put forth in the campaign, a new thrill of joy and enthusiasm and earnestness permeates the entire church membership. All strife and factional elements melt away. When people are really winning souls for Christ, there is no time left for petty quarrels. Such little things become submerged in the one supreme task.

**REVIVE! RESTORE! RECRUIT!
RETAIN!** These great incentives should stir our hearts:

Revive the whole church for a great evangelistic advance.

Restore the indifferent members to earnestness and zeal.

Recruit soldiers of the cross from the ranks of the enemy.

Retain our ground, and never retreat.

Wichita, Kans.

The Test of Leadership

BY G. W. WELLS

A DUKE of Austria is quoted as having said that Napoleon on the field of battle was worth a hundred thousand fighting men. The background of this remarkable tribute is the fact that Napoleon did not *send* his men onto the battlefield, but he *led* them there. True leadership involves entering the conflict, and in the midst of the battle imparting courage and cheer to the men in the ranks. The man who is a home-stayer, an ease-lover, a self-protector, is not qualified to be a leader; and for such a one to attempt to lead means sure defeat.

The greatest need of the cause of God is large-hearted, clean-thinking, hard-working, Spirit-filled men. For such men God is calling, that He may station them as leaders in the onward march of His forces against the powers of darkness. The leaders whom God calls and uses may not always be ideal

or perfect in character, but God wants clean men, men who will work, men who hate sin and love righteousness, who give their lives in loving service for the Master. He wants men who will follow in the footsteps of Him of whom it is written, "Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people."

Conference officials, ministers, departmental secretaries, Bible workers, colporteurs, church elders, or officers in any capacity, may well ask themselves these questions: Am I a leader for God? Am I winning souls, or simply marking time? Am I extending and building up the cause of God where I am? Am I meeting the standard I have set for others? Do I work in Christ's name and for His glory? Am I really His child? Have I been a leader in sacrificial giving, earnest working, and spiritual service?

The old year is soon gone. The new year is right upon us. Shall we not review our own lives with great seriousness, renew our allegiance to God, and by His grace follow Him wholly, and be found workmen who need not to be ashamed, true leaders for God?

Washington, D. C.

Relief for the Pastor

BY J. W. CHRISTIAN

AN oft-repeated question presented to conference presidents to answer is this: *How can the pastor-evangelist look after the individual and collective interests of his church, spiritually, educationally, and financially, leading out in all mission campaigns—Sabbath school, Big Week, Midsummer, Harvest Ingathering, et cetera—and at the same time find opportunity for real aggressive evangelistic work in behalf of the people not yet acquainted with the third angel's message?*

Undoubtedly it is true that no class of workers is under such heavy pres-

sure of detail duties as wide-awake, energetic pastors. The secret of the successful pastor, aside from consecration and the operation of the Holy Spirit, lies in his ability to organize and enlist the latent forces under his charge. It is utter presumption and means positive defeat for a pastor to attempt to take charge personally of every activity of the church. An understanding of the principles of organization, will convince the pastor of a church that his members are like soldiers, and as such are to be well organized and trained to help perform the duties which devolve upon the church as a whole.

The election of officers in the church is not for the purpose of bestowing titles upon individuals, but to bring to the aid of the pastor the consecrated talent of men and women to share the responsibility of leadership. The successful pastor will be quick to recognize the ability of his associates, and know how to roll back upon them tactfully the responsibilities of their respective offices. He must ever stand by, with words of encouragement, counsel, and personal assistance; but the officers of each department of the church work should be made to realize that the responsibility of success or failure rests with them.

When the pastor works on this principle, and with strong Christian confidence trusts his associates to carry their respective lines of work, even though it may be done, somewhat differently from his own method, he will find himself greatly helped in the prosecution of his many-sided task. There are specific duties appropriately resting upon the elder, deacon, treasurer, clerk, and the officers of all ranks in our various departments; and when each does his part, the pastor is relieved to be free for his evangelistic duties.

During the past few years I have observed with much interest and grati-

fication the successful operation of organization along this line in the church. It has demonstrated its success in our largest churches, and also in smaller churches, and affords the pastor-evangelist time for conducting at least two public efforts during the year, which result in a harvest of souls.

Organization is Heaven's plan, and the workman for God cannot ignore this provision if he would measure up to the full standard of leadership. As in a conference, so in a church, the leader accomplishes most by allowing his associates to bear their respective lines of responsibility, thereby fulfilling in the truest sense the inspired statement, "We are laborers together with God."

Chicago, Ill.

Noteworthy Utterances

OUR success lies in winning souls to Christ. There is nothing in position, save as it affords larger opportunities for soul winning. There is nothing in material things that will endure. The souls of men are the all-important thing. True success lies in winning sinners to accept salvation, that they may live eternally in the kingdom of glory. All else will perish and be destroyed in the lake of fire.—*I. H. Evans.*

EVERY person whom God calls to this light must remember that his business primarily is not to make money, or acquire real estate, or engage in banking, or anything else; his business is to see to it, under God, that this message is a living power in his own soul, and that he is doing all he can to help it get into other people's souls. That is our work.—*F. C. Gilbert.*

HE that scolds in the pulpit, or rails, only irritates; he that appreciates and persuades wins the day.—*Maclaren.*

The Association Forum

A Round Table on Efficient Methods

The Ideal Sabbath Service *

BY J. K. JONES

I AM asked to deal with a topic which is of vital importance in connection with our work, and one around which there clusters a diversity of opinions. Possibly it would seem that the most logical presentation of this topic could be made by the pastor of the church who is primarily responsible for the conduct of the Sabbath service; yet the broadened vision which is developed by the itinerant executive during years of visiting many churches, and observing how the Sabbath services are conducted in many places, may serve to some good advantage. Let us therefore consider some of the principles which must of necessity have recognition in the conduct of the Sabbath service which tends toward the *ideal*.

1. *Recognize the Sacredness of the Occasion and the Place.*—The pastor of the church must have a high regard for the sacredness of the Sabbath, and a deep and serious conviction that the church building is God's sanctuary, in which He meets with His people on the blessed Sabbath day.

2. *Personal Preparation for Conducting the Service.*—No minister should approach a Sabbath service without an abiding conviction that he has been divinely called to enter the sacred place of worship to deliver a message of salvation to the waiting congregation. At this point lies a subtle danger of following in the footprints of the Jewish priests of old, which lead into the bypaths of formalism. The

Jewish priests became so absorbed in the routine of the sacrifices which they offered on each Sabbath, that they came to regard the day merely as a period of hard work and long hours, with little regard to the benefits the sinner was to receive from God's pardoning grace. To-day there is a tendency to face the Sabbath duties with mechanical weariness, which gives expression to such statements as these: The pastor may say, "Well, I have just so many churches to visit to-day, and so many sermons to give: This is my work for the day." Or a departmental secretary visiting the church, may say: "I have this definite program to put through before the Sabbath is over." Instead of this definite routine outline, there should rest upon the heart of the pastor and his departmental associate a sense of the responsibility of standing between the people and God and conveying a message fresh from the throne of Heaven. To approach the Sabbath meeting without a sense of our own need and the needs of the people, is worse than mockery, and explains why many sermons are tame and lifeless, and the Sabbath service is so far from the true ideal.

3. *Order and Promptness.*—A church service should begin on time, and all preliminaries should be cared for in systematic order. A very essential contributing factor is to make sure that the Sabbath school closes on time. One hour and fifteen minutes is ample for the Sabbath school; but when the time is extended to fifteen minutes or half an hour longer, a state of confusion results, and causes delay in beginning the preaching service.

4. *Reverence to Be Cultivated and Maintained.*—An attitude of quietness

* Paper read at the Atlantic Union Institute, Springfield, Mass.

and reverence should fill the church, and as the minister enters the sacred desk and kneels in silent prayer, every head should be bowed and every heart united in earnest petition for Heaven's blessing.

5. *Prayer.*—The one who is appointed to lead in prayer should step forward at the proper time, and request the audience to kneel in prayer. He should pray distinctly and in a tone of voice to be heard by all. It is a defeating start to a Sabbath service when the one who leads in prayer speaks so low or in such muffled tones that the people do not hear what he says. When the prayer is of such length as to be almost a sermon itself, this is also a serious detriment to an ideal Sabbath service. The instruction given through the spirit of prophecy is decidedly to the effect that public prayers should be brief.

6. *Music.*—The selection of hymns should be made before the service begins, and care should be taken to choose those familiar to the congregation. To start the meeting by using a hymn which is known by only a few persons, selected hurriedly and perhaps not at all in keeping with the theme of the sermon to be delivered, is a poor way to introduce the ideal Sabbath service.

7. *Announcements.*—Brevity at this part of the service is by all means essential. Long-drawn-out announcements fail to accomplish the desired end, and become a bore to the people. We cannot ignore the fact that announcements must be made. The Church Bulletin (board or printed sheet) is found by some to shorten the time required for the announcements; but this is not a practical plan for every church. We should study brevity, and do everything possible to make the announcements concise, and as few as is consistent with the situation in hand.

8. *Introduce the Offering in a Definite Manner.*—Instead of saying, "The offering will now be received," make a definite statement as to what the offering is for, and combine with this statement a spiritual appeal to the people for liberality.

9. *Junior Sermon.*—A short talk to the children, just preceding the preaching of the sermon for the day, is quite generally favored and is of merit. But this should be well planned for, and should occupy but a few minutes. Be as faithful in preparing for and recognizing the "junior audience" as the seniors, and thereby strengthen the ideal Sabbath service by the loyal interest and intelligent co-operation of the lambs of the flock.

10. *The Sermon.*—The delivery of the sermon should be in all seriousness and dignity, reasonably short (not over an hour in length under ordinary conditions), free from all effort to provoke laughter by the weaving in of a joke. The objective of every sermon should be to present Jesus as the Saviour of sinners and the One who is able to keep us from sinning. It is fitting on frequent occasions to make a special call for consecration and reconsecration at the Sabbath morning service.

11. *Dismissing the Congregation.*—The sermon being ended, the closing hymn is sung and the benediction pronounced. Then the best results are seen when the congregation is seated and every head bowed in silent prayer, until a signal from organ or desk indicates that the service is ended. All should then proceed out of the church as quickly and quietly as possible, refraining from laughing, joking, or boisterous talk, but with the decorum and dignity which is appropriate in the house of God.

These suggestions represent my ideas of an ideal Sabbath service, which are based upon methods I have seen worked out with good results during a

somewhat extensive period and covering a wide field; but, as stated, this is a topic concerning which there is justifiably a wide range of thought, and operation, and to which continued study should be given.

Union Springs, N. Y.

Discussion of the Paper

The delegates at the Atlantic Union Conference session entered into a lively discussion of the various suggestions, and the leading points particularly touched upon follow:

Reverence

One speaker said: "It is impossible to bring about a better state of things in our churches, along the line of reverence for the house of God, without providing and adopting a thorough system of education. Our people must be taught the principles of reverence, and the propriety of due reverence in connection with the church services. Some of our good people have the idea that we are becoming worldly when we seek to establish the ideal standard of reverent worship. I know one pastor who received an anonymous letter from a brother who said he was sorry to see the devil coming into Adventist churches, as evidenced by the fact that the members of the congregation follow the plan of bowing the head in prayer at the close of the service. This good brother saw nothing in that but an attempt to imitate worldly methods. Our people must be taught the true meaning of worship, and keep in mind all that the Lord has told us concerning the sacredness of the place in which He meets with His people."

Another worker said: "Every effort should be made to impress upon the children that the church is the house dedicated to God, and that it is a sacred place always, whether the service is going on or not. And as ministers we must show due reverence for the

house of God and for the sacredness of the pulpit. The pulpit corresponds to the altar which was used in the tabernacle service; it is the spot where the Holy Spirit encompasses the minister as he breaks the bread of life to the congregation, and therefore it becomes 'holy ground.' It grieves me to see the common way in which the pulpit is many times used. I do not think the pulpit should serve purposes other than gospel ministry, and I think it is a serious mistake for the minister to use the pulpit as a sort of punching bag, as I have witnessed more than once. I do not think that children should be allowed to run over the rostrum and around the pulpit."

Still another minister said: "The degree of order which we find in our churches is typical of the order found in the homes of our people. We must begin the campaign of education in the home."

A union conference executive called attention to a matter involving the underlying principle of reverence in its specific application to ministers, and that is, the bad example set by ministers' whispering while in the pulpit. He stated the situation this way: "I have observed a tendency, particularly at camp meeting, of whispering and talking by the ministers in the pulpit. Oftentimes there is quite a line-up of preachers on the rostrum, and while the sermon is being delivered, these ministers carry on conversation among themselves, behind the speaker, and sometimes it becomes so embarrassing that he is about ready to stop preaching and turn around to see what is going on that creates such confusion and attracts the attention of the congregation. It is most unfortunate when preachers so disregard the sacredness of the place of worship as to indulge in whispering and even talking, which would be out of place at any time, and particularly while on the rostrum and at the time preaching is

going on. I wonder what can be done to stop this quite general and very inappropriate practice."

The remedy was promptly suggested by Elder O. Montgomery, who said: "The only thing to do in order to stop this habit is to STOP IT. As individual preachers, we must resolve to stop it. The reform lies within ourselves."

Announcements

"I have observed a good plan in operation," said an experienced worker, "and that is to have the announcements made before the beginning of the service. While the announcements are being made, the ministers are engaged in prayer in the pastor's study or anteroom, just before entering the pulpit."

"If I were pastor of a church," said a General Conference worker, "that would be my program. I believe that the church clerk can make practically all the announcements, and I prefer that all announcements be made before I go into the desk, so that the service begins as a period of worship."

The sentiment of other speakers urged brevity in announcements when made as a part of the opening exercises of the service, as is the general plan. One minister referred to his experience of being in the desk for one hour before he had opportunity to announce his text, because of the heavy encroachment upon the sermon hour by preliminaries. A balance in the adjustment of all necessary details in connection with the Sabbath service must be maintained.

The Offering

Preference was indicated for the plan of having the deacons come forward for the offertory prayer before the offering is taken. After the prayer, the deacons pass through the congregation and take up the offering, and properly dispose of it while the interlude is rendered. One worker called

attention to the fact that prayer preceding the offering should not only be in behalf of liberality, but should give expression to praise and thanksgiving for the gifts to be received. Such a prayer at such a time meets a twofold purpose.

(To be continued)

Illuminated Texts

Side Lights From Translations

Joel 2: 23

"Be glad, O children of Zion,
And rejoice in Jehovah your God:
For He gives you the former rain in
just measure,
And He causes to come down on you
the early rain and
The latter rain, in the first month."

—*American Baptist Improved.*

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion,
and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for
He giveth you the former rain in just
measure, and He causeth to come down
for you the rain, the former rain and
the latter rain, in the first month."—
A. R. V.

"And ye, children of Zion, be glad
and rejoice in Jehovah your God; for
He giveth you the early rain in due
measure, and He causeth to come down
for you the rain, the early rain, and
the latter rain at the beginning [of the
season]."—*Darby.*

"And you, O children of Sion, re-
joice, and be joyful in the Lord your
God: because He hath given you a
teacher of justice, and He will make
the early and the latter rain to come
down to you as in the beginning."—
Douay.

"Rejoice then and be glad, ye chil-
dren of Sion, in the Lord your God:
for He has given you food fully, and
He will rain on you the early and the
latter rain, as before."—*Septuagint.*

"Let the children of Zion be glad,
And rejoice in Jehovah your God,
Who will give you the rain by its law,
And pour for you plentiful showers,
And the rain of spring, as before."

—*Fenton.*

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion,
and rejoice in the Lord your God: for
He giveth you the former rain in just
measure, and He causeth to come down
for you the rain, the former rain and
the latter rain, in the first month."—*Moulton.*

"Be glad then, ye children of Zion,
and rejoice in the Lord your God:
For He hath given you the former
rain moderately,
And He will cause to come down for
you the rain,
The former rain, and the latter rain
in the first month."—*Newberry.*

"Ye sons of Zion, then exult and be
glad in Yahweh your God,
For He hath given you the seed-rain
in right manner,—
Yea, He hath caused to descend for
you a downpour of seed-rain and
of the harvest-rain in the first
month."—*Rotherham.*

"And ye sons of Zion, joy and rejoice
in Jehovah your God,
For He hath given to you the
Teacher for righteousness,
And causeth to come down to you a
shower,
Sprinkling and gathered—in the
beginning."—*Young.*

"And ye children of Zion, be glad,
and rejoice in the Lord your God; for
He hath given you the first rain in
beneficence, and He hath caused to
come down for you the rain, the first
rain, and the latter rain in the first
(month)."—*Leeser.*

"It is not so important for the
preacher to find texts as to put himself
in the way of texts' finding him."

December, 1928

Gem Statements

From the Spirit of Prophecy

Beware of Artificial Embel- lishments

God calls upon the ministers of the gospel not to seek to stretch themselves beyond their measure by bringing forward artificial embellishments, striving for the praise and applause of men, being ambitious for a vain show of intellect and eloquence. Let the ministers' ambition be carefully to search the Bible, that they may know as much as possible of God and of Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. The more clearly ministers discern Christ and catch His spirit, the more forcibly will they preach the simple truth of which Christ is the center. They will then preach the truth as it is in Jesus, and there will be no betraying of the sacred trust that has been committed to them in the work of the gospel.

How painfully is the Lord Jesus Christ kept in the background! How His glory is veiled by the character and life of His representatives!

Let the watchmen on the walls of Zion not join with those who are making of none effect the truth as it is in Christ. Let them not join the confederacy of infidelity, popery, and Protestantism in exalting tradition above Scripture, reason above revelation, and human talent above the divine influence and the vital power of godliness.

—*Mrs. E. G. White, in the Review and Herald, March 24, 1896.*

THE Lord abhors indifference and disloyalty in a time of crisis in His work.—*Mrs. E. G. White.*

If there is anything in our world that should inspire enthusiasm, it is the cross of Calvary.—*Mrs. E. G. White.*

Delving Into the Word

Studies on Fundamentals of the Message

Original Bible Study

BY H. F. SAXTON

SHALL we *study* the Bible? A chorus of voices may be heard in reply: Of course we will study the Bible! We must study the Bible! Then why raise the question? you ask. There are many good reasons. The inquiry is not a useless or foolish one, even when presented to ministers of the gospel, and a few of the reasons for giving it consideration may be stated as follows:

1. *This is an age of spiritual decline.* The spirit of the times is not conducive to spirituality. The influences attending circumstances and environment in this modern age draw away from rather than tend toward deeply religious experience. The people with whom we have to deal are, for the most part, nonspiritual and often anti-spiritual in words and acts, if not in profession. The educators and religious leaders of this generation are often found to be either out of sympathy with genuine spiritual experience or unacquainted with it. It would seem that the very air we breathe tends to despiritualize. All these elements combine to hinder or destroy a real love and craving for deep spiritual life, and the result is that hunger, thirst, and relish for vigorous Bible study become deadened. The very thing that would prevent or cure the spiritual malady is shunned as distasteful.

The ministry has not been immune to this spiritual decadence. There might have been immunity and safety for the ministry if the servants of God had lived up to their privilege in keeping so close to God as to be able to possess

and preserve spiritual discernment; but, sad to say, it is a serious question as to whether the ministry of to-day, individually or as a body, are maintaining their rightful place as real Bible students.

2. *This is a time of multiplied activities.* The minister is ordained to preach the gospel of a crucified and risen Saviour to a world perishing in sin. But to-day we see him burdened by a multiplicity of varied duties, many of which pertain more directly to things temporal than spiritual. We may admit that these multiplied duties, most of them, at least, have their rightful place in the advancement of the work of God; but the difficulty lies in the fact that the responsibility for the detailed execution of these activities has been placed upon the shoulders of the minister, and has become so pressing and so absorbing that he finds his time and strength fully employed to the point of exhaustion. The quickly apparent result is that the minister is compelled to forsake the ministry of the word, to a greater or less extent, and devote himself to the serving of tables. Under such circumstances, real Bible study is almost sure to become a lost art with the ministry.

3. *This is a day of superficiality.* In no place is superficial work more unsuspected or more disastrous than in the realm of spiritual things. We are apt to become content with superficial conversation. The same is true concerning our prayers and our exercises of worship and devotion. In our Bible study we are too often satisfied with skimming the surface. We consider a small sip from the fountain of life good, yes, even precious; but that is

sufficient. We do not thirst for the deep draughts. Even in Christian experience we are prone to accept form and profession for the genuine, especially when applying the rule to ourselves. This is a temptation which constantly stares the minister in the face.

None have greater temptation to be superficial than the minister; it is a danger which ever stands on the threshold of his life, ready at all times to enter and take possession of the motive and will power. But anything that is superficial is not real and genuine, and superficial Bible study is not real Bible study, even though much time is spent in the study.

4. *Bible study is much impaired by limitation.* This limitation is manifested in various ways. Some limit Bible study in the amount of time devoted to it. Many ministers have a habit of devoting but a few minutes occasionally to study with the Bible actually in hand. No adequate knowledge of the Scriptures can be gained unless hours and days are spent in diligent and vigorous study of the Bible itself; and even then, the knowledge of the Bible will be far too limited. Other ministers limit Bible study as to the field covered. They are contented with studying simply one phase of Bible truth. One minister studies Bible history, but omits all else; another confines his study to Bible prophecies, or possibly to just one phase of prophecy; still another may interest himself in the study of the doctrines of Scripture, until his vision becomes obscured so that he is able to see but little in the Bible but dogma and theory. Other ministers study only the literary side of the Bible.

Any one of these fields of study may offer opportunity for lifelong effort, but when a person limits himself to just one field, he shuts the gate through which he might enter upon a broad and well-rounded understanding of the Bible message.

Some ministers limit Bible study as to the method employed. There are those whose Bible study consists in reading over, in a casual manner, portions of Scripture here and there in a hit-and-miss fashion. Other ministers may limit their study to the memorizing of choice passages. Many ministers never study their Bibles except by topics or subjects, and while this is a good method, it will not put one in touch with all the blessings of Bible study. Space does not here permit of an outline of various methods of study, but it would seem to be but reasonable to suppose that the minister would seek to become familiar with all phases of the Scriptures.

5. *Bible study is greatly weakened by substitution.* Instead of bestowing necessary time for direct study of the Bible, some take the course of least resistance,—they close up the Bible, and turn to the writings of some author who has made a survey of this or that particular field, and immediately proceed to adopt, or adapt, with some off-hand adjustments, reservations, or qualifications, what that writer has to say. In this way these people arrive at what they call "their own" understanding of the Scripture teaching. It may be that the author of the books read is reliable, and that his explanations and interpretations are true and worthy of acceptance. Nevertheless, such procedure is not Bible study. Rather, it is substitution for Bible study.

There is a rightful place for, and a legitimate use of, the writings of other men in the minister's study; but they should not be permitted to take the place of first-hand, original, and direct approach to the Bible itself. When we have by direct approach fully exhausted our own God-given powers and resources in trying to understand any portion of the Scriptures, then, and only then, may we appropriately and most profitably turn to the writings of



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men for help. It is the priceless privilege of each and every one to come direct to the words of Scripture, in prayerful dependence upon the Spirit of God to speak to us through the word, instructing and teaching the way of truth.

6. *Bible study requires earnest application.* Lack of application renders study ineffective. If we would unlock the treasures of the word and gain possession of them, we must focus all our powers upon the subject of our study. No easy-going effort will accomplish anything; we must be willing to make haste slowly, and dig deep. Long and laborious searching must at times be done. The greatest possible concentration of mind, the closest observation, the highest degree of mental alertness, are all essential in securing the greatest profit in Bible study. There must also be patient, steadfast endurance, a sticking to the job until the gem of truth is obtained. In brief, we must apply ourselves to the Bible in study.

Much of our Bible study is fruitless because we make wrong applications. There is a tendency to study the Bible and prepare sermons in the spirit and attitude of applying the instruction to the other man. It is only right that we should keep the wayward and the lost ever in mind, it is our business to reach out and try to save all sinners; but no man can give to another that which he does not himself possess. It would seem, therefore, that we should first go to the fountain for the refreshing of our own souls, and then go forth to witness, through sermon and song, to what we have seen and heard and actually experienced. Such is, in fact, the apostolic way of preaching the gospel. It calls for earnest supplication, complete submission, full surrender. The Spirit of God must come into the preacher's heart and

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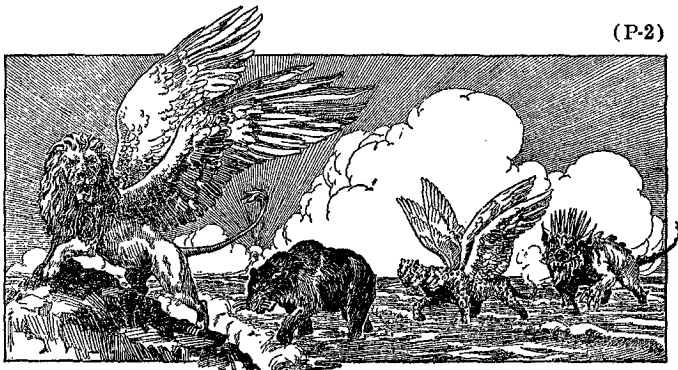
ingraft the studied word into heart and life. In other words, we must apply the Bible to ourselves in study.

7. *Bible study is often marred by presumption.* Here we touch the matter of interpretation. One may read a text of Scripture, and upon first glance imagine that he sees some great truth or teaching, some new light shining forth, and he may begin at once to proclaim his new-found light. But a systematic and thorough study of the text may reveal that he is far from correct in his conclusions, and that they are based upon insufficient grounds. Very similar is the case where a man bases his entire belief relative to a given point upon a single statement of Scripture. The law by which to arrive at the true teaching of Scripture on any given point is the test of harmony in all that the entire Bible has to say on the subject. One can only *presume* to have found truth if he stops short of full investigation.

Bible truth in all its fullness is not to be discovered at a glance, and it would be presumption for us as a denomination, even after all these years of Bible study and light and knowledge which have come to us, to say that we have all the light and understand all Scripture. We are in great need of deeper knowledge of the word, as ministers, as individuals, and as a denomination. The times in which we live and the work to which we are called most certainly summon us to renewed effort in original Bible study.

What have we to say in face of the charge that Seventh-day Adventists are not Bible students to the same degree they once were? We may have to admit the charge as true, but are we going to let it continue to be so? The Bible is now undergoing the greatest attack by infidelity of all history. This is no time for us to abandon, or even lessen, our efforts in diligent Bible study; rather, this is the time above all times for most extensive, exhaustive, and far-reaching investigation of the Scriptures.

The stupor of spiritual decay seeks to rob us of interest in Bible study; the pressure of multiplied activities threatens



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to crowd Bible study out of our lives; the habit of superficiality deceives us into thinking we have mastered the study of a subject, when we have but touched the surface; the tendency toward limitation is reducing Bible knowledge to the minimum; the ease and prevalence of substitution well-nigh sets the Bible entirely aside; the lack of right application deprives our efforts of fruitage, and the dangers of presumption would make us miss the truth. All these elements, and many others besides, threaten to cut us off from a rightful recognition as Bible students. But if the people of God turn away from searching the Scriptures, these hindering elements will never furnish a sufficient excuse.

Shall we *study* the Bible? or shall we merely carry it about with us? Shall we indulge the consolation of the treasured thought that somehow — just *how* we cannot say, but somehow — the foundations of our faith are contained in this blessed Book? Or shall we *know* whereof we speak? Shall we study the *Bible*? or shall we study something in its place? Shall we study the actual words of the Book itself? Shall we delve into it, shall we feed upon it, until it becomes a part of our very life? There is a cry arising from this old world in behalf of a return to original, personal, first-hand study of the Bible. This movement should answer that cry.

Kimball, Neb.

A DOCTRINE which is a mere theological proposition has no power to deliver one from the bondage of sin, and does not impart that peace and rest which are found in Christ. If He is to be to us a Saviour from sin, we must receive *Him* as "the way, the truth, and the life," and we must not permit the knowledge of doctrines *about* Him to obscure *Him* in His blessed fullness.

— *W. W. Prescott.*

The Minister's Books

Reading Course and Reviews

The Fellowship of Books

I CARE not who the man may be,
Nor how his tasks may fret him;
Nor where he fares, nor how his cares
And troubles may beset him,
If books have won the love of him,
Whatever fortune hands him,
He'll always own, when he's alone,
A friend who understands him.

Though other friends may come and go,
And some may stoop to treason,
His books remain, through loss or gain,
And season after season
The faithful friends for every mood,
His joy and sorrow sharing;
For old times' sake, they'll lighter make
The burdens he is bearing.

Oh, he has counsel at his side,
And wisdom for his duty,
And laughter gay for hours of play
And tenderness and beauty,
And fellowship divinely rare,
True friends who never doubt him,
Unchanging love, and God above,
Who keeps good books about him.

— *Edgar A. Guest.*

How a Book Is Born

Now books, be it remembered, are born, not made. A real book is created, not merely constructed — such a book, for instance, as had its birth in the brain of Dante, and which he tells us kept him lean through many years. There are many counterfeits of a book — so many printed pages beautifully typed, exquisitely adorned, and finely bound. But these things do not make a real book. Some books are stillborn, and lie in dead and delicate beauty on the bookshop counter; others eke out an anemic existence for a few years, and then silently slip into neglected graves; the vast majority are obsolete or forgotten in the course of a generation, and only a few have a niche in the gallery of the immortals.

The vitality of a book is determined, not by its printing, adorning, or binding, but rather by that subtle something imparted to it in the process of

intellectual gestation. The psalms of David, the visions of the prophets, the letters of Paul, the sayings of Socrates, the dreams of Dante, the sonnets of Shakespeare, were not *made* in any mechanical sense or fashion; they are creations—the offspring of intellectual and spiritual travail. After long and patient brooding, some night, some morning, the fancies and imaginations, the visions and yearnings, of a man's mental and spiritual life co-ordinate and distribute themselves; the eternal principles relate themselves to the age spirit, and a harmonious whole, fused in the crucible of the brain, pours itself forth at pen point, bearing to all men a message of truth and life.

A book is born! And nothing is more wonderful. Through such creation a man immortalizes himself. He passes on, his form and features are forgotten, he becomes the merest and vaguest tradition; but the truth of his book abides. It becomes a part of the indestructible wealth of the world—a spiritual and intellectual legacy bequeathed to the race by its creator. To such creators and for such creations the world is vastly in debt. Through them we have become “the heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time.”—*David G. Downey.*

Denominational Leaders

Indorse 1929 Reading Course Plan

E. K. SLADE: “I am pleased to note the selections which have been made for the Reading Course of 1929. Really I do not believe that we can improve upon this list. I feel satisfied with the suggestion, and believe this will provide a strong course for 1929.”

W. E. HOWELL: “As to the enlarged plan for the Ministerial Reading Course, I have read the statements with much interest, and wish to place myself on record as being in favor of the plan, so far as I can see its work-

ing out. In fact, away back in the early history of the Ministerial Course, when I was conducting it from the Educational Department, this same question of a little more flexibility in the selection of books was up for consideration. I see no reason why a reader should not be permitted to select one of the books, under the safeguards that the plan lays down, and still have credit for it on the course.”

A. G. DANIELLS: “I have read every line of the manuscript for the book entitled ‘The Coming of the Comforter,’ which has been chosen as one of the Reading Course books for 1929, and I can state most sincerely that it has made a very deep impression upon heart and mind. I am free to say that nothing else I have read on the subject has taken hold of me as this presentation has. The Holy Spirit Himself has spoken solemnly to my heart, and has caused me to bow in reverence before my Lord in a solemn covenant to yield my life as never before to the control of Him who is here in Christ's place. It has clarified my vision regarding the problem of the finishing of our work; it has made union with Christ, our source of wisdom, righteousness, and power, appear more essential and real than it has ever seemed to me before. Yes, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is supremely important. It is the secret of personal victory in our conflict with sin, and it is also the secret of soul-winning service, for it is truly ‘the presence of Christ to the soul.’”

F. M. WILCOX: “I have just finished reading the book entitled, ‘The Desire of All Nations,’ which has been selected for the new Reading Course. It has given me genuine pleasure, and I consider it one of the strongest missionary appeals I have read. I have become, I think, rather hardened in my years of reading, the same as some editors do, but this book brought tears

to my eyes a number of times, and I am glad that its inspiration can be passed on to our workers throughout the field in the Ministerial Reading Course study."

J. E. FULTON: "I think I have never read anything on foreign missions that has such a strong appeal as 'The Desire of All Nations.' It will certainly make an excellent book for the Reading Course."

Just Between Seminars

Glimpses of Ministerial Training

An Auspicious Beginning

THE first words from our training schools around the circle are very encouraging—increased seminar enrollments and deep interest being the dominant notes. It is too early yet for reports on field work, but we gladly share these terse paragraphs:

Union College.—Our seminar is starting off nicely. We have about twenty young men in our ministerial band, and are expecting more to join. This band will conduct about ten prayer meetings a month, and preach about twenty-five sermons each month. These sermons will be prepared under supervision, and as far as possible they will be delivered before real congregations. In fact, I plan for practically all of them to be thus delivered. The students seem really enthusiastic over the plan. I believe they will get tangible benefit from our field work this year.

A. J. MEIKLEJOHN.

Pacific Union College.—We have changed the name of our student organization from Ministerial Association to Gospel Workers' Seminar, and now have a combined seminar of men and women, with over fifty members. A new constitution has been adopted, and everything seems to be starting out with enthusiasm. Last year our

homiletics students conducted meetings in St. Helena, and were assisted by the seminar. A good interest was manifested, and nine were baptized as a result of the effort. At Healdsburg, a meeting was held every Friday night, beginning a few weeks before the close of school. The church members appreciated the meetings very much, and a number of people not of our faith were in attendance. We were told that people attended who had not been in the church for years. A good interest was also aroused in the town of Vacaville. We hope to see some enter the church from this effort also. B. L. HOUSE.

Emmanuel Missionary College.—We have our seminar organized with Roscoe Moore as president. I will try to give you a write-up about it soon.

W. R. FRENCH.

Walla Walla College.—The line-up of ministerial training work is not as yet sufficiently perfected for me to give you what I know you are wanting to hear from us out this way. I think after the coming Sabbath I can write you quite fully. Briefly now, I will say we are very much encouraged with the outlook for the school year.

F. M. BURG.

Southern California Junior College.—You will rejoice in the increasing prosperity of our ministerial department and seminar. Our class in ministerial training is larger by five than last year, and while but twenty-seven of the members of the seminar were present to answer to the roll-call when we first convened this year, we have many more applications to join. We are putting on a strong missionary campaign, and will have full charge of several churches, besides assisting in other efforts and holding at least one of our own.

L. A. WILCOX.

Southwestern Junior College.—There are a number of young men expecting to complete the theological course this

year and our seminar services conducted Friday night after vesper services are well attended, from forty to sixty at each meeting.

CHESTER E. KELLOGG.

Shenandoah Valley Academy.—Our ministerial band is organized for a new school year here at the S. V. A., and each member is quite enthusiastic to make the work of the Band a success. We have our regular meetings each week, and we are making arrangements to hold meetings in other churches and school buildings wherever we can gain entrance and an audience.

J. H. SMITH.

Australasian Missionary College.—We desire to make our ministerial training stronger, especially as this field has to draw all its workers direct from the college. This throws a heavy responsibility upon the teachers and the board. The ministerial class is holding Sunday evening meetings in a town a few miles away. They have an attendance of about twenty-five. Several families have come into the truth as a result of the work done by our young men, and others are interested. Our opportunities, however, are limited, inasmuch as the people in the immediate village are practically all Adventists. Then, too, the people in the country are very scattered, so it is difficult for young men to receive definite training. However, they enter optimistically into all phases of the work.

E. E. COSSENTINE.

Collegio Adventista (Brazil).—Our young men are not idle. They are holding meetings among our neighbors, and seeking to carry on as much missionary work as is possible. We are holding a meeting each Sabbath afternoon. The people around us here are very backward, making it difficult to secure their attendance at meetings. Some of our young men have had opportunity to work with our evangelists in the city, and we have a number of

the graduates of the school who do excellent work as evangelists in different states in Brazil. G. B. TAYLOR.

Co-operation

WE are happy to record upon the honor roll the names of colleges which have already made available to their seminarians the Ministerial Reading Course books for 1929: E. M. C., W. W. C., U. C., P. U. C., S. J. C., S. C. J. C.

This is cordial co-operation. Please accept our appreciation.

Principles for Seminars

IT is believed that the plan of causing students to preach before the class, results, upon the whole, in more harm than good, and that it ought to be avoided. Let them preach where it can be real preaching, or not at all.—*Broadus, page 14.*

“He who has been wont to preach to benches as if they were men, will afterward preach to men as if they were benches.”—*Ibid., p. 15.*

Bible Workers' Exchange

For an Enlarged Service

Bringing to a Decision

BY MARY A. WALSH

IT is while with the inquirer in “the valley of decision” that the Bible worker senses, perhaps most keenly, the solemn duty and responsibility resting upon her. The individual to whom God’s message of truth is brought in this personal manner, stands in a different relationship to God than at any previous time in his life, and there comes the psychological moment when decision involving eternal consequences must be made.

Should the Bible worker at such a time be indifferent to the solemn opportunity, or lack spiritual discernment for guiding the soul through the

struggle with the powers of darkness in combating the doubts and fears which loom up before the entrance to the path of obedience, or if in her own personal experience she has become severed from the Source of power which draws the soul by the cords of love, what excuse can be offered in the day of final reward for the souls which are lost through such unpardonable neglect?

As we look into the faces of the men and women studying the word of God with us, there should arise in our own hearts that same yearning for souls which the Saviour revealed in dealing with the woman of Samaria, when He left His own temporal needs for the sake of bringing that soul to the momentous decision.

The method of personal labor employed by Philip the evangelist in dealing with the Ethiopian is particularly suggestive for bringing the individual to and safely through the deciding point. This method yields to brief analysis, as follows:

1. Philip was so fully connected with God that the Holy Spirit could direct him to a soul seeking for truth.

2. He hastened to the spot where the man was struggling.

3. He joined himself to the struggling man.

4. He put a personal question to the man, thus awakening the desire for Bible study.

5. He had the man read the word of God for himself, whereby is recognized the principle that there is power in the word. 1 Peter 1: 23.

6. He began at the very scripture which the man was reading, and from that point of special interest "preached unto him Jesus." Philip knew that Jesus had said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." John 12: 32.

7. He instructed the man so fully in this brief Bible study as to bring him to immediate decision. "See, here is

water," said the eunuch, "what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Philip's teaching, however clear, forceful, and convincing, would have been in vain if it had not led the inquirer to take the deciding step which brought him within the fold of the church of Christ. And here we have set forth the essential requisite for baptism and church membership. In response to the eunuch's question, Philip answered: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" be baptized. And the man readily replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Only on the assurance of genuine heart belief in the Son of God would Philip baptize the eunuch.

Philip knew from personal experience just what it means to believe in Christ, and it was this living power in his life and teaching which led to the ready decision by the one taught. Is it not true that if we, as Bible teachers, working under the direction of the Spirit to-day, actually believe with all our hearts that Jesus is the Son of God, and that by His life we are saved; that it is His message of salvation which is now in the balance of decision; and if we would seek to lead our readers to the same personal belief, our difficulties would be greatly lessened. It is lack of belief in God that causes many to put off making their decision for truth; and the reason why we so often fail in bringing people to a decision, is because we do not possess the power of decision ourselves, or practice it in our daily life.

There are certain studies which I have found to be effectual in bringing people to the deciding point. One of these studies is based on Luke 14: 16-20, the theme being "The Last Call to the Supper." The excuses which are mentioned in this parable as put forth by those who are unwilling to obey God, readily yield to personal application to the individuals with whom I am studying; and I endeavor,

by the Lord's help, to show that there is no excuse of adequate merit to release them from obeying the clarion call of God at this hour.

For another study I deal with the question, "Is God particular?" and call attention to Genesis 22:1-3, where we find the record of Abraham's quick response to the command of God. I explain how this old man rose up early in the morning to perform the task which God had required of him,—the most severe test of faith which could be brought to any parent's heart, the sacrifice of an only son. Abraham had learned by experience that delays are dangerous, as they give the enemy an opportunity to sow seeds of doubt which so quickly yield a fatal harvest. From this point I lead to the experience of Balaam, recorded in Numbers 22: 8, 9, and explain that delay on Balaam's part resulted in his losing eternal life.

"The Elijah Message" is another study which the Lord has blessed, as I have given it with the object of bringing the individual to a decision. The closing text in this study is 1 Kings 18: 21, which is a direct appeal from the God of heaven to decide either for or against Him. Improving this as the psychological moment, I endeavor to draw from the reader a response as to what his decision is. I then have a season of prayer, and ask God to enable the individual to be true to the vow he has made. In connection with this study, I dwell at length on what it means to step out by faith and take God at His word, and often refer to my own personal experience, and tell what faith in God and His promises has wrought for me.

It is true that not all who hear the message will make the right decision. But although this is a bitter disappointment, there is left on record for our encouragement the experience of Christ in dealing with the rich young ruler. All the persuasions of Christ

did not bring that hard, proud heart to the place where he was willing to give up the world and "come, and follow" the divine Teacher in His life of self-denial and service.

We also have the experience of Nicodemus as an example of favorable opinion of the truth, accompanied by prolonged procrastination. Apparently that interview by night, in which the Saviour taught the wondrous mystery of the new birth, failed to bring Nicodemus to a decision; and we find that after the lapse of three years Nicodemus was still unwilling to identify himself with Jesus. Yet in that tragic hour of earth's history, when the Saviour's pierced body was laid in the tomb, we find in Nicodemus the unfeared manifestation of devotion to the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, revealing that the words of truth uttered on that memorable night had not been fruitless.

There is a statement found in "The Great Controversy" which should be cherished by every Bible teacher. It is found on page 612, and reads as follows:

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. . . . Many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. . . . The honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side."

Brookline, Mass.

WHEN thou seest thy hearers most attentive, then conclude, for so they will come again the more cheerfully the next time.—*Luther.*

A New Starting Point

BY JENNIE L. IRELAND

How great is our need in these days for grace to minister to a sin-sick, dying world in such a way and with such power that souls will be impressed with the reality of the living Word! New life and power must come into the Bible work. We cannot meet present-day intensity by the methods which were used twenty years ago, and the problem which exists in the minds of Bible workers is how we can make our work more effective through bringing into every study, in a more vital and forceful manner than has ever been done before, the revelation of Christ as a present, personal Saviour from sin, — the center around which all gems of doctrinal truth cluster.

This is a problem to which I have given much study, and in dealing with a certain group of readers I have swung away from the usual line of doctrinal or prophetic approach as the basis for a series, and have begun the studies as the Bible begins — with a presentation of God as Creator, a God of love; then presenting Christ as associate with God the Father in creation, of His becoming Son of man, then man's Ransom, High Priest, and King; following these studies by three lessons on the saving relationship between Christ and the believer, and thence into our full message. I have followed this method in both Bible training classes in our churches and with groups of people in homes, and have been gratified to note the unusual interest manifested on the part of all attending the studies. A number of readers with whom I have followed this plan are about ready to take their stand for the truth.

As I have been asked by a number of Bible workers to furnish copies of the outlines used in following this method, I am grateful for the opportunity of doing so through the columns of THE MINISTRY. I am submitting

seven outlines, which I hope will serve to make clear the plan in mind, and open the way for more extensive study in presenting the truth from a new starting point.

Study No. 1 — God the Creator, a God of Love

1. In what words does the Bible introduce us to God? Gen. 1: 1.

2. How is this same Being referred to by the psalmist? Ps. 90: 2.

3. What characteristic description is given in Deuteronomy 33: 27? (Eternal.)

4. What name did He announce for Himself? Ex. 3:14, 15. (I AM — the self-existing, the ever-existing, unchangeable One.)

5. By what name was He known to Abraham? Ex. 6: 3 (Almighty). He has all power (Jer. 32: 17); is omnipotent (Rev. 19: 6).

6. How should we all regard Him? Ps. 83: 18.

7. What particular power marks Him as the Supreme One? Jer. 10: 10-12; Isa. 45: 18; Isa. 40: 26; Ps. 124: 8.

8. How does this great and mighty God feel toward us individually? Jer. 31: 3 ("I have loved thee"); Jer. 29: 11 ("thoughts of peace"); Ps. 103: 13, 14 (pities because He knows our frame); Eze. 18: 32 (would have each one live); 2 Peter 3: 9 (is long-suffering); Ex. 34: 5-7 (merciful and gracious; absolutely just).

9. Has God changed in character or word since the beginning? Num. 23: 19; Mal. 3: 6; James 1: 17.

10. With whom does God dwell? Isa. 57: 15.

11. What does acquaintance with God bring to the soul? Job 22: 21.

12. How should we regard ourselves as related to Him? Ps. 100: 3.

Study No. 2 — The Personality of God

1. What is the first reference in the Bible that reveals that God is more than an essence pervading all space? Gen. 1: 26.

2. When Moses asked to see the glory of God, what answer did he receive? Ex. 33: 18-23. (Note His form here mentioned.)

3. When the prophet Ezekiel was permitted to see the glory of God, what did he say about the personality of God? Eze. 1: 26-28.

4. When the prophet Daniel beheld the judgment scene, what did he note concerning the appearance of God? Dan. 7: 9, 10. (Note His form mentioned.)

5. What promise is given for those who shall be redeemed from the earth? Rev. 22: 3, 4.

6. Where is the dwelling place of God—the place where His personal presence is to be found as it cannot be found anywhere else? Deut. 26: 15 with Deut. 10:14; 1 Kings 8:30; Eccl. 5: 2, 2 Chron. 30: 27; Matt. 5: 16; 6: 9.

7. Where is the throne of God? Ps. 11: 4; Ps. 103: 19; Isa. 6: 1-3, 5.

8. Who stand on either side of the throne? Ps. 99: 1.

9. To what place did Jesus go when He ascended from earth? John 20: 17; Acts 1: 9, 11.

10. To what particular position in heaven did He go? Heb. 1: 1-3; 8: 1, 2.

11. Where is the sanctuary which God pitched? Heb. 9: 24; 1 Peter 3: 22.

12. Where is the "third heaven"? 2 Cor. 12: 2, 4. Where is "paradise"? Rev. 2: 7. Where is the "tree of life"? Rev. 22: 1, 2.

13. Name some of the powers of God's being that man also possesses: Speaks (Ex. 20: 1-18; Deut. 5: 22-24; Heb. 12: 25-29); hears (Ps. 3: 4; Mal. 3: 16); sees (Ps. 94: 9; Ps. 34: 15; Prov. 15: 3); thinks (Jer. 29: 11); loves (John 3: 16); grieves (Ps. 95: 10); rejoices (Isa. 62: 5).

Los Angeles, Calif.

(Studies to be continued)

Personal Testimonies

Deeper Life Confidences

Reminiscences of Pioneer Days

WHEN I was eleven years of age, Elder James White and his wife and Elder J. N. Andrews visited our church, at which time practically all the young

people in the church were baptized. As a child I had a good Christian experience, but when I reached my teens I became careless, and felt that I wanted to have a "good time" according to the worldly standard. My conscience troubled me, and while I prayed to the Lord to take the love of the world out of my heart, I still clung to things which I knew were wrong. In due time I married, and our new home was situated on top of a hill, on a road almost impassable in the winter because of the deep snow. My husband's work kept him away at quite a distance all the week. He would come home Friday evening and remain until Sunday, but the rest of the time I was left alone with my two small children. I reasoned it out that the Lord could not answer my prayer and take the love of the world out of my heart, so He took me out of the world. But I knew that He had not forsaken me.

I was naturally quick tempered, and often became impatient with the children. Then I would be sorry, and weep over my inability to do better. I often said to myself, "I have been trying to be a Christian for sixteen years, and am worse than when I began. What is the use of trying? I'm going to give up." This was in the year of 1879. Just about that time some one gave me a tract entitled, "How to Be a Christian," which made the way very simple. First, I read, "You must give up all." I knew that I had nothing to give up but my sin and misery. Second, "You must confess your sins to God, and He will forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness." "I have been confessing my sins all my life," I said. Third, "Then you must believe that He has forgiven and accepted you." This was something I had never done, because I had never felt that He forgave me; so I had lived in the seventh-chapter-of-Romans experience all these years. When I read that I must believe, I concluded that

there was hope for me yet. I went at once to my room, and prayed as never before — this time *in faith*. As I arose from my knees, I thanked God that He had forgiven and accepted me, and went about my work praising God and singing hymns of rejoicing, but there was no change in my *feeling*. When tempted to become impatient with the children, I would lift my heart to God, and He gave me the victory. On the fourth day of this experience I again prayed to the Lord in a special manner. I prayed for an hour, and when I arose from prayer I said aloud, "I believe that the Lord forgives and accepts me, even if I never *feel* that this is true." As soon as I had uttered the words, a flood of light and glory filled my soul.

The Sabbath came and we went to church. This was the first Seventh-day Adventist church in existence, at Washington, N. H. In the social meeting that Sabbath I told my experience of the past week, and closed my remarks by exclaiming, "Praise the Lord!" As the meeting closed and I was passing out of the church, I overheard two of the older sisters say that I was fanatical. I did not know much about fanaticism, but understood that it was from the devil, and this remark gave me a severe shock. It brought the first cloud between me and my Saviour since I had received the definite assurance in prayer. I concluded that if it were true that this which I had experienced was from the devil, then I would never be able to know the true way.

After retiring that night, I could not sleep for weeping because of my distress. Then a Voice seemed to say to me, "Why don't you get up and pray?" I heeded the suggestion, and taking my Bible I pleaded with the Lord to show me if I had done wrong in uttering words of praise in the meeting. On opening my Bible, the first words I saw were, "Praise ye the Lord," as found

in Psalms 148. Then another verse in the twenty-second psalm came to my mind, which reads, "My praise shall be of Thee in the great congregation." These two verses were sufficient to convince me that I had not been mistaken, and that I should keep right on praising the Lord.

Just at this time I began to feel a great burden for the young people in our church. So I got them all together one evening, and told them just how to become connected with the Lord, and we all sought the Lord together. We did not stop until every one in the company had found the Lord, and knew that he was forgiven and accepted. It was one o'clock in the morning when we separated.

As a result of this meeting, some powerful testimonies were heard in the church the following Sabbath. This caused the older members of the church to become worried, and they reminded us that Sister White had written that "fanaticism would return to the East," and they concluded that the demonstration of a new experience by the young people was the beginning of it. So they sent for Elder S. N. Haskell, and when he came, we young people told him all about our experience in seeking the Lord and accepting of forgiveness and righteousness by faith. This was on Friday that we talked to Elder Haskell, and on the next day, Sabbath, he preached a sermon on faith. It was a good sermon, although he did not see the full truth of righteousness by faith as he came to see it afterward, and there were many "Amens" from the young people. Before he went away, he talked to us young people again, and one thing he said, which I have never forgotten, was, "I came to set you young people right, and got converted myself! Keep right on in the way you have been led. I would rather see a little wildfire than to see no fire at all." Elder Haskell in later years often referred to the new

experience which came to him on that occasion.

Well, the church members did not feel satisfied, so they sent for Elder A. S. Hutchins to come from Vermont. His sermon did not touch faith, but dwelt entirely on works, works. But we young people had tried "works" for so long, and failed, that we did not wish to try that method any more.

Then they sent for another minister to come and set us straight, and this time it was my own brother, Elder E. W. Farnsworth. Naturally he listened with special interest to my own experience, and investigated the experience which had come to the young people of the church. He did not seem to be able to change our attitude, and was impressed by the genuine manifestation of the power of God among us. My brother at that time told me that he wished he might have just such an experience as had come to me. He did not, however, enter into the deeper experience of receiving righteousness by faith until some time after 1888.

Next to be sent for was Elder A. O. Burrill, of New York. He sympathized with us, and gave some good sermons on the subject. After this the church members ceased to try to dissuade us from our belief, and we went on unmolested.

I had never been so happy in all my life. No matter what came, the Lord was with me. Some nights I felt that I did not want to go to sleep, for in sleep I was not conscious of my Saviour's presence. When I awoke in the morning, the first thought was, "I am still with Thee." Almost every one of the little company who entered into this deeper experience at that time has remained faithful.

My husband entered into the experience with me, and some time later we were called to Westerly, R. I., where we began holding prayer meetings and Bible studies to create an interest in the truth. Soon we were called into

conference work, my husband as a minister and I as a Bible worker, and we have been in the work ever since.

As I listen to the message of righteousness by faith as it is being preached at the present time, the early experiences of my life are vividly brought to mind, and I rejoice that the Lord is again bringing this glorious truth to the forefront. It is this experience of receiving the righteousness of God by faith which will bring the latter rain in all its fullness.

MRS. A. T. ROBINSON.

Melrose, Mass.

Kindly Correctives For Better Workmen

A CHRISTIAN woman said recently: "Listening pastors should appear to be interested." That word is needed by about three fourths of our ministry. The pastor who gets nervous and begins to hunt up hymns while another is preaching, is the bane of a visiting minister's existence.—*Watchman Examiner*.

THE preacher should read the dictionary. The book is rather long, it must be admitted, but is beyond degree fascinating. He will do well to mark every word in the lexicon save the chemical terms, which may be dropped off sight unseen and good riddance. . . . This dictionary perusal will give the speaker a gamut of speech which will keep him from being his own ditto mark. The words he uses will be like the flowers a body might pluck coming through a wild-flower field. A word has a haunting quality in it betimes, like a strain of saddened music heard at dusk. Three or four pages of the dictionary each day will stir many a dead coal into flame and stir intelligence into a vagrant mood; and vagrant moods are the soul's hours of vision and attempt.—*Quale*, "Pastor-Preacher," pp. 43, 44.

Confirming the Foundations

Historical, Theological, and Scientific Research

Studies in Historical Theology

BY N. J. WALDORF

No. V — The Catholic Imperial State Church

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the aforementioned steps, another one was taken when the church and state were united under the reign of Constantine, who issued the first Sunday law. Following this law, several more were decreed by the state. A brief quotation will be given here:

"Thus we have two laws prohibiting exaction of debt on that day, one under Valentinian and Valens (A. D. 368) protecting Christians against being forced into litigation on that day, the *dies solis* (*qui dedum faustus habetur*: "Codex Theodosius," viii, tit. viii, 2); the other under Gratian Valentinian and Theodosius (A. D. 386), extending this immunity to all, calling the day plainly the '*dies solis quem Dominicum rite dicere majores*,' and branding any infringer of the law as '*non modo notabilis, verum etiam sacrilegus*' ("Codex Theod.," viii, tit. viii, 2). The progress marked by the contrast of these two laws is significant. The former, recognizing the Christians as a sect, is of exactly the same nature as a law of Honorius and Theodosius in 409, protecting the Jews from being forced to work or litigation on the Sabbath or other of their sacred days ("Codex Theod.," II, tit. viii, 3). The latter accepts Christianity as the religion of the empire, and enforces on all by law the sacredness of its chief festival." — "*Christian Antiquities*," by Smith and Cheetham, Vol. II, p. 1047.

Not only were there laws enacted relating to Sunday keeping, but also against paganism. Gradually paganism was being eradicated from the empire, and its rites and customs grafted upon a fast-disappearing Christianity,

so far as Biblical faith and practice were concerned. Yet an outward warfare raged against paganism by the Roman emperors representing the state. The emperor Gratian (367-383) in the year 382 ordered that the statue of Victory, "*custos imperii virago*," should be removed from the Curia. He also forbade the offering of the "*hostia consultatorie*," and refused for himself the title of Pontifex Maximus ("Codex Theod.," xvii, 7).

When in A. D. 410 Rome was sacked by the Visigoths under Alaric, the pagans gave the cause of the disaster to be the overthrowing of the ancient worship, and as a result of the fall of the city, there was a great revival of later paganism in the form of Mithraism. Says the historian:

"At the commencement of the reign of Honorius, 395-423, temples to Jupiter, Mercury, Saturn, the Mater Deum, Apollo, Diana, Minerva, Spes and Fortuna, and Concord, were still standing in Rome, and many of the old religious ceremonies and festivals continued to be observed. An edict of the year 399, promulgated at Ravenna, while forbidding the pagan worship, prohibited the destruction of the temples. It was the imperial pleasure, it stated, that edifices which gave so much adornment to the public thoroughfares should be preserved,—'*publicorum operum ornamento servari*' ("Cod. Theod.," xvi, x, 15)."

"An edict of Theodosius II of the year 423, assumes that paganism is virtually extinct—'*paganos qui supersunt, quamquam jam nullas esse credancus promulgaturum legum junududum praescripta comescant*' ("Cod. Theod.," xvi, x, 22); but the appearance of subsequent enactments, e. g., one of the year 425 (Append. to "Cod. Theod.," p. 17), forbidding that pagans should practice at the bar, exercise mil-

itary functions, or own Christian slaves, proves that the exceptions were still numerous."—*Christian Antiquities*, Vol. II, pp. 1538, 1539; and "*Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire*," by Samuel Dill, revised edition, pp. 1-148.

Here is another law:

"*Omnia loca, qual sacris error veterim deputaoti, nostrae rei iubemus sociari*," etc. *Im pp. Honorius et Theodosius A. A. polulo Cartaginiensi, Dat. iii Kal september Ravennae.*—"Cod.," Lib. I, tit. xi, *De Paganis, sacrificiis, Et Pemplis.*

Translated it reads:

"All places, which have been consecrated to the old error, we order to be joined to our possessions."—*Given three days from the Kalends of September to the people of Carthagina. (Signed by Honorius X and Theodosius VI at Ravenna, A. D. 415.)*

Space will not permit me to quote the Latin, but the translation only in this one:

"No one may open, for the purpose of adoring and worshiping these temples which have been closed at one time or another; honor is not to be given to impious or accursed images; the doorposts of the temples are not to be wreathed with flowers; profane fires are not to be lighted on the altars; incense is not to be burned before them; victims are not to be sacrificed; libations of wine are not to be drunk; and sacrilege is not to exist in place of religion. Moreover, whoever may attempt to offer sacrifices against this prohibition of our Serenity and against the interdicts of our old and most holy constitution having been lawfully accused and convicted by a public trial of so great a crime, he shall endure the greatest of punishment and the proscription of all his property."—*Given by emperors Valentinus and Marclan, the Kalends of November, 451 A. D. (Book one, part ii, 7, "Code of Justinian.")*

Even as late as in the time of the Ostrogothic king Theodoric, paganism flourished right in the city of Rome, as can be seen from the law which he

published in that city and which reads as follows:

"If any one offers up sacrifice according to the pagan rite, having been arrested by a just sentence, they were to be beheaded. Soothsayers also and schemers were to be put away secretly. Those conscious of the black arts, that is evil-doers, having been despoiled of all their property, were to be condemned to perpetual exile, while the lower classes among these were also to be beheaded."—"*Edict of Theodosius*," A. D. 500. (*Lindenbrog, "Code of Ancient Laws," Frankfurt, 1713, p. 255.*)

Summary of Points

1. The apostolic Christian—ancient catholic (universal)—church established by Christ and His apostles continued to the time of Constantine, about 321 A. D.

2. The ancient catholic church was persecuted by the pagan government, but never resorted to state aid in its religious work. Its only means of converting people was by preaching and persuading people to accept Christ as their Saviour.

3. Just as soon as this church joined herself to the state, she persecuted the pagans and exchanged force for persuasion in her religious work, and she became the Roman Catholic Imperial State Church.

The next study is on the Episcopacy and the Prelacy.

Orlando, Fla.

The Field Says --- Through Our Letter Bag

As to Introductions.—There is a growing tendency to overdo in the matter of introducing the speaker on any special occasion. There appears to be a decided leaning toward the popular methods in vogue on Chautauqua and public lecture platforms; but such methods appear out of harmony with the spirit and the example of the lowly

Nazarene, whose ambassadors we are and in whose name we go forth. Indeed, so profuse are the expressions of flattery and compliment to which the one introduced must often listen, that he is truly embarrassed and even positively humiliated by the flow of "gush" indulged in by the well-meaning but reprehensible brother who has the "honor" and the "pleasure" of making the introduction. Many a fellow minister has, during the past few years, given expression to his dread of being introduced to an audience in such a manner as to become the helpless recipient of the verbal bouquets showered upon him. It is time to study brevity and simplicity in the matter of introductions.

While visiting one of our institutions the writer was extended an invitation to speak to the family at the morning worship hour. He being a stranger to nearly all present, the one in charge of the worship introduced the speaker as follows: "I am glad that Elder Blank can be with us this morning. He is a personal friend, whom I have known for many years. His home is in Washington, D. C., and he is [official capacity] of the General Conference. He will speak to us for a few moments."

The next Sabbath, it so happened that the same speaker was introduced by the same brother, to the large audience assembled at the eleven o'clock church service. The introduction on this occasion was as follows: "For the benefit of those who are unacquainted with the speaker of the morning, I will say that Elder Blank is [office capacity] of the General Conference. We are very glad that he can be with us to-day."

Following the Sabbath morning service, the introduced and the introducer were seated at the table in the dining room, and the former could not refrain from turning to the latter to say:

"Well, my brother, I want to thank you for the simplicity of your introduction in the church service this morning, and also on the occasion when I spoke at the worship hour. I greatly appreciate the brief and simple manner of your introduction."

A world traveler and lecturer visited another of our institutions, and chanced to be seated for luncheon at the same table with the man who was to introduce him at the evening lecture. The conversation during luncheon revealed the extent of the various countries visited, and many of the high points of interest in connection with the lecturer's work. When the time arrived for introducing the speaker to the audience, the well-informed friend of the luncheon hour took occasion to enumerate all the countries visited and to enlarge at length upon the gentleman's travels, work, and reputation. When the lecture was over, the speaker, referring in a personal way to the introduction, said: "Well, there was not very much left for me to say after he had gotten through with his introduction!"

There are but three essentials to be kept in mind when introducing a speaker: (1) His name; (2) his official connection; (3) the place that he is from. All this may be stated with but few words, and in a modest, dignified manner. It is not necessary to elaborate on the following order: "Our brother comes to us with long years of ripened experience, and is recognized as one of our leading men."

Many times introductions are entirely unnecessary. In our own churches, among our own people, where the visitor is well known, why introduce him? If he is a stranger in the conference or in the church, or if there are strangers in the audience, a word of introduction is in place. In it all let there be simplicity, brevity, and modesty.

O. MONTGOMERY.

Washington, D. C.

Preaching Christ in the Message.—

I came into the truth through reading. Shortly afterward I had my first privilege of attending a tent effort. I was distressed to find people denouncing us for not preaching Christ, and charging us with incessant harping on the law. I also found that their accusations had far more of an element of truth than I had wanted to admit. (See "Gospel Workers," pp. 156-160.) I began praying that if ever I were permitted to preach, Christ should be the constant theme, so that this charge might not be true in my labors.

My chance came unexpectedly and soon. With my mind filled with my subject, with an abundance of Scripture and history, and with quotations and current events in hand, I started preaching. But I soon found that on such a program it was a difficult task to find room for Christ. The horns, the heads, the crowns, and all the rest crowded for first place, and consumed the time. Jesus the wonderful Saviour was, at best, given second place. I felt this to be all wrong, so cut down on material used, and prayed most earnestly to learn how really to preach a living and saving Christ *in every doctrine*, rather than a dry, convincing theory, however true it might be.

After several years of endeavor, I came to the following conclusions:

1. Any speaker with a logical mind can present the theory and history of our message, when intellectually understood.

2. Only those actually abiding in Christ can give the doctrines and prophecies their spiritual setting, making Christ their own life and center.

3. When this obtains, there is a living experience with a personal Saviour, and preaching will never be dry theory when His love and life and spirit animate it all. *The possibility of preaching Christ in the message is through this heart experience of the speaker, or not at all.*

I have been blessed many times by following this plan: Study the subject painstakingly, but use a limited number of texts so as to make it simple but clear in connection and theory. Then dismiss the theory phase from the mind. Now restudy prayerfully each text, but with a new object—to find Christ therein in His full love and power as *my* personal Saviour. In presenting the subject I attempt to pass on to my hearers the blessings I found there in Christ, and leave out, if necessary, some of the theory and detail that seem so pressing to the analytical mind.

For example: In presenting the state of the dead, we can tell of Him who loved with an everlasting love. Yet for His love wicked men put Him to death. We can *magnify* His death by explaining its *condition* from the usual proof texts on the state of the dead. He tasted *that kind* of death for every man, for every man dies by the same death.

In one's own thoughts and reflections, when Christ pleads to be his personal Saviour, will he not see bound up *in Him* the truth relative to the true condition in death? Surely. And it will not be so easily brushed aside by him as "strange doctrine," since he sees that it centers in Christ, and is a part of His own personal experience when on earth. To reject the doctrine of the state of the dead is to deny Him, for He is the doctrine made flesh.

"The very first and most important thing is to melt and subdue the soul by presenting our Lord Jesus Christ as the sin-pardoning Saviour. Never should a sermon be preached or Bible instruction in any line be given, without pointing the hearers to 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' Every true doctrine makes Christ the center, every precept receives force from His words."—"Testimonies," Vol. VI, p. 54.

B. R. SPEAR.

Colton, Calif.

THE PULSE OF THE FIELD

Fresh Food!—Every book in the 1928 Course has furnished me much material for my ministerial work, both in the pulpit and out among the people. As soon as I begin reading a book I make use of it in my ministry. This gives me fresh food for the people. Truly I am receiving real benefit from the Ministerial Reading Course.

B. L. HOWE.

Meets the Minister's Need!—All these books in the Reading Course are worth far more than the time it takes to read them. Every minister needs just this kind of reading to go along with his study of the Bible.

A. G. WEARNER.

Vital Message!—I consider that the books so carefully selected by our leaders contain a vital message of helpfulness in the great work of this message, and that I cannot afford to be without them. I have enjoyed these Reading Course books from year to year.

R. J. MCKEAGUE.

New Life and Thought!—Permit me to say that I believe there can hardly be too many good things said about this Reading Course. The books put new life and thought into me.

F. E. COURTNEY.

Tends to Efficiency!—This systematic reading of selected books is a wonderful help in becoming more efficient, and tends to enable one to keep on growing both in appreciation and in application of our message.

E. M. TRUMMER.

Reader for Fourteen Years!—I have read all the Ministerial Reading Course books for fourteen years, and am ready to enroll for the 1929 course as soon as it is announced.

A. G. HAUGHEY.

A Blessing!—I can truly say that all these books have been a great blessing to me. I am only sorry we did not have this Reading Course forty years ago. How much more we might have been enabled to do for the Master! But we will not stop to think of the past, but go on and get what we can and do our very best in the time that is left.

D. P. GAEDE.

Worth Rereading!—I would not be without any of the Reading Course books which I have yet received. They are all splendid and worth rereading. I believe that I shall study the little book, 'Abide in Christ,' as long as time lasts. I am receiving new life and inspiration in my study of Christ and His mission. I wish I had known the Ministerial Association and the Reading Course from the beginning of my work for the Master.

PETER SIGURDSSON.

Strength and Inspiration!—I have read each volume with care, and never, in all my reading, have I enjoyed a course more. I have gathered strength and inspiration, and feel that a wise choice was made by the committee.

W. L. KILLEN.

Wonderful Lessons!—These five books which I have been reading since the beginning of the year are surely wonderful. I am thankful for them. They have helped me in my own life, and also in the work which I am doing. I have learned from these books how to remain in Christ, and also how to win souls for Him. This is the first year that I have been connected with the Reading Course, but I would not like to be without it any more. Thank the Lord for this wonderful plan of studying in our denomination.

A. D. NAGY.