

Preach The Word (Sermon Outlines)

By

Curtis Camp

Published by

J.C. Choate Publications

Winona/Singapore/New Delhi/Cape Town

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J.C. Choate Publications

First Printing, 1996
This Printing, 2,000 Copies
Typesetting, Larry Headley
Proofreading, Barbara Oliver

Order From:
J.C. Choate Publications
Box 72
Winona, MS 38967
Phone 601-283-1192
Fax 601-283-1191

Introduction

A few years ago while visiting Curtis and Sylvia Camp in Amarillo, TX, and knowing of the many years that brother Camp had preached the word, I asked if he would prepare about a hundred of his sermon outlines for publication. He readily agreed and this book is the result of that effort.

With the outlines in hand, we decided to divide them into two volumes. **Preach the Word** is the first, and **These Things Speak** will follow. If you find these outlines to be "preachable", I am sure you will also want the second volume as well.

In considering the title for this book of outlines, brother Camp felt that it should be called **Preach the Word**, based on the well-known text of 2 Timothy 4:2. This is a very appropriate title since those who use these outlines will indeed be preaching the word.

Having been a gospel preacher for many years, the author is more than qualified to share these often-used outlines. They are true to the Book and are designed to promote depth of thought on the subjects discussed. At the same time, brother Camp would be the first to encourage young preachers to study them, to rearrange them, and to fit them to their individual ways of presenting the truths that are contained therein. His one admonition would be, "Just be certain that you, too, preach the word." The power of God is in that word, and when it alone is preached it will result in the salvation of souls. That is the ultimate purpose behind all the work involved in publishing these materials.

Thank you, brother Camp, for these outlines, and remember that as they are preached again and again, you, too, will continue to preach the word.

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DO WE WANT A PAINLESS CHRISTIANITY?

INTRODUCTION:

1. Our attitude toward pain.
 - a. Don't like it! Abhor it! When head, hand or foot begins to hurt we hasten to take a pill.
 - b. Dentist? Is he the "painless" kind?
2. Don't we also want a painless Christianity?
 - a. Is this the reason we don't like the book of James?
 - 1) "I just love the book of Philippians; John; Hebrews." But nobody says, "I just love the book of James." Why? It is also an inspired New Testament book.
 - b. It causes us pain—it hurts—makes us uncomfortable.
 - 1) 1:21, "Therefore lay apart all filthiness and..."
 - 2) 1:22, "But be ye doers of the word and not hearers..."
 - 3) 1:26, "...if any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue... this man's religion is vain."
 - 4) 2:9, "But if you have respect to persons, ye commit sin..."
 - 5) 3:14, "...if you have bitter envying and faction in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against..."
 - 6) 3:16, "For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."
 - 7) 4:4, "...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"
 - 8) 4:8, "Cleanse your hands ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."
 - 9) 4:9, "Be afflicted and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to..."
 - 10) 5:1, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you."
 - 11) 5:3, "Your gold and silver is cankered... they shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as if it were fire."

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12) 5:5, "You have lived in pleasure on the earth... you have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter."

3. See why we don't like the book of James too well? It hurts, stings, see ourselves and makes us hurt!

I. WE DEMAND PAINLESS PREACHING

A. Rather have Pabulum when we hear preaching.

B. Preacher must avoid using the word "sin." Weakness, faults, not perfect is O.K., but not the word SIN!

II. WE MAKE PAINLESS CONFESSIONS

A. Say only, "Said and done things unbecoming a Christian. Pray for me and help me." Well, all right, but what do we pray about? What do we help you with?

1. "Have a problem—finding it hard to overcome it, pray for me." Be glad to help if we can. What's the problem?

2. "Was overcome by my weakness. Pray for me." Well, what do we pray about? What do we help with?

B. We say everything except, "I have willfully been laying out of the assembly." "Have been stingy and covetous in my giving." "Been misbehaving in the assembly."

C. Just what are we confessing? We want to make it sound like anything but sin!

1. The church can apostatize by a namby-pamby attitude toward sin. Glossing over sin!

III. WE ALSO WANT PAINLESS LIVING

A. Is living the Christian life supposed to be easy? Snap?

1. It is a sacrifice, self-denial, running a race, fighting a fight (a warfare), extending ourselves, "instant in season and out of season."

2. "Have done my part. Worked hard, now have our home, family, children on their own—now able to enjoy life, etc." Why are you saying this?

a. "I'm just saying it is time others took over: teach the class, work in this program or some other." What are you

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saying? "Well, I've done my part in the past—let somebody else do it now." So, you want a furlough? "That's it." Don't you know there are no furloughs in the Lord's army? It is a fight to the death—"Be thou faithful." How long? "Til death!"

3. It is as if we put a sign over the door—"Do Not Disturb!" Always reminds me of an old settin' hen. Try disturbing her when she has been setting on those eggs for about two weeks. Way some of us are?

B. Another excuse: "We have good neighbors and friends, and we don't want to disturb our friendship; so, we never mention the gospel to them."

1. If we don't, what? Will they die and be lost eternally without the gospel? "Well, I reckon so, but we don't want to disturb our friendship."
2. Did early Christians ever once think about reaction before they spoke to friends about the gospel?
3. Others say, "Well, you know you can't talk to your own family." No, I don't know that!

CONCLUSION:

1. Aren't we all wanting our Christianity at a painless level?
 - a. Matthew 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let him..."
Not a cross, but a featherbed!
2. The Lord did not begin or end his life at a painless level!
3. There is no way a faithful child of God can live Christianity at a painless level. Jesus didn't, and we cannot!
 - a. Romans 8:17, "We are heirs of God (children of God) and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him."

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WHOM DO YOU SEE WHEN YOU LOOK AT JESUS?

Matthew 16:13-19

INTRODUCTION:

1. I hope we all sang this morning; all of us should have been praying; hopefully, we all remembered Jesus and His sacrifice for us as we ate the Lord's Supper. And, I hope you will carefully listen as the word of God is preached.
2. We don't go to church to see the preacher perform. Everyone is performing. God is to be the only spectator in this service.

I. LET'S LOOK AT JESUS, THE WORLD'S BEST-KNOWN PERSONALITY

A. He was not a politician—He never ran for a political office, or commanded an army or navy. He was neither an artist, nor a poet, nor a world traveler (except His journey to Egypt as a baby, He never went north and south more than 150 miles; east and west more than 50 or 75 miles).

B. He was a preacher and God's only Son.

1. Why don't we want our sons to be preachers? More preachers are needed and more boys need to preach.
2. Perhaps if we had more Hannahs at home, we would have more Samuels in the pulpit!
3. Jesus was the greatest preacher, and Matthew records the greatest sermon (Matthew 5, 6, 7).

C. Jesus is described as the Master Teacher.

1. He employed various methods in His preaching.
 - a. He spoke in parables. They were earthly stories with a heavenly meaning.
 - b. He used object lessons. He "took a little child," He took a coin and asked, "Whose superscription is this?"
 - c. He asked questions.
 - 1) There are 177 questions in Matthew; 120 in Mark; 165 in Luke; and 167 in John. There are more than 1,000 in the New Testament.

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II. JESUS WAS LIKE JOHN THE BAPTIST (Text)

A. Some thought He was John. May have looked alike. They were relatives.

1. But they did preach alike:

- a. Preached the necessity of repentance.
- b. Taught the importance of the kingdom.
- c. Preached baptism for the remission of sins.

2. Neither of them could stand hypocrisy.

3. Both of them were men of self-denial.

- a. John's clothing and diet; Jesus' poverty.

4. Both were killed.

B. Can you believe that Jesus was a weakling, namby-pamby, stand-for-nothing, fall-for-everything kind of person?

III. JESUS WAS LIKE JEREMIAH (Matthew 16:14)

A. Some said He was Elijah.

1. Malachi said one similar to Elijah would come. Luke says one in the spirit and power of Elijah came—John the Baptist.

B. What kind of man was Elijah?

1. He stood for right when all Israel went into digression and apostasy. Remember the contest with the 450 prophets of Baal.

C. People saw Jesus walking and said, "There goes Elijah."

1. Therefore Jesus, as had Elijah, loved truth and loved the sinner but hated sin! They both were bold, courageous and aggressive.

IV. JESUS WAS LIKE ELIJAH (Text)

A. He, like Elijah, stood against an avalanche of evil.

1. Looked over Jerusalem, a destroyed city, and wrote Lamentations, and became known as "The Weeping Prophet." He wept because of the sufferings of others. He had compassion, understanding, and love. These are all marks of strength, not weakness.

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B. Jesus was a friend of sinners, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

1. "Weep with them that weep"
2. Matthew 23, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ..."
3. Lazarus died—"Jesus wept."
4. He loves us and wants to save us, Romans 11:22,
"Behold, the goodness and severity of God..."

CONCLUSION:

1. All shall, one day, be judged by Him.
 - a. Now He extends grace, mercy and compassion to you.
 - b. In the judgment, will it be for you and me "compassion" or "condemnation?" All of us must meet one side of Jesus. Which will it be?
2. What you do with Him now may determine what He will do with you at the judgment!
 - a. It is an issue between you and Jesus—"Come unto me ..."
"Behold, I stand at the door and knock..."

SERMON OUTLINES

WHAT IF I AM LOST?

INTRODUCTION:

1. The word "lost" engenders fear, and it is meant to!
 - a. A child lost in the mountains or forest.
 - b. A person lost his mind.
 - c. A person lost his health.
 - d. A man lost his wealth.
2. All the above are tragedies, but it is far worse to be lost in sin and in eternal hell, Matthew 7:13, 14.
 - a. The majority is lost and God is no respecter of persons, Acts 10:34.
 - b. This means then that I could be lost, and you could be lost.
3. How ungrateful we have been. All other parts of God's creation fulfill the purpose of its being.
 - a. God has devoted His wisdom in preparing man's salvation. He has taught the lost how to be saved, and the saved how to be faithful. He has removed all responsibility from Himself.
4. We should not allow anything or anyone to keep us from salvation.
 - a. It is not enough just to know God's Word—it must be obeyed, Matthew 7:21; Luke 6:46; Revelation 22:14.
 - b. Of some we say, "I am afraid he will be lost; that he will not go to heaven." If he lives without Christ, he is lost while he lives. If he dies without Christ, he is lost forever.

I. IF I AM LOST, I WILL NOT BE LOST ALONE

- A. Cannot be lost by oneself. My life will touch somebody's, Romans 14:7.
 1. The rich man in Luke 16:27, 28 wanted somebody to go back to earth who would be a good influence on his brothers. He was afraid they might follow his example.
- B. Who are those whom we might influence to be lost?

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1. Not those in a far country, but the closest and dearest friends we have.
 - a. Father and son; mother and daughter; etc.
2. When a large tree in a dense forest is cut down, it takes many smaller trees with it.
3. King Saul and his brave sons fell together in the same battle, 1 Samuel 31:6.

II. IF I AM LOST, I AM LOST FOREVER

A.Revelation 22:11, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still..."

B.Revelation 14:11, "...and the smoke of their torment ascendeth forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night..."

C.How long will hell be?

1. Just as long as heaven will be—eternity. The lost are lost as long as the saved are saved.
2. How can we hope for mercy and forgiveness there, when we have refused to be obedient and merciful here?
Luke 16:25; Acts 1:25; Luke 16:26.

III. IF I AM LOST, I WILL SUSTAIN A DOUBLE LOSS

A.I will lose the joy of salvation, Psalms 51:12; Acts 8:39.

1. The Christian life is the best and happiest and the only life with eternal promise.

B.If we are weary and seek rest, heaven is that place, Revelation 21:6.

1. Here we live in a world of sin, sickness and sorrow, and then risk spending eternity away from health, peace and rest. Who can think of it?

IV. IF I AM LOST, IT MEANS ETERNAL SORROW

A.An eternity of darkness—nothing but night.

1. No love, no music, no child companions, no beauty and no purity. Nothing but weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth, Matthew 25:30.

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V. IF I AM LOST, WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE?

A. Is God to blame? Romans 5:8; 2 Peter 3:9.

1. We can't charge God with negligence.

B. Is Jesus at fault? Hebrews 2:9; Matthew 11:28-30.

C. Can we blame the Holy Spirit? John 16:13. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth. The very words of God were written down, 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

1. The apostles spoke as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance, Acts 2. People heard. Pricked in their hearts—all by the Word which was preached.

D. Will the gospel be at fault? Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

E. If I am lost, I must shoulder the blame and responsibility.

1. God is not responsible for allowing false teachers and preachers to deceive me, 1 John 4:1.

CONCLUSION:

1. How can I remain honest with myself, my loved ones and with God, and remain unsaved?
2. What are you going to do about it today?

SO NEAR, AND YET SO FAR

INTRODUCTION:

1. Persons concerned
2. What were they near?
3. How far?
4. Hindering cause
5. Result

I. MOSES

A. Numbers 20:7-12

1. "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?"
 2. "And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also."
 3. "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."
- B. Was near Caanan—could see it (Deuteronomy 34:1, 4)—did wrong—and did not enter.

II. RICH RULER

A. Luke 18:18-24

- B. Was near eternal life (v. 18)—lacked only one thing (v. 22)—covetousness (v. 23)—personal sorrow.

III. FOOLISH VIRGINS

A. Matthew 25:1-13

- B. Were near the marriage celebration—even at the door—but were not prepared (v. 8)—and were shut out.

IV. FELIX

A. Acts 24:10-25

- B. Had faith in Christ (v. 22)—trembled (v. 25)—hardened his heart (Hebrews 3:13)—and was lost.

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V. AGRIPPA

A. Acts 26

B. Near becoming a Christian (vv. 27, 28)—he was almost there (v. 28)—cause unknown—but he was lost.

VI. MANY OTHERS

A. Matthew 7:21, 22

B. Near heavenly glory (v. 21)—at the judgment (v. 22)—did not do God's will (vv. 21, 23)—depart (v. 23; 25:41).

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THREEFOLD NATURE OF THE GOSPEL

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

- I. DEALS WITH THREE DIVINE PERSONS
 - A. God, John 3:16; 1 Peter 4:17
 - B. Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:2; Romans 5:6
 - C. Holy Spirit, revealed and confirmed word of the gospel.
 - 1. John 14:26
 - 2. 2 Peter 1:21
 - 3. Hebrews 2:1-4
- II. DEALS WITH THREE GREAT DISPENSATIONS
 - A. Gospel preached in promise, Genesis 3:15.
 - 1. Genesis 12:1-3
 - B. Gospel preached in prophecy.
 - 1. Song of Solomon 2:1
 - C. Gospel preached in reality.
 - 1. Acts 2
- III. DEALS WITH THREE GREAT FACTS
 - A. Death of Christ, 1 Corinthians 15:3
 - B. His burial, Matthew 27:59, 60; John 19:39-42
 - C. His resurrection, John 20:1; Matthew 28:1
- IV. DEALS WITH THREE GREAT COMMANDS
 - A. To believe
 - 1. 1 John 3:23
 - 2. Hebrews 11:6
 - 3. John 8:24
 - B. Repentance is a command
 - 1. Luke 13:3
 - 2. Acts 17:30
 - C. Baptism is a command
 - 1. Matthew 28:18
 - 2. Mark 16:15, 16
- V. DEALS WITH THREE GREAT PROMISES
 - A. Remission of sins, Acts 2:38
 - B. Added to the church, Acts 2:47
 - C. Eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Peter 1:9

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HAPPINESS IS ...

I. THERE ARE VARIOUS TYPES OF HAPPINESS

A. The happiness of health

1. Able to feel good and function properly
 - a. Our bodies are wonderfully made. Need care, however
 - b. Body is actually sacred, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20

B. The happiness of family

1. Loving father and mother, grateful and obedient children—a little foretaste of heaven divine

C. The happiness of friends

1. Have things in common—enjoy being with—can confide in—rely on—one can trust.
 - a. Proverbs 18:24

D. Happiness of achievement, etc.

1. But only permanent happiness is spiritual—only lasting happiness

II. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING GOD IS OUR FATHER

A. "Fatherhood of God." True, God is creator of all, but in a spiritual sense He is not the Father of all.

1. He wants to be—gave His Son that He might be
2. Said to some, "You are of your father, the devil," (John 8:44). "If God were your Father, ye would love Me," (John 8:42).
3. John 1:12

B. Happy to be sons of God

1. Psalms 77:13
2. It is happiness to know He loves us as His children; that we can always call on Him; to know He is always ready to pour out His blessings upon us; to know He cares for us more tenderly than any earthly father cares for his child.

III. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING THAT CHRIST IS OUR SAVIOUR

A. When we believed on Him, repented of sins, confessed His

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sweet name before men and were baptized into Him, He saved us and became "my" Saviour.

1. If can't say this, then missing life's greatest joy

B. He swapped places with me.

1. "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound..."

IV. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING THAT OUR SINS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN

A. All past sins washed away in blood of Christ

1. Acts 2:38; 22:16; John 19:34; Romans 6:3-6

B. But, also sins we commit as Christians

1. 1 John 1:7

2. More than making an oral confession.

a. 1 John 1:9

b. Means forsaking that sin and turning from it

C. Rejoicing after baptism—Acts 8, 16

D. Rejoicing as forgiven Christians, Psalms 32:1

E. What is your sin? Commission? Done wrong? Omission?

Not doing what you should? Sin of disposition? Have wrong feeling toward someone else? Then, can't be happy.

V. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING WE HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

A. God is our Father and we can address Him as such.

1. "Take it to the Lord in prayer"

B. Suppose you couldn't come to Him in prayer?

1. No way to ask for forgiveness. To ask for help, comfort, etc.

VI. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING WE HAVE THE BIBLE AS OUR GUIDE

A. Our guide from earth to heaven. Don't know a thing about it except for the Bible.

1. Psalms 119:105

2. Without it would be continually walking in darkness

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VII. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING THE JOY OF SERVICE

A. One who becomes a Christian and stops right there is not happy, and never will be until he changes.

1. Do what you can and do your best. You will grow and you will be happy. But start now. Will one day be older and infirm and cannot. Do it now.

VIII. HAPPINESS IS KNOWING WE HAVE A HOME AWAITING US AT THE END OF THE WAY

A. Some here a year ago are gone now. Some here now may not be a year from now. Doesn't matter. God has planned far better things for us over there than we can ever enjoy here.

B. John 14:1-3

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SOME THINGS A SINNER LEARNED TOO LATE

Luke 16:19-31

I. TORMENT BEGINS AT DEATH

A. No such thing as unconsciousness after death.

1. Man is in God's image (Genesis 1:26); therefore, spirit. Man is immortal—eternal—personality—never dies.
2. Read of mortal and immortal bodies (Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:53), but not of mortal and immortal soul.
3. He was conscious, recognized, remembered. He was in "torments." "I am tormented in this flame." It was "a place of torment."
4. Death is not a "dreamless sleep."

II. TORMENT IS A REALITY

A. Would have a hard time trying to convince the rich man that the torment was not real. He was enduring the flame and was suffering.

B. Why argue about what hell is? Why try to take the fires out of hell? New Testament still talks about this place.

1. Matthew 25:41
2. Matthew 25:30
3. Revelation 14:11
4. Mark 9:43-48

5. I don't intend to go there anyway. Don't want to go.

C. The torment he endured then, he still endures tonight.

III. IT WAS TOO LATE TO PRAY

A. Prayer is so often abused—a waste of time, actually.

B. "Father Abraham, have mercy on me." "Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." "I pray thee therefore, Father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house..."

1. Not a single desire was granted.
2. Hosea 13:14

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3. Isaiah 55:6, 7

C. Every request would have been granted in life.

IV. TOO LATE TO BE MISSION-MINDED

A. "For I have five brothers..." Luke 16:27, 28.

B. He knew what they needed, Luke 16:30.

C. We know the same but do not believe we'll be lost if we do not do them.

V. THERE IS NO SECOND CHANCE

A. "...there is a great gulf fixed; so that they..."

VI. WARNINGS COME FROM GOD'S WORD

A. "If they will not hear Moses and the prophets... they have
Moses and the prophets... they would not hear though one..."

B. Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10, 12;
John 12:48

VII. EVEN A CHILD OF GOD CAN BE LOST

A. This man a Jew—"Father Abraham"—"Son, remember..."

B. Revelation 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Matthew 10:22;
Galatians 6:1; James 5:19, 20; 1 John 1:9; Acts 8:13-24

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THE BORDERLAND

Mark 12:28-30

INTRODUCTION:

1. He was almost fit to be a disciple of Jesus.
2. Near the kingdom, in the fringe area, he was in the borderland.

I. FACT OF THE BORDERLAND

- A. Degrees of moral and spiritual distance from kingdom
 1. "Not far" implies degrees. Sin removes one from God and the more one sins, the farther he is removed from God. This man was closer to God than others.
 2. Matthew 15:8
 3. Songs: "I've Wandered Far Away From God," "Jesus Is Tenderly Calling"
- B. Those in borderland are better than those far away.
 1. Prefer moral non-Christian to drunkard for neighbor—though neither are in the kingdom.
- C. Others not far from the kingdom
 1. Mark 10:21, rich young ruler
 2. John 19:38, 39 Joseph and Nicodemus
 3. Acts 26:28, "Almost thou persuadest me..."

II. MEANING OF THE BORDERLAND

- A. This man different from Pharisees, Sadducees, publicans
- B. Had certain very good characteristics
 1. Knowledge of God's word
 - a. Scribe—copyist—knew what law said. Knowledge is the first step in coming into the kingdom.
 2. Courage to confess the truth. Some recognized it, but would not confess it, John 12:42.
- C. Many in borderland today
 1. Good habits, disposition. Not matter of "giving up" bad things, but "giving in" to Lord's will for them.
 2. Have good knowledge of scriptures.

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3. Have noble resolutions—"I intend to obey..."

III. TRAGEDY OF THE BORDERLAND

A. Difficult to convince borderland resident

1. Satisfied with nearness—"I'm better than some..."
 - a. Must realize if not **in** then **out**; if not **forgiven** then **guilty**; if not **saved** then **lost**.
2. Tragedy seen clearly in death. Only those who die in the Lord go to heaven—those "near" not in Lord.
3. Tragedy will be seen in judgment. Be only two classes: right and left, sheep and goats, "come" and "depart," heaven and hell. "A miss is as good as a mile"—Yes, to miss heaven a fraction is to miss it altogether.

CONCLUSION:

1. Tragedy of nearly making it
 - a. Illu: First 707 to crash was at LaGuardia—150 yards from end of runway as it came in for a landing. Had just crossed the Atlantic and had flown over much of Europe. Nearly made it home. So near and yet so far.
2. It is "only a step" to the borderland of the Kingdom. But it is a step of obedience through faith, and this step must be taken by you! No one else can take it for you.
3. Saddest words, "Almost—but lost!"

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LEARNING TO PRAY FROM JESUS

Matthew 6:5-15

INTRODUCTION:

1. The greatest thoughts on prayer the world has ever heard
2. He first discusses the abuse of prayer, then He gives an example of prayer.

I. ABUSES TO AVOID (6:5-8)

A. Prayer can easily be misused

1. Can be a way of displaying our righteousness before others
 - a. Pharisees were given to abusing prayer in this way. Jesus called them hypocrites. Offered their prayers in a public place—to be seen of men. It is not to be used to make anybody admire our goodness.
- 1) “Go into your closets and pray.” Go into some private place where nobody will hear you except the Lord. To be no effort on our part to try to impress anybody else with anything about ourselves. We just talk to God personally, privately, to convey our thoughts to Him.

B. Prayer can also be made mechanical

1. We lay out some words to say and we say them over and over without appreciating their meaning. We say the words, but do not comprehend them.
 - a. Many say this model prayer this way, without stopping to think about what we are saying. Thus, without its having any real significance upon our lives.
2. Let it not be a thoughtless routine we go through.

II. AN EXAMPLE TO EMULATE (6:9-15)

A. Is it significant that the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, Luke 11:1?

1. The only thing the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to do! Confessed they didn't know how to pray.
2. Illu: An old restoration preacher, John Rogers, was called a

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"man of prayer." L.B. Wilkes and Jacob Creath (restoration preachers) made a preaching appointment together—got up early, walked down into the woods and knelt to pray. Afterward Wilkes said, "I never in all my life felt so close to God as when I heard Brother Creath pray that early morning out in the woods." The old-timers were great men of prayer.

B. This prayer can be divided into 6 or 7 parts. It is fully comprehensive. Hopefully we will continue to read it and continue to learn from it.

1. It is not designed to be repeated word for word, but it is a pattern for all prayers. It shows us that for which we are to pray.

C. The prayer

1. First, it is addressed to God as our Father; second, to God as our King; and third, to God as our Master.
 - a. Begins with a hallowing of the name of God
 - b. Next, speaks of the coming of the kingdom
 - c. Then, the will of God to be done on earth
2. "Our Father, who art in heaven"
 - a. Reminded that we belong to the great family of God
 - 1) Some insist that all sexist symbols be removed from the Bible. "Don't think of Jesus as the **Son** of God—that's masculine—so speak of Him as the **Person** of God." Don't call God our heavenly Father—that is masculine and women's lib doesn't like it. If we did this, no tenderness left in prayer; all suggestions of strength would be lost.
3. Then, Jesus said, "Hallowed be thy name." Did not begin with His wants, but He begins with God. God's claims must be considered first of all.
 - a. The word "name" in the Bible is used as a synonym for all that one may be. Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches..." All that you are clusters

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around your name. God's name represents the nature, the character of God. Thus Jesus is giving His disciples the attitude that they are to have toward God, their heavenly Father. "Hallowed" here simply means "holy." Therefore, let God be regarded as holy when we approach Him.

4. "Thy kingdom come"

- a. Refers to the church, Colossians 1:13. To be in subjection to the will of God—to Christ our King
- b. At this time the kingdom had not come. Now it has, and we can pray that it may be extended. We do this when we pray for our brethren all over the world.

5. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

- a. The Lord's will is that the will of God should be put into practice everywhere. That starts with each one of us. The will of God is done in heaven. Jude says an angel rejected God and was cast out of heaven, Jude 6. God will never allow disobedient people in heaven. Heaven is made up of those who obey God.
- b. Yet, we can never do the will of God unless we know what the will of God is. Not governed by a subjective experience. The way I "feel" may not be the way God feels. How do we know how He feels? By what He says in His word.

6. "Give us this day our daily bread"

- a. God meets our physical needs, but we are dependent upon Him for them. Talk to Him about them. Nothing wrong with asking Him for physical blessings. Matthew 24:20, "But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day..." Nothing wrong in our praying for personal blessings. But all things are to be asked in submission to God's will.
- b. "our daily bread". Did not say, "Give me my daily bread"—would have been a selfish prayer.

7. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"

- a. "Give" is followed by "forgive." Is saying, "Father, give us this, as we forgive other people."

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- b. If God had the same attitude toward us as we have toward our fellowman, we might be in serious trouble. If we come before the Father expecting grace, mercy, and kindness, we must show grace and kindness toward others. The very attitude I want God to have toward me is the very attitude I need to cultivate toward other people.

CONCLUSION:

1. Don't you agree that this prayer contains the basic contents of all prayers? Look at the spirit in which it was uttered—humility, honoring God, willingness to do the will of God—thus the kind of spirit which should be in any disciple of Christ.

SERMON OUTLINES

THE MAN WHO CAME BY NIGHT

John 3:1-10

INTRODUCTION:

1. The man
 - a. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, a teacher of the law (master in Israel)
 - 1) Therefore, a man of position
2. "came to Jesus by night"
 - a. The wonder is not that he came by night, but that he came at all
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 1:26—"For ye see your calling, ..."
 - b. Why did he come to Jesus by night?
 - 1) No testimony—no faith
3. Recognized the purpose of miracles
 - a. John 3:2, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher..."
 - b. John 20:30, 31, "And many other signs truly did..."
 - c. His credentials from heaven to prove that He was the Son of God

I. THE NEW BIRTH

A. Of water and the Spirit

1. The Spirit
 - a) 1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18; 1 Corinthians 4:15; John 6:63
2. The water
 - a) John 16:25; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Psalms 78:2; Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17
 - b) baptized into Christ; in Christ we are new creatures; but if new creatures, then born again babes in Christ."

B. The part of man that is born again

1. v. 6—the spirit, the inner man, not flesh

C. The person that is born anew is invisible

1. v. 8—changes from the new birth to the one who is born again—just as the wind is invisible, so the part of man that is born again is also invisible

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II. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

A. Born—life exists—what kind?

1. Galatians 5:25, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"
2. The fruits of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22, 23

B. 1 Peter 1:18, 19, 22, 23

1. "...redeemed... seeing ye have purified your souls...
unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another
with a pure heart fervently...being born again..."

CONCLUSION:

1. The necessity of the new birth

SERMON OUTLINES

WHERE ARE WE?

INTRODUCTION:

1. Three dispensations of religion in the Bible
 - a. Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian
2. In which age are we living and under what law?
 - a. Law determined by the period of Bible history

I. PATRIARCHAL

A. "Age of the Fathers"

1. Age of family worship. Father was the one through whom God spoke to the rest of the family

B. Not in this dispensation, nor under its commands

1. Illu: "Build an ark"
2. Illu: "Offer your son as a sacrifice..."

II. JEWISH

A. Old Testament law or "Law of Moses" governed in that age

1. Are we in it and under its law?

B. Law not given to Gentiles—only to Jews

1. Deuteronomy 5:1-3, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in you which I speak in your ears..."
2. Psalms 147:19, "He showeth His word unto Jacob..."
3. Romans 3:1, 2, "What advantage then hath the Jew?"
4. Romans 2:14, "For when the Gentiles ... law..."
5. Ephesians 2:11, 12, "Therefore remember you were in times past Gentiles in the flesh, without Christ, being alienated from the covenants of promise..."
6. Acts 25:8, "...neither against the law of the Jews... have I offended any thing at all..."
7. Galatians 1:13, "For you have heard of my conduct in the Jew's religion..."
 - a. So we, Gentiles, were never under that law

C. Are Jews under that law today?

SERMON OUTLINES

1. Galatians 4:4, 5, "...God sent forth His Son..."
2. Romans 6:14, "For you are not under the law..."
3. Romans 7:4, "...you are become dead to the law..."
4. Ephesians 2:14, "For He is our peace..."
5. Galatians 3:19-28
6. Hebrews 7:12, "For the priesthood being changed..."
7. Hebrews 9:11, Christ became our high priest—not of Levi, but Judah
8. Law of Moses taken away, but "law of God" not?
 - a. Romans 7:7, "...I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law..."

III. CHRISTIAN

- A. Hebrews 1:1, 2, "...hath... spoken unto us by His son..."
 1. Matthew 17:5, "This is my beloved son... hear ye Him."
 2. Hebrews 9:15, "He is the mediator of the New Testament"
 3. Hebrews 9:16, 17, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force..."
- B. Difference? New Testament any better than Old Testament? Superior?
 1. Both sealed and dedicated with blood
 - a. Old—Hebrews 9:18-20
 - b. New—Matthew 26:28
 2. Both God-given, etc.
 3. Then, what's the difference?
 - a. Hebrews 10:4, "...not possible... blood of bulls and goats..."
 - b. 1 John 1:7, "If we walk in the light..."
 4. Difference?
 - a. Being saved and not being saved today
 - b. Dying in faith and not dying in faith
 - c. Living in heaven or perishing in hell

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Acts 16:30

INTRODUCTION:

1. Did you contact someone today and ask, "Are you saved?"
 - a. A question out of the past.
 - b. Word "salvation" has a strange ring to modern ears.
 - 1) Easy to speak of persons being adjusted, educated, productive, creative, wealthy, and a lot of other things, but never think about whether he is saved!
2. Who is responsible for words "save," "saved," and "salvation"? Why the Lord Himself, Luke 19:10.
3. The central message of the Bible is the message of salvation. So if salvation is not important, then the Bible is not important.
4. The purpose for which Christ came into the world was to save the lost, Matthew 1:21. So if salvation has no meaning, then the purpose of Christ's coming is meaningless.
5. So many really big questions today:
 - a. Can our nation survive economically?
 - b. Will communism soon dominate the whole world?
 - c. Next war be fought on our shores?
 - d. What about the future of cancer?Suppose we sink economically; lose war to communists; and suppose you die of cancer? Take most pessimistic view we possibly can. If all these things should happen to you and you die as a child of God, who is the loser?

Or, suppose we survive economically, resist the communistic nations and a complete cure for cancer is found, and you die without Christ, who has gained?

Therefore, the most important question in all the world is, "What must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:30.

I. THE QUESTION (An Analysis)

A. What must I do?

1. Not may, can, might, but must!

SERMON OUTLINES

B. What must I do?

1. Didn't ask about Abraham, or thief on the cross, or some departed relative, but "What must I do?"

C. What must I do?

1. "Nothing. If did something, would be trying to earn salvation—just trust the Lord, for you can't do anything to be saved."
2. Consider Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone that saith..."

D. What must I do to be saved?

1. Realized he was separated from God, Isaiah 59:1, 2

II. MUST KNOW YOU ARE A SINNER

A. Luke 5:8, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man."

1. The greatest of all faults is to be aware of none.

B. Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned..."

C. 1 John 1:8, 10, "If we say we have no sin..."

"If we say we have not sinned..."

D. We use wrong approach sometimes.

1. "Come on into the church—we need you. You could do so much good as one of our members."
2. Rather, "Sir, you are lost. We love you and we want to encourage you to come to Christ. You must believe and obey His gospel or you cannot be saved."

III. TAKES HUMILITY TO BE SAVED

A. Must realize we do not know the way

1. James 4:6, "God resisteth the proud, but gives grace..."
2. Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit..."
3. Those who think they can give direction and guidance to their own lives cannot be saved.
 - a. Isaiah 66:2, "But to this man I look..."

IV. WILL HAVE TO MAKE SACRIFICES TO BE SAVED

A. Matthew 19, Rich young ruler

B. Young people: May even have to give up a sweetheart

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C. May have to go against wishes of a companion

1. If love relatives more than Lord, cannot be saved,
Matthew 10:37

V. MUST RECEIVE CHRIST TO BE SAVED

A. "Where do you get language like that?" From the Bible, of course

1. Colossians 2:6, "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."
2. John 1:11, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not..."

B. How do we receive Him? If one does, he will be saved

1. John 8:24
2. John 3:18
3. Acts 16:31
4. Acts 2:37
5. Acts 9:6—3 different answers to same question

C. Jailer—same hour of night—baptized—rejoiced—saved, Mark 16:16

CONCLUSION:

1. You must make a choice, Joshua 24:15. You will make a choice now.
 - a. "I am not going to make up my mind now." But you have decided! You decided to be indecisive. Your refusal to make a decision is a decision.
2. So, if you don't decide to obey Christ now, you will still make a decision. You will decide to go on without Christ and remain lost.
 - a. The purpose of this meeting is to look into the word of God and see ourselves in our true condition.
 - b. And the purpose of this service is to exhort you to not remain in a lost condition another day.

"Just as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

SERMON OUTLINES

WILLING TO DIE, AFRAID TO LIVE

Matthew 26:31-35

INTRODUCTION:

1. Jesus and His disciples at the passover for the last time—then Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, "and when they had sung a hymn they went out..."
 2. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you shall be offended because of me this night."
 - a. Peter, "All the others may, but not I." "This night before the cock crows you will deny me three times."
 3. Later, Peter did draw his sword—cut a man's ear off. Probably said, "See, Lord, I didn't deny you. I'll die for you, Lord, you know that."
 - a. Jesus rebuked him, "Put up your sword." I wonder if the Lord was saying, "Peter, you are willing to die for me, but you are afraid to live for me."
 4. How much like Peter we are today. Are we willing to live for Him?
- I. "I'LL DIE FOR YOU, BUT DON'T ASK ME TO GIVE YOU MY TIME AND MY TALENTS"
- A. There are many avenues of service—lead, teach, sing, preach, etc. Such are essential to the ongoing of the church.
 1. "But, I can do none of these."
 - a. Cliff Dunn, Shamrock Shores church in Dallas. Never heard him lead a prayer, singing, teach a class. Never served at the Lord's table. He was a pharmacist and many Saturdays he was cutting weeds and grass at the church house, replacing a broken window, etc. After his working hours, he would deliver medicine to older people all over east Dallas. Never heard him utter a critical word about anybody in or out of the church. Was he working in the church? Was he serving in the name of Jesus?
 2. "I don't have time." I have as much time as anybody and you have as much as I do—24 hours in each day.

SERMON OUTLINES

3. Jesus never accepted excuses, Luke 9:5; 7:62.

- a. Jesus said, "Follow me." "But first, I must go and bury my father"—"Let me go first and say goodbye to those in my house." Have we said, "We will follow Him, but first...?"

II. "I'LL DIE FOR YOU, BUT DON'T ASK ME TO GIVE MY MONEY"

A. If our religion is evaluated by our giving, are there many of us who are irreligious? Let us look at our homes, luxuries, our spending habits.

1. Illu: Man gave his little daughter a nickel for her class contribution. "Gee," she said, "religion sure isn't worth much—to church is the only place where I can go with this."

III. "I'LL DIE FOR YOU, BUT DON'T ASK ME TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE ALL THE TIME"

A. Romans 12:1, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies..."

B. 2 Corinthians 7:1, "... let us cleanse ourselves..."

C. Hebrews 12:14, "Follow... holiness..."

D. 1 Peter 1:15, "...be ye holy in all manner of..."

E. Really, what does it mean to live the Christian life?

1. Practice pure religion, James 1:27.

2. Have Christ-like virtues, 2 Peter 1:5-7.

F. It is necessary of course, to give our time, talent, and money, but it is first essential that we give ourselves.

G. It is certainly good to be noted for our zeal, and for a "thus saith the Lord" in matters of doctrine, but we should also be noted for our earnestness in upholding the high moral standard of God's word.

CONCLUSION:

1. Can't you see our Lord's sad and disappointed eyes as He looks at Peter, thinking, "Willing to die, but afraid to live!"
2. Is He looking at you and me and saying the same thing?
3. Are we willing to gain the martyr's glorious name, but unwilling to serve Him in a humble way?

SERMON OUTLINES

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF CHRIST

Isaiah 9:6, 7

INTRODUCTION:

1. Let us emphasize one word in our text—**wonderful!**
2. We could talk for hours of the wonders of Jesus, and then have to exclaim, "The half has never yet been told."

I. THE WONDER OF HIS BIRTH

A. To be born of a virgin, Isaiah 7:14

1. Gabriel made the announcement, Luke 1:26, 27
2. Explanation made to Joseph, Matthew 1:20

B. So, in a stable in Bethlehem, the King of kings and the Lord of lords was born.

1. The angel announced the birth to shepherds, and a whole heavenly host came and sang, "Glory to...", Luke 2:8-14.
Then the wise men came from the east.

C. Do you believe in the virgin birth of Jesus?

1. The angel Gabriel did
2. Mary and Joseph believed it
3. The men who wrote the New Testament believed it

D. There has never been one like it. He was **wonderful** in His birth!

II. THE WONDER OF HIS LIFE

A. Never committed a single sin, 1 Peter 2:22, "Who did no sin..."

1. "...but was in all points tempted as we are...", Hebrews 4:15.
Never said an evil word, never did a thing that was wrong.
Pilate, "I find no fault..."

B. Performed many marvelous miracles

1. Touched blind and they could see; touched the lame and they were able to walk; cleansed the leper, stilled the storms, brought the dead back to life.

C. He went about doing good.

SERMON OUTLINES

1. He was goodness in action everywhere He went
- D. He spoke as man had never spoken
 1. Told men about a loving heavenly Father
 2. Told about the way of salvation
 3. Told about a glorious heaven for God's children
 4. God down where men lived and touched them at the point of their greatest need

III. THE WONDER OF HIS DEATH

- A. Died as no other man had ever died
 1. Others have died sacrificial deaths, others have died for some great cause, but Jesus died to save men!
 2. He did not have to die. He had power to lay down His life and power to take it up again, John 10:18
 - a. Hung on the cross 6 long hours, alive! Even the sun hid its face. Finally, at 3:00 P.M., after hours of anguish and intense suffering, He cried out, "It is finished!"
- B. What did He accomplish in that death?
 1. Zechariah 13:1, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened... for sin and uncleanness"
 2. Matthew 26:28, "For this is my blood...shed for many..."

IV. THE WONDER OF HIS RESURRECTION

- A. Killed Him and buried Him, but no tomb could hold Him!
 1. On the third day, He walked out of that tomb, forever alive!
 2. The resurrection proved that He was the Son of God; that He was everything He said He was; the resurrection set a seal upon His divinity!
- B. Go to the tombs of Mohammed, Confucius, and Buddha. Will read the words, "Here...lies." Go to the tomb of Jesus, "He is not here, He is risen!"

V. THE WONDER OF HIS ASCENSION

- A. Acts 1:9-11

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1. No launching pad, no booster rocket, not one piece of electronic equipment. Just the ordinary cloud, but up He goes, back to the Father and back to the glory He had before the world began!
2. What a homecoming in heaven there must have been!

VI. THE WONDER OF HIS PRESENT WORK

A. What is He doing now?

1. Making intercession for us. Hebrews 7:25, "...He is able to save them...come unto God by Him..."
2. He is our mediator. 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Hebrews 8:6, "...He is the mediator of a better covenant..." Hebrews 9:15, "...He is the mediator of the New Testament..." Hebrews 12:24, "And to Jesus the mediator..."

VII. THE WONDER OF HIS COMING AGAIN

- A. Acts 1:10, 11; John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."
1. Coming to receive His own
 2. Will come also to judge the world in righteousness, John 12:48

GIVING TOO MUCH PROMINENCE TO THE DEATH OF CHRIST?

INTRODUCTION:

1. A man died—executed on a cross—and he was buried.
 - a. Some say that's the gospel—"good news." But the death and burial of anyone is not good news to me. But that He died for me is good news.
 - b. But all who come into this world by the door of birth must leave it by the door of death. Nothing strange, therefore, about the fact that a man died.
 - c. But, Christ came into the world to die. You and I were not born to die—we were born to live. But death was the very purpose for Christ's coming.

I. HAVE WE GIVEN TOO MUCH PROMINENCE TO HIS DEATH?

- A. "I don't like to hear sermons about suffering and death." "I like to think about living, not dying."
- B. The cross came first with the apostles.
 1. Peter: Sermon on Pentecost, "Jesus of Nazareth, approved of God by signs, wonders and miracles," Acts 2:22. You took Him by your wicked hands and crucified Him, v. 23, but death couldn't hold Him for God raised Him up, vv. 24, 31, 32, making Him both Lord and Christ, v. 36. "God exalted Him to His right hand," v. 33. Later Peter wrote, "You are not redeemed by corruptible things as silver and gold... but with the precious blood of Christ," 1 Peter 1:18, 19.
 2. John: 1 John 1:7, "But if we walk in the light... the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ cleanseth us from..." 1 John 2:2, "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 4:10, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins..."
 - a. All through Revelation, the predominate figure is that of the Lamb who was slain for the sins of the world.

SERMON OUTLINES

3. When you open the writings of Paul, it is of the cross he is speaking.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 2:2, "...not to know anything save Jesus Christ..."
 - b. Galatians 6:14, "God forbid that I should glory save..."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 15:3, "...unto you first..."
 - d. Romans 5:18, "But God commendeth..."
- C. The cross comes first in the books of the gospel.
 1. Not like other biographies—they devote very little space to the death of their heroes. Only two tell of His birth; only three of His temptation; only two of His ascension; only two of His Sermons on the Mount.
 2. The transfiguration, temptation, Lord's Supper and the agony of the garden have no place in John's record.
 3. In all the books, sketches of the resurrection are brief.
 4. But each one—all four—relate in full the betrayal, denial, torture, and death of Jesus:
 - a. one-fifth of Matthew, given to death of Christ
 - b. two-fifths of Mark, given to death of Christ
 - c. one-fourth of Luke, given to death of Christ
 - d. one-half of John, given to death of Christ
 5. There must have been a reason for giving such profound significance to the death of Christ!
- D. The cross comes first with Jesus
 1. John, "Behold, the Lamb of God..."
 2. Jesus, "Destroy... in three days I will raise..."
 3. "As Moses lifted up the serpent..." John 3:14
 4. Over and over it is said, "Jesus must...suffer"
 5. On mount of Transfiguration, He spoke of His death, Mark 9:12
 6. He explained the purpose of His death in instituting the Lord's Supper
 - a. "This is my body..." Luke 22:19

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b. "This is my blood..." Matthew 26:28

7. Luke 24: 46, 47, "...Christ to suffer and rise on the third day that repentance and remission..."

a. "Lift Me up on a cross, and I will lift up the world!"

II. THE CROSS DELIVERS FROM SIN

A. Did He die in vain? Yes, if no one comes to Him in gospel obedience. He died for our sins. Are you still in yours?

B. Consider the great and precious promises in the gospel—remission of sins and life eternal. Make them yours today!

SERMON OUTLINES

THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST

Colossians 1:18

INTRODUCTION:

1. We should never tire of talking about Jesus.
 - a. So, for a few minutes, let us turn our thoughts away from every plan, program, and project and let us think of Jesus.
2. Illu: Pike's Peak, looks down upon other mountains below. Pike's Peak is the preeminent mountain in all that mountainous region.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the greatest and most preeminent personality of all the ages. All of history past and all of prophecy future revolves around Him.

I. CHRIST IS PREEMINENT WITH THE FATHER

A. John 1:1; 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I am"

1. With Father in creation, John 1:3
 - a. With God when He said, "Let there be light," Genesis 1:3
 - b. With God when He said, "Let us make man..."
Genesis 1:26
2. Project your mind just as far back as your imagination can carry you—back to the time when there was no sea, no land, no living creatures, no man, before the moon and stars and sun were flung into space. Standing there in the bright light of eternity past you will see God. But Christ was by His side.

B. God has always made much of His Son.

1. Philippians 2:9-11, "...God also hath highly exalted Him..."
 - a. If we want to please God we must make much of His Son.
 - b. When someone brags on our children, it pleases us greatly. How much more then is God pleased when we exalt His only begotten Son.
2. Some say they believe in God but not in Christ. God despises such. Only way to God is through Christ.
 - a. John 14:6, "...no man cometh unto the Father but by me."
 - b. Some talk of "finding God." If they find Him, they find

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Him through Christ the Son.

C. Christ has first place with the Father and He ought to have first place in our hearts.

1. Illu: Robert Browning said, "Open my heart, and you will see, engraved upon it, Italy." If your heart and mine were opened, one ought to find engraved thereon the matchless name of Jesus Christ.

II. CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN THE SCRIPTURES

A. The Old Testament is simply a signboard saying, "This way to Jesus Christ."

1. The Old Testament is full of types and shadows which point to Christ.
 - a. Brazen serpent on pole points us to the One lifted up on the cross, saying, "Look unto me and be ye saved."
 - b. Smitten rock points to the Rock of Ages cleft for us on Calvary—where we can go and hide from our sins.
 - c. Manna from heaven reminds us of that One who became the Bread of Life for hungry souls.
 - d. Story of Abraham and Isaac reminds us of how God spared not His own Son, but gave Him up as a ransom for our sins.

III. CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN SALVATION

A. Men search everywhere for salvation, for forgiveness of sins, for hope of everlasting life.

1. They try doing penance, rituals, making large gifts to charity. But find no peace, hope, assurance in these.
2. Can never find this peace until they realize that "there is no other name..." Acts 4:12.

B. There is something more valuable than silver and gold.

1. The salvation we enjoy is worth more than all the world. "What shall it profit..." Mark 8:36, 37.
2. Ask any Christian how much he would take for his hope in Christ.

SERMON OUTLINES

- a. If he would even consider entering into a trade, he is not a faithful Christian.
- 3. Yet, all of this is free, Romans 6:23. Heaven is ours just for the asking or taking.
- C. Where does our salvation center?
 - 1. Not in creeds, not in our own goodness nor righteousness, but in a person, Jesus Christ. This is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins..." John 1:29.
 - 2. He is preeminent in salvation. Our salvation begins and ends in Him.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:18, 19, "...redeemed, not with corruptible..."
 - b. Hebrews 5:8, 9; Romans 6:4

IV. CHRIST IS PREEMINENT IN THE CHURCH

(He is its head, foundation, body—He built it and saves it.)

A. In the worship

- 1. In the prayers that are offered
 - a. "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it," John 14:14.
 - b. Illu: Club, thanks in name of Christ, asked by president of club to not use that name anymore. If I have to deny Lord to stay in club, better get out! Be a farce anyway—God not hearing—can approach Him only through Christ.
 - c. Illu: Couple entertaining man in their home who knew their son. So, God says, "If you know my Son and ask anything in His name, I will give it you."
- 2. In the songs we sing
 - a. "Jesus, Lover of my Soul"
 - b. "Rock of Ages"
 - c. "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross"
 - d. "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"
 - e. "Jesus Paid It All"
 - f. "When My Love For Christ Grows Weak"
- 3. In the sermons that are preached

SERMON OUTLINES

- a. "We preach Christ..." 1 Corinthians 1:23
- b. 1 Corinthians 2:1, 2
- c. Galatians 6:14
- d. How the world needs a tide of gospel preaching flowing out of every pulpit in the land
- 4. In the Lord's Supper
 - a. Looks back to a crucified Christ; looks forward to a coming Christ
 - b. Not for preacher, elders, Sunday School class, but for Christ and His glory!

V. CHRIST WILL BE PREEMINENT IN THE JUDGMENT

A. John 5:22, "For the Father judgeth no man..."

- 1. Matthew 25:31, Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12

B. John 14:1-3

- 1. Revelation 22:4, "And they shall see His face..."
- 2. Revelation 22:3, "...and His servants shall serve Him..."

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Is Christ preeminent in your life? Does He have first place in your love and affection? Does He reign upon the throne of your heart?

SERMON OUTLINES

WHY I RECOMMEND THE BIBLE

INTRODUCTION:

1. Recommending something is a risky and serious thing.
 - a. "Good Housekeeping Seal" preferred over other products.
Known to be good—look for such products
 - b. A place to eat; a motel to sleep; see a certain play
 - c. Recommend doctors, dentists, lawyers, etc.
2. I want to recommend something today
 - a. A book; world's best seller. The Bible. Let's look at ten reasons why I recommend it.

I. IT IS GOD'S WORD

- A. God is, and the Bible is His word
 1. Over 2,000 times the expression, "thus saith the Lord"
 2. He communicates—He speaks to us.
 3. His word is powerful, Hebrews 4:12.

II. IT REVEALS GOD TO US

- A. The universe presents to us a Supreme Being
 1. But without the Bible, we do not know who He is. Thus, does not present a personal God who loves us and provides for us
- B. The Bible does present Him, Genesis 1, 2, 3
 1. His attributes are revealed: Holy, eternal, great, good, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, immutable, generous, perfect, just, true, upright, faithful, merciful long-suffering, compassionate, kind, loving, and majestic!

III. ANSWERS LIFE'S MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- A. "Who am I?" "Why am I here?" "What am I to do or be?"
"Where am I going?"
 1. Created in God's image, Genesis 1:26, 27. An intelligent being, not an animal. A person loved by God, John 3:16
 2. We are here to prepare for eternity
 3. Are going to the judgment, Hebrews 9:27
 4. Will be an accounting time, Acts 17:30, 31

SERMON OUTLINES

IV. IT MEETS OUR EVERY NEED

A. Whether spiritual, physical, or mental

1. 2 Peter 1:3, "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue..."

B. Answers life's problems

1. John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth..."
2. John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth..."

C. Provides comfort in sorrow, Psalms 23

V. IT PRESENTS THE GOSPEL (glad tidings, good news)

A. The power unto salvation, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

B. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

1. Birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ
2. John 20:30, 31, "...many other signs...Jesus..."
 - a. That's the basis of our hope

VI. IT IS INCOMPARABLE

A. Differs from all other religious books—Koran, Book of Mormon, creeds, books of discipline—all of them are superfluous, not needed, waste of time to read in search of salvation

B. Bible written by 40 men over a period of 1600 years without a single contradiction

VII. IT CHALLENGES THE GREATEST MINDS

A. More books written on and about the Bible than any other book. Commentaries, devotional books, etc.

1. Shallow enough to wade and deep enough to swim in. A lifetime of study cannot finish it!

VIII. IT WILL JUDGE US

A. We are concerned about the judgment—we'll be there.

1. Want to know what will occur—how we may come out. Much confusion about the judgment

B. There is an unchanging and unchangeable standard

SERMON OUTLINES

1. God's word, rightly divided
2. The word will judge us, John 12:48
 - a. Romans 2:16, "...when God shall judge..."

IX. IT PRESENTS OUR LORD

- A. As the only Saviour
 1. John 10:10, "I am come that they might..."
 2. John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth..."
 3. Matthew 1:21, "...He shall save His people..."
- B. As one who loves us
 1. Revelation 1:5, "...Him that loved us..."
 2. Revelation 7:14, "...made them white..."
- C. As the answer to our sins, life, grave, and eternity
 1. By obeying Him we have hope, Romans 8:24
 2. We have eternal life, 1 John 5:13

X. IT KEEPS US SAVED

- A. It is our spiritual food
 1. 1 Peter 2:2, "...desire the sincere milk..."
 2. Hebrews 5:12-14
 - a. Milk at first, then strong meat for the mature, a diet for all
- B. Must be doers of the word also
 1. James 1:21, "...receive with meekness..." v. 22, "...doers of the word...not hearers only..."
 2. Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live by bread alone..."
- C. So, we should announce and push Bible study—both public and private

CONCLUSION:

1. Our final recommendation—obey the Bible! Today!

SERMON OUTLINES

INFLUENCE

INTRODUCTION:

1. "Power Age"—rockets, jets, etc., but there is something greater than these, **influence**.
2. Influence may be summed up in one word, **consistency**.
 - a. We speak of restoring the church of New Testament in—name, doctrine, worship, etc. New Testament Christianity will never be restored until we **teach** as they taught, **give** as they gave, **work** as they worked, and live as they lived.
 - b. Acts 1:1
 - 1) Must **do**, must **live** it first
3. Philippians 4:9
4. Titus 2:7
5. 1 Timothy 4:12
6. 1 Peter 5:3
7. 1 Peter 3:1, 2
8. We easily, and very soon, forget an oral sermon, but a **life** is a sermon that never loses its original impact.

I. THE SECRET OF THE POWER OF INFLUENCE OR EXAMPLE

A. Its clarity

1. Illu: Telling me directions. "I'm going that way in a few minutes. Just follow me."
2. Illu: Golf pro's instructions, "Let me see you do it"—and he does.
3. Illu: Book of Acts, examples of conversion. "The gospel in example." Clear, easy to understand and follow.

II. EXAMPLE CAN BE BAD AS WELL AS GOOD

A. 1 Kings 11:4

B. 1 Corinthians 5:6, 7

1. Christianity is better demonstrated than debated.
 - a. We can meet error with the unanswerable argument of conduct.

SERMON OUTLINES

III. WHOM DO I INFLUENCE?

- A. Those outside the body of Christ, Colossians 4:5
- B. Those outside the body
 - 1. Phil. 2:5-8
 - 2. Illu: Aaron and Hur, Exodus 17
- C. Your mate
- D. Your children
- E. To some degree, all with whom we come in contact

IV. WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE MY INFLUENCE AS GREAT AS POSSIBLE?

- A. Do all the good I can in a positive way
- B. Abstain from all appearance of evil
 - 1. Long list of negatives add up to zero. No man would base his hope of business success on what he does not do
 - 2. Illu: One talent man did not do anything, yet he is called wicked
 - 3. We are "created unto good works...", Ephesians 2:10. So are we good people if we do nothing, James 4:17?

V. HOW LONG WILL MY INFLUENCE LAST?

- A. Hebrews 11:4, "...dead yet speaketh..."
- B. Revelation 14:13, "...works do follow them."
- C. Matthew 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth..."
- D. Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world..."

SERMON OUTLINES

HINDERING SPIRITS

Matthew 13:54-58

INTRODUCTION:

1. Are we concerned about the ineffectiveness of our religion and our religious activities?
 - a. Preaching, teaching, meetings, classes, etc.
2. What limits us and the Lord from doing what He wills through us?
3. Someone said, "There are three spirits in any meeting: God's Spirit, man's and the evil spirit."
4. Let's mention three spirits that hinder us

I. THE FIGHTING SPIRIT

A. There is a fitting and proper fighting spirit

1. 2 Timothy 2:3
2. 1 Timothy 6:12
3. Ephesians 6:11

a. Need a holy indignation against all evil

B. But, many of our conflicts are with each other. We are fighting each other

1. Not over doctrine or principles, but personalities
2. Romans 16:17
3. Galatians 5:15

C. We fight back when we are wronged

1. Saviour, our example, 1 Peter 2:23
2. Christians "took joyfully" the spoiling of goods, and they were patient under persecution
3. What has become of leaving vengeance to the Lord? We are taught to "take wrong" rather than do wrong

II. THE FRIVOLOUS SPIRIT

- ##### A. I am in favor of good humor. To be all-out for God you don't have to look all-in. Good fellowship among God's people is precious.

SERMON OUTLINES

B. But there is an inherent seriousness in our message and in our mission. Our manner should reflect this.

1. Do you think the early Christians cracked jokes and made puns on the sacred scriptures?
2. Can't advance the sacred Cause by being jolly good fellows after the pattern of the world
 - a. Church has had no influence on Hollywood, but Hollywood has had a profound influence on the church
 - b. The gospel is good news of a feast, not a frolic

III. THE FED-UP SPIRIT

A. Have we heard the gospel so much we have reached the saturation point?

1. Like Laodicea, "rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing?"
2. Lack of desire is the ill of all ills
 - a. Children with too many toys soon thrill to none
3. Precious truths that ought to stir us and bring tears to our eyes now leave us cold
4. What once made us want to almost leap in the aisle, now puts us to sleep in the pew.

B. Have put up an unconscious resistance to any form of the gospel

CONCLUSION:

1. In New Testament times, gospel was preached, many mighty miracles done, people believed, but Pharisees stood critically by and missed the blessing

SERMON OUTLINES

I KNOW

INTRODUCTION

1. Triplets of despair
 - a. Physical suffering
 - b. Mental anguish
 - c. Religious unrest
 - 1) Isms, cults, etc. not founded upon God's word
2. There is a place where souls can find rest, where hearts can find peace, and where lives can find satisfaction.
 - a. In Christ and in His word
 - b. Men doubt ("I don't know"), but a faithful Christian can say, "I know".
 - 1) Paul said "I know" three times. Let's look.

I. "...FOR I KNOW WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED...", 2 Timothy 1:12

- A. We pass by one who guesses and listen to man who knows
 1. When sick, don't listen to quack, but one who really knows something about our condition, and also knows what to do about it
 2. Want to know something about an airplane? Then don't ask a man who has never seen one.
 3. Paul, "I know." We know we can listen to him.
 - a. Had seen the Lord, talked with Him and been blessed by Him. Knew what he was talking about
- B. Some quote, "I know in whom I have believed..."
 1. Verse says, "I know whom I have believed..."
 - a. ASV= "For I know Him whom I have believed..."
- C. The Christian knows a person
 1. Christ is our creed. Our faith is not in a thing but in a person
 2. Illu: "I do not believe in repentance, etc."
 3. How do you know you are saved? No problem. We know Him and we believe Him, Mark 16:16
- D. Life's greatest joy is to know Him

SERMON OUTLINES

1. We know His way, will, attributes, actions and reactions.
Can live as He did, and thus live the full, abundant, and happy life

E. Paul says He "...is able..."

1. To save, bless, keep
2. "...keep that which I have committed unto Him..."
a. Hebrews 6:10

II. "...WE KNOW THAT ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER...", ROMANS 8:28

A. Speaks from experience. After all he suffered, "It all worked out for my good... furtherance of gospel..."

1. Hardships, troubles, sufferings—this can't be good. Years pass, now say, "Best thing that ever happened to me"
2. Text does not say that all things are good. But when God puts all these things together and works them out, they do turn out for our good

B. Sin to worry as we do. "Be not anxious", Jesus said

1. Disobey Him and worry ourselves sick. Has not God promised to look after us, Matthew 6:33? Look after His interests and He will look after ours.
2. Psalms 37:25

III. "...FOR WE KNOW THAT IF OUR EARTHLY HOUSE...", 2 Corinthians 5:1

A. Every day our bodies are decaying—getting older and weaker, but Paul says, "That's all right. When the body is gone, God will give us a better one—one not made with hands—eternal and in the heavens"

B. Paul never speculated about matters of eternal life

1. Philippians 1:23, 24. Even if martyred, the real Paul will soar up into the heavens to be with God
2. O, if we would just live in close fellowship with our Lord, then heaven would never seem far away

C. Illu: Homing pigeons released one morning in Knoxville, TN.

SERMON OUTLINES

By night, wire received from Oklahoma City that all had landed safely in their home loft

1. God put homing instinct in those pigeons, and He also put that instinct into the human soul

CONCLUSION:

1. Some day our earthly house will fall. Some day the school of life will be over. Some day the day of trouble will be done.
2. But God takes care of the past, present, and future
 - a. Past—when He forgives our sins and saves us,
2 Timothy 1:12
 - b. Present—when He cares for us every day, Romans 8:28
 - c. Future—when He prepares a place in glory for us,
2 Corinthians 5:1

SERMON OUTLINES

LOOK AT THIS PICTURE

Colossians 4:7-14

INTRODUCTION:

1. Receive picture of friends known to both—enjoy looking at them, picking different ones out, telling something about them
2. Paul does this by word—gives thumbnail sketches of those around him in Rome, who were also known to the Christians in Colosse
3. Let's take a good look at them, there in the group, one by one

I. TYCHICUS—The Man With A Message

- A. A beloved brother—an endearing term
 - B. A faithful minister—ready to do any job, run any errand
 - C. Fellow-servant in the Lord—served Him together
 - D. May be insignificant-looking fellow when you pass him on the road—hardly notice him, but he has a message. He is carrying a part of the very word of God
 - E. We bear in our persons the message of Christ
 1. 2 Corinthians 3:3, "...ye are the epistles..."
 2. Regardless of how insignificant we think we are, somebody is reading the "gospel according to you"
- "You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day by all that you do, and all that you say. Men read what you write, whether faithless or true, say, what is the gospel according to you?"

II. ONESIMUS—The Man With A Past

- A. Wonder what Colossians thought when saw this man in the group—one of them—had been a slave—robbed Philemon—one of their members, and had run away to Rome
- B. Someone in Rome found him and brought him to Paul, who brought him to Christ, Philemon 10
- C. All his past now forgiven
 1. Restitution is a first principle of spiritual life, Matthew 5:23, 24

SERMON OUTLINES

III. ARISTARCHUS—The Man With A Heart

- A. Was with Paul in Ephesus—riot—Diana—Acts 19:29
- B. With Paul on sea on trip to Rome—wind, Euroclydon
 - 1. Sharing these stormy experiences must have drawn them together
- C. Now, my “fellow-prisoner”
 - 1. Galatians 6:2
 - 2. Some can't preach, lead public prayer, lead singing, but are some of the most beloved and effective workers in the church. Burden-bearers, comfort and help

IV. MARCUS—The Man With A Future

- A. One who turned back, Acts 13:2, 5. Yes, he had a past, but that is now all over
- B. Had a second chance. Barnabas gave it to him
 - 1. Does God ever judge a man on the first chance?
 - 2. Peter fell, but given a second chance
 - 3. Jonah, Jonah 3:1
 - 4. Mark came back—wrote second gospel—“...he is profitable to me...” (Paul), 2 Timothy 4:11
- C. “If he comes to you, receive him...”
 - 1. “If he dares come near here, we will show him what we think of him”
 - 2. Paul, “No, no. Not a cold shoulder, but a warm hand”
 - a. Way to receive a backslider, Galatians 6:1

V. JESUS JUSTUS—The Man With A Name

- A. Know very little of this man—a Jew, fellow-worker in the kingdom and a comfort to Paul
- B. But we do know his name and oh, what a name
 - 1. Matthew 1:21
 - 2. James 2:7
 - 3. Acts 11:26
 - 4. Acts 26:28

SERMON OUTLINES

5. 1 Peter 4:16

C. "Christian"—"Christ-ones"

1. Will really take some living up to
2. Are we really living the name we wear, Revelation 3:1?

VI. EPAPHRAS—The Man With A Passion

A. "...he hath a great zeal for you...", v. 13

1. Good to come across a man with real enthusiasm
2. What Lord thinks of lukewarm person, Revelation 3:15, 16

B. What can he do for them now, separated by miles?

1. "...always laboring fervently" for you in prayers..., v12.
 - a. "laboring fervently from Greek word. Our English word "agonizing" is transliteration of it
 - b. Must have risen from his knees physically exhausted and completely spent. (We may have grown tired of praying and given it up, but have we ever grown tired through praying?)
2. Do we ever try battling for souls through prayer?
 - a. Souls in China, Japan, Poland, Russia can be reached by way of the throne
 - b. The unfriendly neighbor can be reached by way of the throne
 - c. The believers in Colosse can be reached by Epaphras in distant Rome by way of the throne
3. "Always" at it

VII. LUKE—The Man With A Gift

A. First find Luke with Paul at Troas, Acts 16:10

1. Reckon Paul's thorn bothered him, had to call a doctor?
And, perhaps Paul converted him?

B. A busy doctor, dedicated to Lord's cause—first medical missionary for Christ?

1. Paul would save lowly Tychicus, but also the brilliantly-educated like Dr. Luke

C. Luke wrote Acts—"Stories From The Diary of a Doctor"

SERMON OUTLINES

VIII. DEMAS—The Man With A Bias

- A. The only one about whom the apostle had not one word to say. Already showing signs of cooling off, 2 Timothy 4:10?
- B. Though he was a Christian, he had this fatal bias within himself
- C. Was not willing to give up all for Christ
 - 1. To be thus unwilling is to fail and to fall

SERMON OUTLINES

LOVE FINDS A WAY

1 Corinthians 13:4, 8

INTRODUCTION:

1. Love knows no loads, burdens—minds no sacrifice
 - a. Love will sit up with a sick child all night and night after night, if necessary
 - 1) Friend will say, "You go lie down and rest. Even sleep a little. If there is any change will call you."
"No, I am not sleepy. I'll stay right here. I'd feel better to remain right here the rest of the night. I'll sleep later. Perhaps, tomorrow."
2. I really get a thrill out of getting up real early to go bird hunting, even when it is cold and rainy. Why? I love to tramp in a field all day and hunt birds.
3. We need to know the thrill of serving under adverse circumstances
 - a. Attending when weather is bad—having to rearrange schedules in order to put the kingdom first
 - b. Greatest thrill should come to the Christian when we must sacrifice to serve and be faithful
 - c. I really love to attend when weather is bad
 - 1) Feel for once that making a little sacrifice is to do something for God
4. Some will ask, "Of what church are you a member?"
 - a. "That's the group that says you've got to go to church every Sunday?" "Even if it is raining and weather is otherwise bad—and even when weather is pretty and just right for fishing you've still got to go to church on Sunday"
 - 1) New Testament example, Acts 20:7
 - 2) New Testament command, Hebrews 10:25

I. HEBREWS 10:23-25

- A. "Hold fast...without wavering" (without bending or staggering)

SERMON OUTLINES

1. Every person who is happy, is happy in spite of something.
Every person whom you meet is bearing some kind of heavy burden.
 2. Every person who is faithful, is faithful in spite of some obstacle, opposition, or sacrifice.
 - a. Nobody is faithful without opposition.
- B. "Consider one another"
1. To know one another, to be interested in one another, to be ready to serve one another
 2. Watch against the upgrowth of jealousies, misunderstanding, and prejudices that tend to divide us one from another
 3. Give more thought to our oneness in Christ and less to our mutual peculiarities and infirmities.
- C. "...to provoke..."
1. By our example of Christian living
 2. By our joy in meeting Christian obligations and fulfilling Christian duties
 3. By coming together to worship—the assembly
 - a. Plants and trees never do well unless they grow together
 - b. Can't build good fire with only one log
 - c. The spirit of sin is the spirit of separation. Sin makes men walk in lonely paths, thinking their own thoughts, wrestling with their own doubts.
- D. The failure to assemble never provokes any unto love and good works. Always discourages and hinders
1. Few assemble, we get discouraged and ask, "What's wrong with our work?" To ask such a question is to begin to fix blame.
 - a. Preachers, elders, teachers, etc.
 2. Our text says that our assembling together is a means of "provoking one another to love and good works." Only kind of provoking Christians should ever do

SERMON OUTLINES

E. Three kinds of assembling

1. For purpose of Christian fellowship
2. For purpose of worship and instruction
3. To remember our Lord's death

F. Not showing proper consideration for others unless I take advantage of all three

II. THE HEBREWS NEEDED THE ASSEMBLY

A. Needed admonition and strength for dark days ahead

B. We have the same need

1. For everyday living, temptations, etc.
2. For death and the judgment
3. For trials which could come in our own lifetime and almost sure to come in the lives of our children

SERMON OUTLINES

THE KIND OF OBEDIENCE GOD WANTS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Romans 6:16—Right doing and right living
2. 1 Samuel 15:3-23, "...have performed the command..."
 - a. "meaneth the lowing..."
 - 1) "...people brought them to offer..."
 - 2) "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and as in obeying His voice..."
3. Hebrews 5:9, "...author of salvation..."

I. OBEDIENCE THAT GOD DOES NOT WANT

A. By force. "You are going to be baptized or I am going to shoot you." Then, suppose the man obeyed? Would that please God? No.

1. Many do in religion what they feel they are forced to do. Force does not change the thinking of people, nor does it convince them.

a. God does not force man to obey Him, Revelation 3:20. He won't break it or crash it down.

B. By fear

1. 1 John 4:18
2. He warns us against disobedience because He is completely honest with us. But He does not frighten us into His service.
3. If I serve God only because I am afraid I might go to hell if I don't, that is not a very high motive.

II. HE WANTS OBEDIENCE OUT OF LOVE

A. John 4:24, "My meat is to do my Father's will"

1. John 6:38, "I came...the will of Him who sent me"
2. In Gethsemane, "... as Thou wilt," Mark 14:36. Our Lord obeyed out of love and devotion to the Father.
 - a. John 14:23, 24

B. We can't really know what it means to be a Christian until we realize what the Lord has done for us.

SERMON OUTLINES

1. We are Christians today, but not because we are good, for we are sinners; neither because we have rendered such great service. We can never repay Him.
2. But what kind of obedience do we give to God as our response to His love? Is it a "have-to" obedience? Or, is it a "want-to" obedience?
 - a. "Lord, you sacrificed so much, but do I **have** to worship you? Do I have to meet with you each first day of the week around your table? Now if you can show me the rule that tells me that I have to do this, then I will try to do it."
- C. If this is our attitude, we have missed the whole meaning.
 1. Our obedience rises because we want to do what He calls upon us to do. "Lord, what will you have me do?"
- D. What a change would come over us if we had this attitude. It would **change** our lives. We would love God deeply and give our lives in service to Him, and that would demonstrate our love. Then we would want to follow Him, and not because we feel we have to.
- E. Now, this is crucial, for the kind of obedience we give to God determines whether we please Him.

CONCLUSION:

1. The term, "Son of God," involves an obedient relationship to God.
 - a. Do we study His word? Do we pray to God in the name of Christ? Do we look to Him for leadership? We must know that without Him we cannot make our way.
 - b. Is it our deep, burning desire to follow Him?
 - c. Is our obedience a "have-to" obedience, or a "want-to" obedience?

SERMON OUTLINES

WHEN LIFE REALLY BEGINS

INTRODUCTION:

1. At 40? To fall apart, that is?
 - a. Begins when one is born again—spiritual life
 - 1) Philippians 1:21
 - 2) Galatians 2:20
2. What is life to you?
 - a. Live a few years, suffer all the trials of life, die in agony, be covered over with 6' of earth?
 - b. It is to know Jesus Christ through His word, to walk with Him, and then go home with Him to that land that is fairer than day, and where we will never grow old, and where sorrows never come.
3. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. Why?
 - a. I do not condemn him for it; rather, I commend him for coming at all. He did come to the right one—the one who has the answer to life, and when it really begins. After all, he came to the one who can give us real hope beyond the grave.
 - b. Jesus had time to talk to this one man. Loves sinners and always has time for them—even you and me.

I. THE MAN WHO NEEDED THE NEW BIRTH

- A. A Pharisee—strict—religious—member of the highest court in the land—ruler of the Jews. But, still he needed to be born again.
- B. A teacher of the law, “a master of Israel”—still he was not in the kingdom—needed new birth.
- C. An intelligent man—a master’s degree in Jewish religious knowledge. A scholar, but lost

II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BORN AGAIN?

- A. Birth of the Spirit, v. 5. Still, “how”?
 1. James 1:18
 2. Corinthians 4:15

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3. John 6:63

4. 1 Peter 1:23

B. But also a birth of water, v. 5

1. John 16:25

2. Jesus explains the part of man that is born again, the "spirit"—the inner man, not the body, the flesh, v. 6. So don't marvel, "ye must be born again."

a. Read v. 8. Here Jesus changes from the new birth to the person who is born again, the "spirit". The wind is invisible and the part of man that is born again is also invisible. So, it's not the physical body then.

III. AFTER THE NEW BIRTH—WHAT?

A. Birth means "a beginning"

1. Child born—gets to be 3 months old—35 years pass—now he has experienced physical growth. He was as much alive at 3 months as he is at 35 years of age. Some don't grow—still act like babies spiritually. Like wasp—bigger at birth than at any other time

B. Birth implies a home

1. Taken from hospital to his home—not a foundling, he has a home. The church is the earthly home of the Christian. Is a child of God—in God's family, the church. Ought to love the church, be jealous of its reputation, pray for it, support it.

2. Then a heavenly home beyond

C. If born again—to bear the fruit of the Spirit

1. Galatians 5:25

a. Vv. 22, 23

b. 2 Peter, 3:18

c. Colossians 3:2

d. Philippians 3:20

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PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD

Amos 4:12

INTRODUCTION:

1. We prepare:

- a. To make a living through education and training
- b. To take care of our family—"provide for our own"
- c. For a wedding in the family
- d. For retirement through pension plans and investments
- e. Purchase life insurance, cemetery lots
- f. But neglect the matter of preparing to meet God

I. WE MUST MEET GOD IN THIS LIFE

A. Laws of nature—God's unchangeable laws

1. If violate them, we come face to face with the judgments of God. Must pay dearly for every violation of these laws
2. Galatians 6:7
 - a. "I am a free being—I will live as I please and it's nobody's business but mine." But will one day come face to face with the consequences of his sinful life and learn that God will not be mocked
3. Illu: Joseph's brothers—22 years pass—famine, "Now we know why this trouble came upon us. We mistreated our brother and now we must meet our sin again." They felt a reasonable retribution would be death

B. Consolation: Can repent of our sins, acknowledge and confess them to God and He will forgive

1. 1 John 1:9

II. WE MUST MEET GOD IN LIFE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Must account to God for way we meet responsibilities

1. Consecrated, loving, thoughtful parents—taking parenthood seriously
2. Consecrated, dedicated member of body of Christ
 - a. No higher privilege given to man than this.

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But with this privilege comes responsibility.

b. "What kind of a church would this church be if every member were just like me?"

1) Would we even have a local church?

2) But if all were like some, would have one of the greatest congregations ever

3. Remember, must account to God for way treat this privilege

III. MUST ACCOUNT FOR WAY WE USE OUR INFLUENCE

A. Everyone is casting a shadow—either for good or bad. Lift people up or we push them down, Romans 14:7. No man is an island.

1. Mothers and fathers have strongest influence of all.

Children will be what we have influenced them to be.

a. "What will my boy or girl be when they grow up?" Well, depends largely upon you, upon the example you set, upon the influence you exert

b. Illu: "Walking in Daddy's tracks"

IV. WE MUST MEET GOD IN DEATH

A. Hebrews 9:27; Psalms 89:47, 48; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Job 30:23

V. WE MUST MEET GOD AT THE JUDGMENT

A. Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:30, 31

B. Can plead "not guilty" before judge in this life, but not when you stand before God

1. He has all the evidence; He knows all the facts.

2. He has the power to pronounce the sentence.

3. 2 Corinthians 5:10

C. One will stand with us and for us there if we have lived for Him and stood with Him in this life.

1. Do you have Him as your Saviour?

VI. HOW TO PREPARE TO MEET GOD

A. Illu: Train wreck—pulled dying engineer out of the crushed cab—he was waving a yellow slip of paper—"Somebody gave

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me the wrong orders”

1. So, we must give you God’s orders. God’s way, God’s plan is found in God’s book. If some theologian had composed this plan, could say he might be mistaken—but God’s way is found in His book
2. Plainly stated to unbelievers, Acts 16:30; to believers, Acts 2:38; to believing penitents, Acts 22:16
 - a. “Went on his way rejoicing....,” Acts 8:16
 - b. Revelation 2:10

VII. WHEN SHOULD THIS PREPARATION BE MADE?

- A. 2 Corinthians 6:2; Proverbs 27:1
 1. “Harden not your hearts”

CONCLUSION:

1. How will it be with you when you get to the end of the way?
“Prepare To Meet Thy God”

IF I HAD BUT ONE SERMON TO HEAR

INTRODUCTION:

1. Have heard subjects such as, "If I Had But One Sermon To Preach."
 - a. Have been great preachers; One day apostle Paul preached his last sermon; Barton W. Stone; David Lipscomb; G. C. Brewer; N. B. Hardeman; Horace W. Busby—one day, each preached his last sermon
2. But, "If I Had But One Sermon To Hear"
 - a. In 1906, Charles Reynolds Brown was preaching in the San Francisco bay area. Years later he mentioned that particular Sunday. "How differently I would have preached if I had only known that many in that audience were hearing the last sermon they would ever hear." No one could possibly know that the great San Francisco earthquake was to come on the following Wednesday morning and that many would be killed before another Sunday arrived
 - b. In almost any audience of any size, there may be someone who is hearing his last sermon. Foolish to take for granted that we will have other opportunities to live and to hear the saving message of Christ. Often say, "Nothing is certain but death and taxes," yet do not actually believe this applies to us, James 4:13, 14
 - c. If I were not a Christian and knew I had but one more sermon to hear, what sermon would I want most to hear? Certain would not want to be a "grand" or "beautiful" effort, nor a learned dissertation on some obscure theme, but would want a simple statement of the essence of Christianity, highlighting my responsibilities to God

I. A MAN WHO WAS TO HEAR ONLY ONE SERMON AND WHAT HE HEARD

A. A man from Ethiopia, Acts 8:26-35

1. Man was reading from Isaiah 53
 - a. Story of Christ unfolded—Old Testament prophecies now

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fulfilled, John 3:16; 1:14; Matthew 1:20, 21

- b. Christ's death—"...led as sheep to slaughter..."
1 Corinthians 15:3
 - c. His burial in Joseph's tomb—loving hands ministered to
His body. All thought everything was over
 - d. His resurrection—morning of 3rd day—empty tomb—grave
clothes—napkin—"He is not here: risen." On earth 40 days,
ascended with promise to return, Acts 1:3, 11
2. Philip must have told him about beginning of church and
people being added to it, Acts 2:38, 47
- a. Must have mentioned life to come, John 14:1-3
 - b. Lord's invitation and appeal, Matthew 11:28-30;
Revelation 3:20

B. The results

- 1. Now it is the Ethiopian's turn. Had heard gospel
preached. What would be his decision, Acts 8:36-39?
- 2. As story began, he was not a Christian. As story closes,
he is a child of God, Colossians 1:13, 14

II. STORY OF ONE WHO STARTED AND THEN FALTERED, Acts 8:13-24

A. Simon the sorcerer

- 1. Believed, baptized, Mark 16:16, later his heart was not
right, in gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; therefore
lost. What would you want to hear most?
 - a. "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do the
first works," Revelation 2:4, 5
 - b. "Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray
God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven
thee," Acts 8:22
- 2. His response: "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of
these things come upon me," Acts 8:24

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Yes, if I were not a Christian, and if I were hearing the last

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sermon that I would ever hear, I would want it to be about Christ. I would then want to become a Christian in the ancient, New Testament way.

2. And, if I realized I might be facing my last opportunity to be forgiven and restored as one who had wandered away, I would appreciate a lesson on my true condition and being reminded of the consequences of delay.
3. Friends, this may be your last. If so, you do know enough to be saved from past sins and eternal destruction—enough to be restored and escape eternal condemnation at the end of the way.
4. The nobleman responded at once. The erring child of God wanted to come back immediately.
 - a. What will you do—today?

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SATAN WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOU

2 Corinthians 2:8-11

INTRODUCTION:

1. Like someone to take advantage of you?
 - a. Satan will take every chance we allow him
 - 1) Will take advantage of our ignorance, innocence, agreeableness, or of our age
 - b. Devil longs for the youth of our land
 - 1) 2 Timothy 2:22
 - 2) 1 Timothy 4:12
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 12:1
2. The devil won't leave you alone.
 - a. James 4:7
 - b. Luke 4:13
3. How does he work?
 - a. Come as monster—frighten you out of your wits?
 - 1) No. We don't always see him, nor the move the deceiver is making. We must be alert.
 - b. May work through some human being; certain circumstances; concealed within some allurement
 - c. May never be immoral, murderer, thief, liar, drunkard, cheat
 - 1) More ways of playing into Satan's hands than through these overt acts we all know to be wrong

I. WRONG ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS

- A. Devil hurts one's love for the Lord by hurting his love for others
 1. 1 John 4:20
 2. Illu: If spokes are properly fitted into the hub, and into the rim, they will inevitably be in the right relationship to each other.
 - a. So, if we have right relationship to God, will have right relationship to each other, 1 John 1:7

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B. Satan will take advantage of you through resentful feelings you might have toward others.

1. Don't harbor malice—don't look for something to offer as criticism of others. It is much easier to be critical than it is to be correct.
2. Can put your best foot forward without going around kicking everything
3. Do not fly off handle when others do not do what you would like to see them do. You cannot put things across by getting cross.
4. Illu: Woman criticizing neighbor—"clothes on line are dingy, streaked, and dirty"—No, it's your window.
 - a) It is so easy to garnish your own traits, and tarnish the traits of others.

C. Matthew 5:23, 24

1. Matthew 22:39
2. Romans 12:18

II. DISPLAYING TEMPER

A. Satan would like to make you mad so he can take advantage of you.

1. Ephesians 4:26, 27
2. "I am at the mercy of anyone who can make me mad."
3. When you spell "danger" you have spelled "anger," and when you spell "anger" you are only one letter short of "danger."
4. "Anger is an acid that will do more damage to the vessel in which it is stored, than to anything on which it is poured."

B. Vast difference in a piece of your mind and in peace of mind

1. And, it will not give you peace of mind to give someone else a piece of your mind.
2. Luke 21:19
3. Devil is working so hard on our emotions. Would like to get us upset, distraught, and frustrated

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III. MISUSE OF THE TONGUE

A. James 3:2

1. Proverbs 21:23
2. Matthew 12:37
3. James 3: 5, 6, 8, 9, 10

B. Be careful lest by tongue Satan take advantage of us.

1. Psalms 141:3
2. Proverbs 15:23
3. James 1:26
 - a) Illu: "Stick out your tongue"
4. Colossians 4:6
 - a) Not with pepper
5. James 1:19

IV. EXCUSE-MAKING

A. Pleases Satan when Lord's people begin to make excuses

1. Luke 14:18
 - a) Some new sinners today, but no new sins
2. Far too many have studied "alibi-ology." Not a course one takes in college, but one some have taken in life
3. Seems to be an alibi for everything. Reasons that sound good are not always good sound reasons.

B. A Christian actually accuses himself when he tries to excuse himself.

1. Excuse-making deals with one's sense of values—with which is first in our hearts and affections
2. Can fail through wrong-doing, of course, but can fail also by running away from responsibility

V. FLIRTING WITH DANGER

A. Why is man prone to get as close to the line of sin as possible?

1. Illu: If Mother Eve had only been in some other part of the garden
2. Illu: Candle flies or moths flying around kerosene lamp.

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Lots of fun. But for some that fun ended in tragedy. Not everyone fell in, but everyone there was flirting with danger.

3. 1 Thessalonians 5:22

a. Drinking, dancing, etc.

b. Proverbs 6:27, 28

B. Man is known not only by the company he keeps, but also by the company he keeps—out of.

1. 1 Corinthians 15:33

VI. PROCRASTINATION

A. The devil would like to hitch as many as possible to the “post” of “postponement”.

1. One of the devil’s greatest “wiles” is “wait awhile”.

2. “Plenty of time”—“Don’t be in a hurry”—“Study it some more”—“You’ll feel more like making a decision tomorrow.” Sounds plausible. Tickles the ears of many

3. Proverbs 27:1

B. It is later than you think.

1. 2 Corinthians 6:2; Isaiah 55:6

a) Life has its favorable moments. You might not be as much in the mood to obey Christ tomorrow. Time is on the devil’s side. Immediate action

2. Acts 22:16

SERMON OUTLINES

HOW WE GOT OUR NAME

Acts 11:26

INTRODUCTION:

1. The name "Christian" was not used at all during the public ministry of Christ, nor even to describe the first members of the church who were baptized in Jerusalem on Pentecost day.
2. It is not used at all in the 39 books of the Old Testament and it appears but 3 times in all 27 books of the New Testament.

I. WHO WERE CALLED CHRISTIANS?

A. The disciples. But who were they?

1. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47
 - a. ASV, "Go ye...make disciples..."
2. Are they disciples first and you baptize them later?
 - a. No. That's how you make disciples—teach them and then baptize them.
 - b. Illu: "Go make teachers, teaching them." Are they teachers first and then you teach them to be teachers? No. That's how you make teachers.
Illu: "Go make nurses, training them."
3. "Disciple" from *Mathetes*, a "learner," "follower"; not only a pupil but an adherent. Hence, "an obedient learner and follower of Jesus Christ," John 8:31
 - a. May profess, but have not accepted His invitation to take His yoke, learn of Him, and bear His burden

II. WHAT WERE THEY CALLED?

A. Christians

1. They were identified with a person, not merely a principle, a philosophy, or a program. They were married to another—espoused to one husband—with them to live was Christ.
2. The connection between leader and followers was unavoidable.

III. HOW DID THEY GET THIS NAME?

- ##### A. They were "called" Christians—they did not name themselves.

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1. Not a nickname, 1 Peter 4:16
2. There are 2 words translated "called" in the New Testament.
 - a. **Kaleo**—used many times and is employed usually when man calls or does the calling
 - b. **Chrematizo**—Lit. to give a divine warning; to be warned of God. Acts 11:26 means "to be called of God."
3. This was in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, Isaiah 62:2
 - a. Acts 10; Romans 1:16, 17
 - b. A brand new name. First time it ever appears
 - c. Named by "the mouth of the Lord"

B. If the name had never been used, would anyone call us Christians?

1. The people of Antioch must have been so impressed with the change in the lives of the disciples that they could only attribute it to Christ.
 - a. Repentance (change) is a part of making one a disciple. (Great Commission)

IV. WHERE WERE THEY CALLED CHRISTIANS?

A. In Antioch, of all places

1. Some say they could be better Christians if they had a better place in which to live. Antioch was a wicked pagan city. If one could be a Christian there, he could be a Christian anywhere.

B. If you cannot be a Christian where you are, you cannot be one anywhere. (Might go to church some other place)

1. Jeremiah 12:5
2. Letting trivial troubles get us down is poor preparation for real adversity. Some of us frazzle ourselves battling mosquitoes and are exhausted when we face the lion.
 - a. John 16:33
 - b. 2 Timothy 3:12

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3. Don't let the footmen get you down, for you may have to contend with horses.

CONCLUSION:

1. Are you the kind of disciple the world calls Christian right in your Antioch?
2. Are you a Christian?
 - a. A choice must be made—Felix, Agrippa, Acts 24, 26

SERMON OUTLINES

IT IS LATER THAN YOU THINK

Romans 13:10-14

INTRODUCTION:

1. The expression was seen by someone on a sundial somewhere. It has been repeated over and over, year after year.
2. The one sure sundial is the word of God. From Genesis to Revelation, it gives us the timely warning, "It is later than you think."

I. IT IS LATER IN THE CHRISTIAN AGE THAN YOU THINK

A. Genesis 6:3, preceding the flood, God said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." And, it didn't.

1. Flood came—all drowned but 8 righteous souls

B. Now, 2,000 years have passed in this Christian Age.

1. Think of all the striving, patience, long-suffering of God since gospel first preached on Pentecost, 33 A.D.
2. Do not know how much more time, but do know there is less than when the Age began
3. 2 Peter 3:9
 - a. Maybe this is reason Age lasted this long

II. IT IS LATER IN OUR LIVES THAN WE THINK

A. Psalms 90:9, 10

1. Psalms 90:12
2. Ephesians 5:15
3. Ecclesiastes 12:1
 - a. "If only youth knew how to live and old age could."
 - b. "Youth has fire without light and age has light without fire."
 - c. There are things possible to youth that age cannot know. Don't waste it, young people!
4. Some think it smart to say, "Life is only the predicament that precedes death" and "Youth is a blunder, maturity is a struggle, and old age is a regret."

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a. Yet, we often live as if these things were true.

B. There is no turning back.

1. "Turn back, turn back, O time in your flight. Make me a child again, just for tonight." Not possible

III. IT IS LATER IN CHRISTIAN OPPORTUNITY THAN WE THINK

A. John 9:4

1. How short our opportunity for living and serving
 - a. Illu: "If I had the power, I'd shout, Glory, glory (words of a person nearing death). Another replied, "It's a pity you didn't shout glory when you had the power."
2. Great concern for those who waste precious, active years and then do a comeback—but usefulness nearly over
 - a. Think of all the days and years of inactivity; of all contributions missed, etc. 1 Corinthians 15:58

B. Now is God's time for service.

1. Many say, "There are yet..." John 4:35
2. We overlook the shortness of time and the vastness of eternity—really need to brush up on our spiritual mathematics

IV. IT IS LATER FOR THE UNSAVED THAN WE THINK

A. Isaiah 55:6, 7

1. Evident there will come a time when He will not pardon
2. Jeremiah 8:20

B. Now is the day of condemnation.

1. John 3:18

a. not at death, not at judgment, but **now**

C. But **now** is also the day of salvation, 2 Corinthians 6:2

1. Illu: woman facing approaching lawsuit, planned to employ an able attorney. After delay, she asked him to take her case. "I am very sorry, but I have just been appointed a judge. I cannot plead for you now. I can only judge you"
 - a. So it is with our Lord **now** and **then**.

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YOU MEAN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST DOES NOT TEACH...?

INTRODUCTION:

1. The task of the Lord's church is to convey to people what the Bible teaches regarding the church.
 - a. Not always an easy thing to do. Many preconceived notions about the church and Christianity. That is, notions unknown to Scripture.
 - b. We must be honest to detect the difference between what we think and how we feel about the church—and what the Bible actually says about it.
2. Sometimes, when plain and fundamental points about the church are brought out, people will show surprise.
 - a. "Why, I never knew that was in the Bible" or "I've always been told something else."
3. Don't you know that those pioneers who have gone before us were faced with many questions about the church—its teaching, its worship, its purpose, the work in which it is to be engaged?

I. PREACHERS ARE NOT "PASTORS" OR "REVERENDS"

- A. Every day many preachers are called "pastor" or "reverend" by someone. When a preacher points out that he is not a "pastor," people are surprised.
 1. But why? Because the Bible says he is a pastor and we just do not practice what it teaches? No. But because this is what has been accepted over the years. Most people are not aware of what the Bible says.
- B. "Pastor" is synonymous with "elder" and refers to the leaders or overseers of a local church.
 1. Preacher or evangelist is spoken of by Paul, Ephesians 4:11
- C. The word "reverend" is never used in the Bible with reference to man.
 1. Appears only once in Bible, Psalms 111:9

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II. THE CHURCH DOES NOT TITHE

- A. "You mean the church of Christ does not teach tithing?"
 - 1. Why such surprise? Because the Bible teaches tithing for Christians today, but the church of Christ does not practice it? No. Simply because people have been taught that tithing was a part of the church's activity—and have never heard anything else.
- B. New Testament does not teach that the law of tithing is binding on Christians today, 1 Corinthians 16:2 and 2 Corinthians 9:7

III. PEOPLE CANNOT JOIN THE CHURCH

- A. One of the most common expressions. "You mean I can't join the church?" No! Why? Because the Bible teaches we can, and we don't practice what it teaches? No, that isn't it. Can join a denomination—have a choice—can exercise your own volition
- B. Can't join Lord's church—have no choice since only one—have no decision whether we will become a member of it. We don't decide that.
- C. The Lord adds the saved to it, Acts 2:47
 - 1. "...such as should be saved, Mark 16:16"

IV. COMMUNION EVERY SUNDAY

- A. "The one thing I really notice about the church of Christ is that they have communion every Sunday." Why does this surprise people?
 - 1. Because the Bible does not teach this but we do it anyway? Because the Bible teaches annual communion, quarterly communion, but we don't follow the Bible and therefore we have it every Sunday? No!
 - a. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- B. They assembled at a specific time to worship, 1 Corinthians 16:2

V. SINGING ONLY—NO MECHANICAL INSTRUMENT

- A. "No piano or organ?" "I'm surprised—I don't understand".
 - 1. Why? Because the Bible teaches that we should have it, and

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we don't practice what it teaches?

B. God tells us what to have in worship, Ephesians 5:19;
Colossians 3:16

1. He commands singing—not playing.
2. Examples of singing—none of playing

VI. ANY CHRISTIAN CAN BAPTIZE OTHERS

A. "I didn't know that any member of the church could baptize other people. I thought it had to be done by a preacher."

1. Why does this surprise people? Because the Bible teaches that only preachers can baptize people, and we do not practice what the Bible says?

B. "Have always heard and have been under the impression that this is reserved for the clergy"

1. Bible places no such restrictions on baptism. Anyone can teach another and baptize him. The Great Commission applies to all equally, Matthew 28:19, 20

VII. CAN BE BAPTIZED AT ANY TIME

A. "Any time? No special time for a baptismal service?"

1. Why should it be surprising that it can be done any time? Does Bible teach a special time? And we're not following the Bible when we do it anytime?

B. There was no waiting in the New Testament.

1. Acts 2:42; 8:36-38; 16:33

VIII. "CREED BOOK"—"RULES OF FAITH"

A. "You mean you people follow only the Bible? You mean the church of Christ doesn't have a creed for its members to follow?"

1. Why should this be surprising? Because the Bible teaches that we should have a creed, manual, or discipline written by men for the church to follow? And we are in error because we don't have one?

B. Do the Scriptures supply our needs?

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1. 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; John 12:48
2. Not to add to or take from what God has said

IX. NO EARTHLY HEADQUARTERS

- A. "Where are your headquarters, earthly headquarters, your central offices?"
 1. I guess heaven would be. We have none on earth. Each congregation is autonomous; self-governing.
- B. Each congregation is to have its own elders, overseers to lead the flock, guided only by the word of God, respecting our Head, Colossians 1:18

CONCLUSION:

1. These are the simplest things about the church, but they surprise people and catch their attention.

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A FORGOTTEN QUESTION

2 Corinthians 5:10

INTRODUCTION:

1. A very useful service is being provided by life insurance companies today. They are making men think about their own death.
 - a. They remind men that sooner or later they will die—their duty is to begin now to provide for the welfare of their families.
 - b. Their wise counsel has been a blessing to thousands of people.
2. Not easy to make men face the prospect of their own death
 - a. To do so, insurance salesmen have kept raising one important question over and over in all kinds of ways, “What will happen to your family after you are gone?”
 - b. Illu: Happy father playing with his smiling children—then a picture with the father gone—widow and children well-taken care of. “What will happen to my family after I’m gone?” becomes unescapable.
3. But there is one question insurance companies never ask—a forgotten question that they and everybody seems to avoid today. It is this: What will happen to YOU after you are gone?
 - a. The success in life insurance advertising is due to the ads diverting a man’s attention from his own involvement in death to the effect his departure will have on his loved ones. Might be that if a man were too concerned about what would happen to him beyond the grave, he might not be concerned enough about his family’s insurance coverage.
 - b. Their sales pitch tends to give a man a false sense of immortality. Very subtly, they give the impression that if a man makes adequate provision for his family, should have no fear of death. His memory will be cherished and perpetuated by his grateful survivors.
 - c. Don’t expect insurance companies to raise this forgotten question. They do a tremendously good job in reminding a man of his responsibilities with respect to his family’s

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future. But this question so easily avoided and forgotten, should be raised by someone, shouldn't it? Should be fully aware that something will happen to him, too, after he is gone. There is something beyond the grave and man must know what it is. No one should be allowed to forget the question, "What will happen to me after I'm gone?"

- d. Will not escape death: Hebrews 9:27; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Isaiah 89:47, 48; Job 30:23

I. WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER DEATH?

A. Hebrews 9:27; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10, 12

1. Every man, after he has died, will stand before the judgment seat of God and be judged for what he has done during his lifetime. This is what will happen to you after death, James 4:12; Ecclesiastes 3:17; Hebrews 10:30; 1 Peter 4:17; 1 John 2:28; 4:17; John 5:28, 29
 - a. To be sure, very few people talk about this. No newspaper or magazine headlines proclaim it.
2. This isn't something we haven't known before (public opinion sort of judgment; own conscience).
 - a. We know naturally that sometime, somewhere, we shall have to give account for what we have done in this world. We sense instinctively that men are responsible beings who do not do simply as they please. We know that man is not a vegetable or an animal, and we know deep inside that it is the duty of man to do good and to be good.
 - b. Even though people don't think much about it, they know they will be judged. "I am not a very good church member; but I have lived a fairly good life so I don't think I have too much to worry about. Anyway I guess I am about as good as anybody else." (Know will one day be compared with fellowman or judged by some standard)
3. We are so foolish when we think about the judgment we must face. "Have nothing to fear—perfect—have failed rather badly at times—have not always been entirely honest and pure—but still have nothing to be afraid of." Assume judgment will be a simple mathematical exercise in which

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God will determine whether they have done more good than evil during their lifetime, and if they have, God will forget all about their wrongdoing

- a. Illu: Criminal before judge. "I admit I broke into Smith's Grocery Store, but the good I've done far outweighs this offense." Let him go free? Of course not!
 - b. Can't pay for our evil deeds with our good works. But even if we could, where would we find works good enough to pay for them? Not enough to offer works we consider good. Would have to be works God considers good. Our prayers are not perfect, our worship not sincere, our love not unselfish. Isaiah 64:6
- B. Any hope for men like us who face such a judgment after our life on this earth is over?
1. Insurance companies may take care of our survivors, but who will take care of us? Any hope for us?

II. THERE IS HOPE.

- A. Not because of something in us, but because of the person who will sit upon the throne of judgment
1. This hope is so complete and so wonderful that the terror of the day of judgment will be turned into joy for many.
- B. He will be our judge.
1. John 5:22; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1
- C. We shall be judged by His word.
1. John 12:48; Romans 2:16; James 2:12
- D. But, He wants to be our Saviour.
1. Can be if we are willing to accept His salvation
 - a. Through faith and obedience

CONCLUSION:

1. What will happen to you after you are gone?
 - a. You know the answer to that question even though you do not like to think about it. You will stand before the Judge of all the earth.
 - b. Will that Judge be your Saviour?

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RECOMMENDING OR RENOUNCING?

Psalms 66:16

INTRODUCTION:

1. Ever testify in a religious meeting? Ever hear?
2. Realize it or not we are recommending our religion every day or renouncing it
 - a. Through our speech, actions, attitudes, etc.
3. Want to ask you four questions about your religion:
 - a. Can you recommend your religion in the light of the Scriptures?
 - b. Can you recommend your religion by the way you live?
 - c. Can you recommend your religion by the way you support it?
 - d. Can you recommend your religion by the way it works for you?

I. "RECOMMEND...IN LIGHT OF SCRIPTURES?"

A. Can you prove your religion?

1. Does God approve it? He cannot approve a religion that cannot be proved by His word, 1 Peter 3:15
2. What answer? Can't let parent, forefather, friend, or neighbor give the answer for you
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:21, "Prove all things..."
4. 1 John 4:1, "...believe not every spirit..."
5. 2 Corinthians 13:5, "...whether ye be in the faith..."
6. 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God..."

B. Matthew 15:8, 9, "...draweth nigh unto Me..." 2 John 9, "Whosoever transgresseth...hath not God"

1. Have Lord's word for everything you practice and teach?
 - a. Matthew 7:15, 16, "Beware of false prophets, which come in sheep's clothing..."

C. What about the name you wear? Items and forms of worship? Church of which you are a member?

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1. Don't be deceived. Be sure. Be certain

II. "RECOMMEND...BY THE LIFE YOU LIVE?"

- A. Gets close to home here. Your life and religion complement each other?

1. Christianity not just a life of convenience, but of conviction
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:5, "...having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof"

- B. Way you use a thing is the greatest recommendation for that thing

1. "Drink occasionally but I don't recommend it"
2. "Smoke but don't recommend it" (Why? We do by our practice)
3. Matthew 7:16-18, "By their fruits...know them..."
4. James 2:14, 18, "What doth it profit if a man says..."

- C. Illu: Light bulb does not shine just so you can see the bulb, but what is in the room. Christian shines, not to glorify himself but that others might see, Matthew 5:16

1. People watch us six days a week to see what we mean by what we say and do on the first day of the week.

III. "RECOMMEND...BY WAY YOU SUPPORT IT?"

- A. Spread the Good News?

1. 2 Corinthians 4:13, "I believed and therefore have I spoken..."
 - a. Why did he speak? Because he believed.
 - b. When see **therefore**, need to stop and see what it is **there** for? Means, for the above and stated reason. When one believes, he can't keep quiet about it.

- B. How much time, effort, ability, influence?

1. Christianity is not in capsule form to be taken in Sunday doses.
2. Presence, availability, financial support?

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IV. "RECOMMEND...BY THE WAY IT WORKS FOR YOU?"

A. Give you something to hold onto?

1. Crisis, fortune, death, sad, lonely, discouraged?
 - a. "When the world is at its worst, the Christian must be at his best."
2. Romans 8:28, "...all things work together..."
3. Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you..."
4. Hebrews 13:6, "The Lord is my helper..."
5. Daniel 3:17, "...our God...is able..."
6. 2 Corinthians 9:8, "And God is able..."

B. Live by it? To die by? Furnish you something to tie to? A refuge in every tempest?

1. Not enough to have a creed to uphold, must have a creed that holds you up. And, only Christ's gospel can!

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WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?

James 4:13-17

INTRODUCTION:

1. As the shadows lengthen and eternity seems not so far away, we are more prone to ask, "What is life? What's it all about?"

I. LIFE IS FROM GOD.

- A. "...He giveth to all life, and breath..." Acts 17:25
- B. He is the "father of our spirits"..., Hebrews 12:9
- C. Our life belongs to Him, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20
 1. "It's my own life." Not true.
- D. Should serve Him, Romans 12:1, 2
- E. Life is busy—meant to be
 1. Jesus, "I must work...while it is day," John 9:4
 2. New Testament reveals His busy life, but what if all He did had been written, John 21:25?
 3. Responsible for way we use life, Matthew 25:14-31
 4. Many lives are wasted.
 - a. Won't get interested in saving our souls until we are interested in our lives

II. LIFE IS PREPARATION FOR LIFE

- A. Twenty to twenty-five years in preparation for forty or fifty years of living
 1. Ours should be a life in preparation for eternity, Matthew 25:46
 - a. Galatians 6:8
- B. Question: "What is your life?" Not, "What is your living, your profession?"
- C. Parable of ten bridesmaids teaches life is time to prepare to meet God, Matthew 25:1-13

III. MY LIFE AN OPEN RECORD BEFORE GOD

- A. Ecclesiastes 12:13; 2 Corinthians 5:10 87 89

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1. "Be sure your sins will find...", Numbers 32:23

B. My life flashed upon screen—ashamed, embarrassed?

IV. LIFE IS BRIEF

A. James 4:14, "...as a vapor..."

B. Job 14:1; "Man...born of woman is of few days ..."

C. 1 Peter 1:24, "For all flesh is as grass..."

D. Psalms 90:9-12

1. "We spend our years as a tale that is told..."
2. "The days of our years are threescore and ten..."
3. "It is soon cut off and we fly away."
4. "So, teach us to number our days..."

V. LIFE IS UNCERTAIN

A. Death is certain, but life is not, Hebrews 9:27.

1. Proverbs 27:1, "Boast not thyself of tomorrow..."
2. Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now..."
3. Hebrews 3:7, "...Today if ye will hear..."
4. 2 Corinthians 6:2, "...now is the...time..."

VI. LIFE IS PRECIOUS

A. Life and death set before us in the Bible

1. Deuteronomy 30:15, "Behold I have set before you life and death..."

B. Romans 8:13, "...if you live after the flesh you shall die... mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live."

CONCLUSION:

1. Pass this way but once. Wheels of time have no reverse gear. Can't relive it—is lived but once.
 - a. Make yours meaningful—the fullest and happiest possible. That's what the Christian life is.

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THAT YE MAY GROW...

1 Peter 2:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 13:11

INTRODUCTION:

1. No sound sweeter than the sound of a little child lisping his first words, "Ma-Ma," "Da-Da"
 - a. Yet, if this same baby-pronunciation is continued into the teens, there is the feeling of "What a tragedy."
 - b. It is right and heart-warming for a baby to talk like a baby, play like a baby, and act like a baby.
 - c. But one of the surest proofs of its growing up is that it lays aside its baby talking, baby clothes, and baby habits.
 - d. Sure indication that he is wanting to grow up is that he begins to imitate grown people's habits
2. This is the same in the process of spiritual growth.
 - a. In the beginning, immaturities of attitude and behavior appear.
 - b. Can view these traits with tolerance and patience—in the beginning. But if these "beginning to walk" traits are continued—become hurtful to him and disappointing to others
3. Unhappiness in church relationships arises out of adults who have not grown up spiritually.
 - a. Insist on having our own way, sulk if our requests are not honored, and all too often, either leave the congregation or remain to obstruct its progress
 - b. Give way to pride, jealousy, desire for attention.
 - c. "Far more children clothed in adult bodies in our churches than there are in the nurseries"—have not yet laid aside childish ways
4. Our text (1 Peter 2:1) tells us there are five things a growing Christian needs to lay aside or put away.
 - I. "...LAYING ASIDE ALL MALICE..."
 - A. At first the child has nothing to guide him except his

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own feelings. Reason is undeveloped; there is no sense of time, value, or respect. Normal, therefore, for the child to react to hurt or frustration by crying out in rebellion or fighting back in resentment

1. Illu: When punished by parent, "I'm gonna run away from home, and you'll not get to see me anymore. I'm going to get me a big house and latch the screen and not let my Mommie in—forever and ever."
2. Reason, respect for others, desire for group approval—all are beyond their current development

B. Some vicious person wronged you? And the deed so entirely unjustified? "You are asking the impossible to ask that I relinquish all feelings of malice."

1. Need to recount all the venomous things said and done against our Saviour—not one of these evil things was deserved by Him. ("Father, forgive them, for...")
 - a. He would have been immeasurably more justified in harboring malice than any one of us. Isn't it surprisingly tragic, therefore, that anyone who has belonged to Jesus over a period of years should retain any malice in his heart?

C. "But there is absolutely no malice in my heart."

1. Wonderful! Now look honestly into heart. If any trace of jealousy, envy, covetousness, personal dislike, or an unforgiving spirit—there is ample material from which the stuff of malice grows.

II. "...AND ALL GUILÉ..."

A. Primary meaning is "deception" but can be used to allude to any sinful habit

1. Little child will pick up things belonging to others, appropriate it to his own enjoyment—looked at through adult eyes is theft and falsehood. It is not to the baby, though.
2. May greatly exaggerate—"elephant in back yard,"

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3. When older, instructed, understands, expected to lay these things aside

B. So, young Christian may easily commit acts which are out of harmony with his new life—but does not realize the wrong and inconsistency involved

1. But Christian who has followed Christ long enough to develop his Christian conscience, can't defend his actions with, "I didn't know it was wrong"

2. If speak whole truth, would be forced to say, "Knowing full well that it is wrong, I continue to do it because I do not love Christ

C. Does this mean that the time will come where there will be no sin in our lives, if we grow spiritually? No. But, I am saying that the time ought to come in this life when you and I will not have any habitual practice of sin and wrong in our lives.

III. "... AND HYPOCRISIES..."

A. Ever pretended as a child, "play-like," etc.?

1. All these imitations are a part of the psychology of childhood, but would be regarded as marks of mental infirmity if perpetuated into adulthood.

B. May imitate older and wiser Christians but must guard against pretending

1. Matthew 23:27, "...whited sepulchers..."

C. Should pray, "Lord, help me to be genuine, to be the same from the center of my heart to the finger tips of my life. Help me to be victorious over artificiality and pretense."

IV. "... AND ALL ENVIES ..."

A. A child is disturbed by the necessity of sharing love, attention and gifts with another child, because child's world centers in himself

1. Not old enough to know that his parents' love is so wonderful that there is enough to go around even if there are a dozen children in the family

2. Illu: Little 8-year old boy had brother, 5, and then a baby

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sister. Called his dad aside and said, "Dad, our family is just getting too large"

3. These indications of envy are the rule, not the exception with normal children. But with people older in years, envy ought to be the exception, not the rule.

B. It is psychologically and spiritually childish for us to react toward others with feelings of envy.

1. Indicates lack of faith in God's plan. So vast in scope and personal in nature that He needs every one of us. Nobody can take your place or mine.
2. Indicates a lack of faith in God's plan. The success or joy of another does not imply that God loves the other person more.

V. "... AND ALL EVIL SPEAKING ..."

A. Children hear words from others and repeat them without knowing they are wrong. Having grown up, can no longer say, "I didn't know those words were wrong..."

B. Christians should know that there are some uses of speech that God never expected to cross their lips.

1. Gossip, unfair criticism, cursing, swearing and vulgarity of any sort—a Christian's speech should never include such.
2. Cure for evil speaking must be accomplished in the heart. If we do not tolerate thoughts of evil and emotions of wrong in the heart, there will be no likelihood that evil speaking will emanate from our lips.
 - a. Psalms 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth..."

CONCLUSION:

1. Remember habits of your early Christian life which would be completely out of character for you to do now? We have belonged to Christ long enough to grow up!
2. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere..." 1 Peter 2:2

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WHO IS THIS JESUS?

Colossians 1:15-19

INTRODUCTION:

1. So many at this season seem to believe to some extent that Jesus lived upon the earth at one time.
2. Many do not know or believe the Bible account of this person.
3. Paul is trying to get the gnostics and other unbelievers to take another look at this Jesus, the Christ.
 - a. He does so by affirmation—affirming who Jesus is and what He did and is doing. So he says:

I. JESUS IS THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD (v.15)

A. He represents to mankind the perfection of God.

1. Hebrews 1:3, "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person..."
 - a. Shows the dignity and exalted rank of the Son of God. Thus He is our divine mediator—stands between us and God. He is the express image of God.
 - b. Can you imagine one equal to the Father being here in human flesh? That's the story of Jesus—born of Mary in Bethlehem.
2. Only by and through Jesus that we can perceive God, or by which God is made known unto us in His real perfections. By Him we see God's character and His glory.
 - a. We know God when we know Jesus—He is the representation, the manifestation of God. He is known only in and through Christ.

B. The firstborn son was the officiating priest in the family, in the absence or on the death of the father.

1. Thus, among all the creatures of God, Christ occupies a place of preeminence. "He is the image of God." Thus Christ sustains the most exalted rank in the universe. He is preeminent above all others. He is the head of all things. First place in preeminence.

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II. HE IS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS (v.16)

A. Universe divided into two—heaven and earth, Genesis 1:1

1. Heaven seems to embrace all the universe except the earth—the heavenly bodies, the distant worlds, as well as heaven where God resides. Thus all things in the worlds above us were created by Him.
2. Earth = all the animals, plants, minerals, waters, everything which the world contains
3. Visible and invisible—see but a small part of the universe, but all created by Jesus Christ

III. HE IS BEFORE ALL THINGS; BY HIM ALL THINGS CONSIST (v. 17)

A. As He must be if He created all things

1. He was before all things in the order of existence.
 - a. The equivalent to saying that He was eternal. If He had an existence before anything was created, He must be eternal. Colossians 1:17, "...and by him all things consist." The "all things" are kept in the present state—the order and arrangement is continued by His power. If unsupported by Him, all of it would fall into disorder or sink back to nothing.
 - b. His power is infinite—nothing less could be sufficient to uphold the universe. None could do this but one who is divine. He is the image of God.

IV. HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH (v.18)

A. He is the beginning of all things—as in creation, also in the church.

1. Said He would build it. Matthew 16:18, "...and upon this rock I will build my church..."
2. He is the fountain of authority and power, the first to be raised from the dead to immortality. Others raised, died again. He rose to die no more.

B. Thus, the one with supreme authority is the one who established the church—bought it with His blood and promises to save it.

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V. HE HAS FIRST PLACE IN EVERYTHING (v.18)

A. Pleased the Father to bestow such upon His Son

1. Thus, He is to have first place in everything.
2. He is placed over all things as the head of the church.

B. So that in Him should be dignity, authority, power, and moral excellence.

1. Thus, He supplies everything needful for our salvation.

CONCLUSION:

1. Thus, if we follow Him appeal to His word, obey what He has told us to do, how to live and die, that we might live with Him in eternity.

SERMON OUTLINES

I AM DEBTOR

Romans 1:8-17

INTRODUCTION:

1. This is the Christian's "I am" of gratitude.
 - a. Paul felt that there were so many blessings which he enjoyed in Christ, that a lifetime of service in Christ would not enable him to pay off his debt.
 - b. This was not a debt of merit but one of grace.

I. THE GOSPEL PUTS US IN DEBT.

- A. Paul wanted to visit Rome. Why?
 1. Not as a tourist but as a debtor. Having received the gospel put him in debt. To share these blessings with others.
- B. We, in Christ, enjoy same blessings he did
 1. These blessings make us debtors just as he was.
 2. Carrying the gospel to others not optional
 - a. This "I am" of gratitude makes us feel that no one should be cheated out of the opportunity to hear the gospel
 - b. Often talk about mission work as if it were optional or special, but this is the very heart of Christianity—the very mission of the church; therefore, nothing optional about it
- C. This "I am" of the Christian will put the gospel where it belongs, and we will do it with joy.
 1. We are expected to pay our debts—not at liberty to choose whether we pay or not. One who does not is dishonest.
 - a. If we as Christians do not feel deeply this "I am" and if not meeting the responsibility of trying to carry gospel around the world, we are dishonest. We are trying to beat this debt.

II. CHRISTIANS ARE DEBTORS, NOT CREDITORS

- A. Lot of people in world think they are creditors—think world owes them a living.
 1. World does not owe us anything. We owe the world a life.

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B. Many in church feel they are creditors and church owes them everything.

1. What a mistaken idea. Study this "I am" and know that as individual members we are debtors, not the church.

III. DEBTORS TO PREACH GOSPEL TO WORLD, NOT CONVERT THE WORLD

A. Not in debt to convert the world.

1. Surely we are to try to convert all, but Christ and His apostles did not convert all.
2. Paul felt his responsibility to preach to all, but if they refused the gospel after he preached it, then he had paid his debt to them.
3. Some feel if cannot get them into church one way, then we are to do it some other way.
 - a. Water down gospel and try to bring them in any way and every way. This is not the "I am" Paul was talking about.

B. Acts 13, Paul preached gospel in Antioch of Pisidia—they would not listen. Read vv. 45, 46. He felt he had paid his debt, so he left them and told them they had judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.

1. He had paid his debt. The debt then became theirs.

IV. I AM IN DEBT TO MY PARENTS

A. Their sacrifices to give me an opportunity in life—more than I could ever number or repay

1. Gave me a good name, thus as long as I live I am in debt to maintain the honor of the name they gave to me
2. Taught me the value of the Bible and the importance of and following its teaching. Places me in debt to study it and try to practice its precepts

V. IN DEBT TO CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

A. In the Bible classes

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1. e.g.: George W. Jones—taught us—trained us in leading prayers, reading Scriptures, making talks
 - a. Encouraged and helped me want to preach the gospel of Christ

B. All of us are in debt to good Bible teachers

1. Many today would know practically nothing about the Bible if it were not for dedicated teachers
 - a. Yet many parents are so lacking in understanding and gratitude until they never even offer a word of encouragement or a compliment to the teacher of their children

VI. IN DEBT TO PIONEER PREACHERS

- A. They sacrificed beyond measure to preach the gospel, and finally to bring it to our parents and to us
 1. Most of them “made tents” to live and preached wherever they had an opportunity
 2. Yet many, especially younger preachers and members, would downgrade these giants of the past. One got rid of every book in his library written by the pioneer preachers
 - a. What a way to feel his indebtedness to preachers of the past

VII. IN DEBT TO THE CHURCH

- A. To every congregation where I have lived, worshiped, and worked
 1. They suffered. But they suffered **with** me, for I suffered, too
 - a. I was trying—still am—to grow as a preacher, and so many brethren have been so understanding and helpful
 2. e.g.: Congregation at Grandfield, Oklahoma, Pauls Valley, Oklahoma City, Elk City, San Jacinto, Tulia, Shamrock Shores and Lake Highlands in Dallas, Big Spring, Bell Avenue in Amarillo, Vega, Adrian, and Northridge in Amarillo
 - a. Even though I go back to some of these places occasionally

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for meetings and funerals and thus try to make an "installment payment," I shall never get my debt to them paid in full

3. Fifty-eight years of preaching has not made a dent in the debt I owe. Expect to spend the rest of my life making payments. But when my life is completed, I will die in debt

B. All members here are in debt to this local church

1. Illu: New members. Don't come expecting church to give you something, feeling that the church owes you something

2. Should feel indebted

- a. Place is here, building is here, program in progress to evangelize, edify, and help the needy
- b. Should ask, "Now, what can I be and do so as to make payments on the debt I owe and also to help expand and enlarge the program of this church?"

SERMON OUTLINES

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Romans 1:1

INTRODUCTION:

1. Wm. James said, "Religion is either a dull habit, or an acute fever."
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:5, "...having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof..."
 - 1) Romans 15:20—He wanted to preach where Christ was not named lest he should build on another man's foundation
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:10, "I labored more abundantly..."
2. Our text is short but it contains three powerful truths concerning the Christian life

I. A SERVING LIFE

A. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ..."

1. The Greek word means "bondservant" or "slave." So, it really means, "I belong to another." Paul was a possessed person. His life was not his own
2. When one is buried in baptism for the remission of all past sins, he enters into a fellowship, and over the threshold is written, "You are not your own, you have been bought with a price." The Christian is the personal property of Jesus Christ

B. Here we have a paradox. It says "Slavery is the way to freedom." One is never more free than when he is surrendered to Christ. "He that would be the greatest of all, let him be the servant of all." The way up is down and the way to real greatness is service. A Christian is a servant

II. A SEPARATED LIFE

A. Paul said, "I am separated unto the gospel"

1. There is no way a life can count for Christ unless it is a separated life. This separation is not a monastic life, but it involves our allegiance and our affections, our standards,

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concepts, values, and priorities

2. Romans 12:2, "And be not fashioned according..."
 - a. Phillips, "Don't let the world squeeze you into its mold." We must not live, act, talk, or dress like the unholy world about us. We are to be different from the world, not in superficial ways, not in perpetuating peculiarities, but in the terms of morals, standards, concepts and values
3. A Christian is hearing a different drummer. He is walking to a different cadence. He gets his orders from a different source. He will not allow his speech, thoughts, attitudes or actions to sink to the sub-standard ones of the world. He has been separated

III. A SOUL-SAVING LIFE

- A. A Christian is one who is sent (not as an apostle) to some lost soul with the gospel—a neighbor, friend, or loved one
 1. Romans 1:16
 - a. I have been separated for soul-saving purposes
 2. Illu: J.W. McGarvey said of Benjamin Franklin, "He knew the word and treasured it in his heart."
 - a. How we need this same trait
 - b. McGarvey also said of Franklin, "He believed his message." We will not try very hard to save people unless we believe they are lost. And, we won't try very hard unless we believe the gospel is God's power to save.
 3. 2 Corinthians 4:13, "...I believed and therefore have I spoken." Paul spoke because he believed. Our failure to speak reflects our lack or weakness of faith
 - a. Illu: Little boy home from Bible school, "Mom, my teacher's brother died and she believes she is going to see him again." "Well, son, we all believe that." "But, Mom, she **really** believes it."

We sing, "O Will You Not Tell It Today," and "I Love To Tell The Story," but I'm afraid our singing is sometimes in the spirit of the mother who said, "Well, son, we all

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believe that.” The little boy had noticed there was a difference in the way his mom and the teacher believed. We need to **really** believe that the gospel is God’s power to save, and that if our loved ones and others do not learn and obey it, they cannot be saved.

CONCLUSION:

1. Take inventory: Is my life a serving life, or do I live as if I am possessed by another? Is my life a separated life? Is my life a soul-saving life?
2. If I can answer these questions in the affirmative, then I am living the Christian life.
3. We really need to take a personal inventory because our souls and their salvation are in the balance.

SERMON OUTLINES

WONDERFUL JESUS

Isaiah 9:6, 7

INTRODUCTION:

1. Names do not mean very much to us today.
 - a. Many are not even much interested in keeping a "good name," a name for honesty, integrity, and purity
2. In the Bible, names really meant something
 - a. **Peter** meant a stone
 - b. **Jesus** meant Savior
 - c. **Abraham** meant father of many nations
 - d. **Samson** meant son-like
3. Jesus is given at least 212 names and titles in the Bible, and each one expresses something in His character
 - a. Called the Lamb, Lion, Lily of the Valley, Rose of Sharon, Bright and Morning Star, One altogether Lovely
 - b. But Isaiah sums it all up when he tells us that Jesus is **Wonderful**
4. The ancient people selected 7 wonders of the world
 - a. You can add all of the wonders of the world, ancient and modern, and those in heaven and on earth. Yet, all of these combined cannot equal the wonders of Jesus
 - b. Place all the wonders of the world on one side of the scales and place Jesus on the other side, and He far outweighs them all

I. HIS BIRTH WAS WONDERFUL

- A. The Old Testament is full of prophecies concerning His birth
 1. Genesis 3:15, Would come forth as "the seed of woman." Man would have nothing to do with this birth
 2. Micah 5:2 tells us where He would be born—not in Jerusalem as the wise men thought, but in the little town of Bethlehem
 3. Isaiah 7:14 said He would be born of a virgin

SERMON OUTLINES

- a. No one had ever heard of such a thing, but 700 years later, Gabriel appeared to the virgin Mary and told her that she would bring forth a child and that His name would be called "Jesus"
- b. "How can this be?" God will do it. Joseph need not put her away, for angels told him Mary was not guilty of sin
- B. His birth was so wonderful that God hung out a new star in His honor. Star told wise men that He had been born and led them to His house
- C. His birth was so wonderful it affected three worlds:
 - 1. Angels came down from heaven and sang at His birth
 - 2. Shepherds and wise men came to worship Him
 - a. Represented two classes: the highest and lowest. Shows Him to be the Saviour of **all men**—to touch all classes—no respecter of persons
 - 3. The devil was agitated—he knew He was the Christ and stirred up King Herod to kill every baby under two years old

II. HIS LIFE WAS WONDERFUL.

- A. Can say of some "He lives a most wonderful life"
 - 1. But when you come closer to this person, you find that he is not perfect—there are flaws and shortcomings
- B. But call Jesus and look at Him from every standpoint:
 - 1. "The verdict of the ages"—good sermon based on Pilate's statement, "I find no fault in Him." **No one** can find any fault in Him
- C. We ought to look up to Jesus
 - 1. Illu: Man finding fault with church members, preachers, didn't like the way the church was being run, way preachers preached, etc. One asked, "What do you think about Jesus Christ?" "Oh, I can't find any fault in Him." If we would just quit looking at human frailties and look at Jesus, we would be a thousand times better off.
 - 2. Illu: Old man asked a carping critic, "Did you ever hear the story of the rich man and Lazarus?" "Why, yes." "Do you

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remember how the dogs licked the sores of Lazarus?" "Yes."
"Well, you remind me of those dogs. You are always licking sores. All you ever notice in Christians is their faults."

3. Ought to quit looking at others—especially hypocrites—and look up to Jesus. Ought to measure our lives by His wonderful life and see how we stand.

III. HE WAS WONDERFUL IN HIS MESSAGE

A. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:46, 47

1. Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10; Romans 5:8; John 3:16
2. Matthew 11:28-30

B. "All have sinned..." Condemned sinners before God

1. Preached faith, John 8:24; repentance, Luke 13:3; confession, Matthew 10:32; baptism, Mark 16:16

C. They marveled at His message—"Never man spake..."

1. Confucius, Mohammed, Buddha—all gave their messages.
2. Joseph Smith gave his, Mary Baker Eddy gave hers, Ellen G. White gave hers, but when you compare their messages with Christ's, it is like comparing a molehill to a mountain.

IV. HIS LOVE IS WONDERFUL

A. Paul tried to measure it as he told of the length, breadth, depth, and height of it, Ephesians 3:18

1. How long? Extends from eternity to eternity
2. How broad? Broad enough to include all races, tongues and peoples in the world
3. How deep? Reaches down to the deepest sinner
4. How high? Lifts a sinner out of hell and into His Father's house

V. HIS DEATH WAS WONDERFUL

A. The Son of God—sinless—dying for sinners

1. Darkness for three hours—veil in Temple rent from top to bottom—earthquake shook the world—rocks torn apart—graves were opened

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B. Wonderful because of what it accomplished,

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

1. We can have remission of sins and eternal life.

a. We were doomed to die and He took our place.

VI. HIS RESURRECTION WAS WONDERFUL

A. When He conquered death—when He arose from the grave—He proved that everything He had ever said was true.

B. Because of His resurrection we shall be raised.

1. When He comes, the dead will be raised and the living will be changed—"And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

VII. HE IS PREPARING A WONDERFUL PLACE

A. John 14:1-3

CONCLUSION:

A. He is, indeed, a wonderful Saviour.

1. Is He yours? He can be—today!

SERMON OUTLINES

INTO HIS LIKENESS

2 Corinthians 3:18

INTRODUCTION:

1. What is the real nature of human nature?
 - a. Is it good or bad?
 - b. Is it fixed or flexible?
 - c. Is it final or changeable?
2. From experience we know not all is good or bad, rather a mixture and a conflict between the two.
 - a. Sometimes cross, peevish, downright mean. "I was not myself; something got into me; I don't know what happened to me."
 - b. Illu: One person built himself a "grouch house"—would shut himself in until he became himself again.
 - c. Illu: In Chinese language, a character for "peace"—a roof top with one woman under it. Also a character for "discord"—same roof top with two women under it.
 - d. Wonder how many different persons there are in each of us? Conflict between our better self and our poorer self that causes us to be reasonable or unreasonable, generous or stingy, loving or unloving.

Self-Discovery

"Within my earthly temple there's a crowd;
There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud;
There's one that's brokenhearted for sins
And one, unrepentant, sits and grins.
There's one who loves his neighbor as himself,
And one who cares for naught but fame and self;
From such corroding care I would be free
If once I could determine which is me."

- f. In every person there is this mixture of good and bad:
"There is so much good in the worst of us,
And so much bad in the best of us,

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That it doesn't behoove any of us,
To find fault with the rest of us."

3. So, this is human nature as we find it in neighbors and friends, and as we find it in the Bible.
 - a. David, in Psalms, did not always live up to what he wrote.
 - b. Solomon, in his Proverbs of wisdom, often lived foolishly.
 - c. All through the Bible, a contrast between "earthly and heavenly," "flesh and spirit," "old and a new man," "law of sin and the law of Christ".
4. Now, what are we to do about this human nature?

I. FORMULA HAS AS ITS BASIC IDEA "SEEING CHRIST"

A. See His glory and focus our attention on Him

1. A transformation begun on earth and will be completed into the perfect likeness of Christ in the world to come
2. Whole Christian life a process by which we are changed into what we ought to be

B. Christ is being formed in us when we truly see Him and behold His glory

1. Galatians 4:19, "...until Christ be formed in you"
 - a. Ephesians 3:17, "...Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith..."
 - b. Colossians 1:27, "...Christ in you, the hope of glory"
 - c. Thus, the gospel's mission is to create Christ in us, and our great need is for Christ to be formed in us
 - d. 1 John 3:1, 2 "...manner of love the Father..."

II. THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW NATURE

A. Galatians 3:26, 27, "...are all one in Christ Jesus..."

1. When you were baptized, what did you know about it? What did you know about putting on Christ? How could a young person put on Christ?
 - a. Was just the **beginning** of his putting on Christ. Just the beginning of his being changed into the likeness of Christ

SERMON OUTLINES

- b. Baptism, the **beginning** of the new creation.
- B. There is a great challenge in the study of baptism
 - 1. Needs to be preached to people out of Christ, but the really deep messages about baptism in the Bible are addressed to Christians. A discussion can be powerful and needed for one in process of putting on Christ.
 - a. As Paul was urging the Colossians to put on Christ, he takes them back to their baptism. That's where it all begins. Reminds them of what it meant.
 - b. Baptism means a lot more to me than it did many years ago when I was baptized.
 - 2. Read Colossians to find out what we did when we were baptized
 - a. Colossians 2:12; 3:1-23
 - b. What takes place in being buried and in being raised up in baptism? "...put off the old man...put on the new man...image of him that created him"
 - 3. Have we left the meaning of baptism behind us? Should be with us every mile of the journey
 - a. Old nature crucified, but a really important thing is that day we started putting on Christ
 - 1) We yielded, we began the journey. Song, "Have thine own way, Lord—mold me and make me after Thy will..." As years pass, we yield more and more in a fuller degree—changed into the likeness of Christ from one degree of glory to another
 - 4. Baptism not just an act by which we are constituted members of the church. It was the way we started putting on Christ
 - a. That's what your family, neighbors, and friends are looking for; they want to see Christ living in us

CONCLUSION:

- 1. We know much more, I am sure, about baptism now than when

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we were baptized. But am at my best **only** when I go in the direction which was set many years ago. A lifetime's work to put off the old and put on the new

2. If you have never put on Christ in baptism—do it now. If you have put Him on in baptism, now put Him on in your life everyday. Fulfill the commitment you have made
 - a. Remember, it is “**Christ in you**, the hope of glory,”
Colossians 1:27
 - b. 2 Corinthians 3:18, “...are changed into the same image from glory to glory...”

SERMON OUTLINES

THEY TOOK HIM EVEN AS HE WAS

Mark 4:35-39

INTRODUCTION:

1. "They took Him even as He was"

- a. If we expect Christ to still the tempests in our lives, we must take Him as He is
- b. If we seek to change Him then we cannot have the peace and calmness that He offers
- c. We must take Him even as He is or we cannot take Him at all

I. CHRIST CAN CHANGE YOU, BUT YOU CANNOT CHANGE HIM

A. He is perfect, Hebrews 5:8, 9. Any change would mar that perfection

- 1. Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever"

B. Many would like to take Him if they could modify Him

- 1. Make Him fit into their mold—make His thinking coincide with theirs

C. Others would take Him if they could take Him upon their own terms and if they could dictate the policy

D. Christ knows men, John 2:24, and came to change men, Luke 19:10

- 1. Christ does not need to be changed, but man does

II. SEVERAL THINGS THAT CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM HIM

A. Christ and His cross

- 1. Many would take Him if they could take Him without the cross

- a. Peter tried to remove the cross from Him
Matthew 16:21, 23

- b. Luke 24:46, 47

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c. Hebrews 9:22

d. Hebrews 2:9, "...He tasted death for every man"

e. Isaiah 53:5, "...wounded for our transgressions"

f. Isaiah 53:6, "...laid on Him the iniquity..."

2. Matthew 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me"

a. Some are not ready for this. Self-denial, selflessness

b. Cannot take Christ without the cross, nor can you take the cross without Christ

3. One cannot have the Christ of the cross without taking also the cross of the Christ

B. Christ and His atoning blood

1. 1 John 1:7; Hebrews 9:22; Colossians 1:14; 1 Peter 1:18, 19

2. The power is in the blood. If you take Him even as He is, must believe in the atoning blood, obey His commands to be cleansed by it, Hebrews 5:8, 9

C. Christ and His church

1. Some will not take Him at all if they have to take His church

a. Do not like arrangements of it, mission, nature, government, limitations of it, terms of it

2. Christ established His church, Matthew 16:18, and built only one, Ephesians 4:4. He is the head of it, Colossians 1:18, and it is built upon Him, 1 Corinthians 3:11. He has told everyone how to become members of it, 1 Corinthians 12:13. Leaves no doubt as to its importance—saved are added to it, Acts 2:47. His own blood purchased it, Acts 20:28

3. His church is His body, Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22, 23, and cannot separate Christ from His body

D. Christ and His offer of salvation

1. Purified through obedience to the truth, 1 Peter 1:22

2. Only when one abides in the word is he a disciple indeed, John 8:31, 32

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3. Sanctified by the word, John 17:17
4. What does the word teach with reference to salvation?
 - a. Must believe, John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
 - b. Must repent, Luke 13:3, 5
 - c. Must confess Jesus Christ, Matthew 10:32, 33; Romans 10:10
 - d. Must be baptized into Christ, Romans 6:3, 4
5. We cannot take Him as He is without taking His plan of salvation
 - a. The Lord taught it. In baptism, Christ is put on, Galatians 3:27. Baptism saves, 1 Peter 3:21. Brings one into the Lord's church, 1 Corinthians 12:13
 - b. Why not then, "arise and be baptized...", Acts 22:16?

CONCLUSION:

1. You cannot have the promises of God until you heed the precepts of God
2. You cannot enjoy the comforts of the gospel until you employ the commands of the gospel
3. To have access to the dividends, you have to accept the demands
4. Christianity not only proposes some opportunities, but it also imposes some obligations
5. Take Christ as He is and He will change you into what you ought to be

SERMON OUTLINES

THE VANISHING SINNER

INTRODUCTION:

1. Book, *The Vanishing American*—American Indians
2. Word “sin” appears more than 310 times in the Bible
 - a. Add words like “sinned,” “sinners,” “sins,” etc. then, we have it used more than 700 times in the Bible. Isaiah 59:2, “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid...” Ezekiel 18:4, “...the soul that sinneth, it shall die”
3. But, the word “sin” has about lost its sting
 - a. John 8:21, “...die in your sins, whither I go...”
 - b. John 8:24, “...if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins”
4. But, in spite of all this, sin does not appear so awful and hideous—the sinner has almost vanished
 - a. Now, what has contributed to the vanishing sinner?

I. A VANISHED SENSE OF GOD

- A. Who is He? He is Creator, ruler of the universe, Jehovah, Father, merciful, loving, gracious, severe, our judge and “a consuming fire,” Hebrews 12:29
- B. In our sufficiency, we do not need Him, can get along without Him, and so He has just about vanished

II. A VANISHED SENSE OF SIN

- A. What is sin?
 1. James 4:17, “...knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin”
 - a. “good”—what is upright, righteous, moral quality
 - 1) Psalms 133:1, “Behold how good and...”
 - 2) Williams, “So when a man knows what is right but does not do it, he is guilty of sin”
 2. 1 John 3:4, “...sin is transgression of the law...”

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- a. Means "lawlessness"—law-breaking, contrary to the law
- b. ANT, "The breaking, violating of God's law by transgression or neglect; being unrestrained and unregulated by His commands and His will"
- 3. 1 John 5:17, "All unrighteousness is sin"
 - a. Phillips, "...a failure to obey God's law is sin".
- 4. "But I'm not bad—O, I do some things I shouldn't; don't do some things I should, but I am not bad" (But, isn't that exactly what the Bible says is a sin?)
- 5. "What's the need for me to obey the gospel? I don't feel I need to"
 - a. Forget what obedience to the gospel does? It cleanses from sin, remits sin, forgives sin
- 6. Sometimes we forget to repent, pray and reform. That's our contact with blood that keeps us free from the guilt of sin

III. THE FACT OF THE VANISHING SAINT

- A. Think we can be anybody and do anything and still be a Christian
 - 1. No particular high standard; standards are lowered and delinquency is raised
 - 2. Has the church become bulky with the unconverted? No particular difference in the way we live and the way the world lives?

IV. A VANISHED SENSE OF THE JUDGMENT

- A. 2 Corinthians 5:10, "...must all appear before the judgment seat of God..."
- B. Romans 14:10, "...for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"
- C. Romans 14:12, "So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God"
- D. Acts 17:30, 31, "And the times of this ignorance God overlooked, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. Because He hath appointed a day, in which He will

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judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained..."

CONCLUSION: (What is it?)

1. The sinner should vanish

- a. He does when he is cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ,
1 John 1:7
- b. Romans 6:17, 18
- c. Galatians 3:26, 27
- d. 2 Corinthians 5:17

SERMON OUTLINES

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Philippians 3:13, 14

INTRODUCTION:

1. Near the close of each year, we hear it and say it
2. "New" is a beautiful word
 - a. House, car, clothes—new, new, new
3. God gives so many wonderful new things
 - a. Birth, new creatures, heart, life, hope, task—finally a new body in a new home called heaven. Nothing there will ever be old or worn out. "For, behold, I make all things new," Revelation 21:5
4. Text: Paul looked backward and thought of all he had suffered for Christ and all he had accomplished for Christ, then said, "I turn my back upon all that, for there is something more important ahead. I am pressing toward the mark for the prize..."
5. Recipe for a Happy New Year: Repent, Resolve, Remember

I. REPENT

- A. Illu: Adam and Eve—"Where art thou?" Out of fellowship with God
- B. Illu: David, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation..."
Psalms 51:12
 1. Sins are to be repented of. Have known joy, good conscience—now miserable (as was David, "My bones waxed old and tears ran down my face like rivers of waters," Psalms 119:136
 - a. Think Peter was happy when he denied the Lord? "He went out and wept bitterly"
 2. Neglect is to be repented of
 - a. Vowed to be faithful when became Christian
 - 1) Other things crowded out Christ and His church? He never faltered—He went all the way for us. Why can't we?

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- b. The best we can be and do is not good enough for Jesus. Best of your time, talent, money, and service not good enough for Him. Shameful that we give Him less than our best
- 3. Wrong spirit needs to be repented of
 - a. Many would not drink, steal, are pure morally, but heart filled with hatred, jealousy, malice, and envy
 - b. If something between you and someone else, then there is something between you and God

II. RESOLVE

A. Daniel resolved

- 1. Would not defile himself with the king's meat
 - a. Did not lose out—lived it for 70 years

B. Jacob resolved to be liberal with the Lord

- 1. Vowed—even when he had nothing
- 2. Matthew 6:33

C. David resolved

- 1. To read the Bible, Psalms 119:15, 16, "I will meditate in Thy precepts...I will delight myself in Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy word"

D. Paul resolved

- 1. To win souls
 - a. Romans 1:14, "I am debtor both to Greeks..."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 9:22, "I am all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"
 - c. Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire..."
 - 1) If we did this, would make this church over, and it would also make us over

III. REMEMBER

A. Can't repay Christ for what He has done for us

- 1. If had one thousand lives and lived every one of them faithfully for Him every minute, we could never repay Him

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for all He has done for us. Remembering this, "I'll do my best for Him in the New Year"

B. Greatest happiness and richest rewards come to those who are faithful

1. True happiness is found only in Christ

C. May be our last year

1. Want, therefore, to make it our best

2. Illu: Jesus and barren fig tree. "Cut it down"

3. May be cut down before another year is over and what if no fruit is coming from our lives? Are our homes stronger?

Children reared to be faithful? What if your children, in the new year, follow your example of this year?

CONCLUSION:

1. Now, as we remember, we resolve, but we cannot carry out these resolutions until we repent

SERMON OUTLINES

THE TEARS OF JESUS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Three times we read of Jesus weeping:
 - a. At the grave of Lazarus, John 11:35
 - b. Over Jerusalem, Luke 19:41
 - c. When He prayed, Hebrews 5:7
2. Because of the tears of Jesus we are brought face to face with His humanity; for tears are an inherent attribute of man—a visible expression of His emotion, usually of grief or sorrow, and sorrow is the unfailing portion of all men (Job 14:1; Ecclesiastes 2:23; Isaiah 53:3; 53:4).
3. Men today do not like to be seen weeping—think tears are a confession of weakness—would keep their sorrows to themselves
 - a. Lord wept unashamedly before others. Would not hide His grief from others. How tenderly He felt for them in their sorrows
4. In these three recorded occasions of His weeping, we are led to appreciate a different cause for His tears in each instance

I. TEARS OF SYMPATHY, John 11:35

- A. How expressive this short sentence. Its brevity serves to focus all attention on the Lord. How human He was!
- B. He is still the same—the sympathizing High Priest—touched with feeling of their infirmities, having experienced all their temptations. He draws near to His people in their sorrows.
- C. Let us not be ashamed to be seen weeping with those who weep, Romans 12:15
 1. True sympathy means entering fully into other folks' grief, suffering with them, even to the sharing of their tears.
Nothing dishonorable in tears

II. TEARS OF SORROW, Luke 19:41

- A. Jesus is now coming to Jerusalem the last time during His sojourn here on this earth

SERMON OUTLINES

1. Looked sorrowfully upon the city, and wept bitterly over it.
2. Word translated "wept" here is different from that used in John 11:35
 - a. There—implied merely the shedding of tears, but here—the word indicates that the weeping was accompanied by signs of distress, as commonly witnessed in lamentation for the dead, Mark 5:38. The Lord was visibly moved
- B. Visibly moved as He contemplated the coming destruction of Jerusalem soon to take place
 1. There it lay so peaceful, so privileged, yet so persistent in its refusal of the Messiah
 2. He knew the awful fate that awaited the city—a destruction so complete that not one stone would be left standing upon another. Its inhabitants would all be slain
 - a. All His warnings had gone unheeded—think of their awakening when it would be too late. How genuine His grief! Wept and lamented over the city
- C. Do we know anything of such tears today? Do we weep over the state of the world around us?
 1. Judgment will surely come but the world is oblivious to it
 - a. Many with whom we associate day by day are going to experience an eternity of woe, all because they have refused the gospel presented to them. Do we feel for them as we ought? If we grieved over the plight of our neighbors and friends as we should, it would drive us more often to our knees to pray for them—would impel us to be more faithful in telling the good news of salvation for lost man

III. TEARS OF SUPPLICATION, Hebrews 5:7

- A. First ten verses give the High Priest's qualifications, Hebrews 5:1-10
 1. An amplification of Hebrews 4:15—He is a High Priest fully able to sympathize with our weaknesses
 2. Vv. 7, 8, an example of what His work entailed—His prayer life while upon this earth

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- a. Some think the prayers and supplications of Gethsemane. Intense agony in the Garden—but no record of Lord shedding tears on this occasion
- b. Others believe these prayers and supplications refer to the Lord pleading with God while on the cross, Psalms 22:1, 21
- c. Psalms 88:1, 2, 13—full of crying and praying unto God. These tears are not mentioned in the books of the gospel for no man saw them. But God knew them
3. Hebrews 5:7, God heard and answered Him because of His godly fear. Word here translated fear carried the idea of taking good hold of something or someone. So, Lord had taken good hold of God in prayer. “Strong crying and tears”—thus took hold of God—He prayed with great intensity of emotion. Prayed fervently. Prayed as if He meant it
- B. How poor are our prayers compared with Christ’s
 1. Often characterized by self-glorification—vain repetition—praying for its own sake—praying to be seen of men—a catalogue of requests with but little feeling. How seldom we really strive in prayer. Do we continue steadfastly in this exercise, at all seasons, with perseverance?
 2. What part have tears in our prayer life?
 - a. Should feel the burden of what we pray for—strong crying and tears should characterize our supplications

CONCLUSION:

1. The ministry of tears is conspicuous by its absence today
 - a. How seldom do we see tears of sympathy for those who suffer
 - b. Tears of sorrow over those who are passing by opportunities to know and obey the gospel
 - c. Tears that denote the fervency of our prayers
 - d. Tears of repentance for our failures, Matthew 26:75
 - e. Tears of disappointment when out of touch with Christ, Mark 16:10

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- f. Tears of gratitude as we consider what the Lord endured for our sakes, Luke 7:38
- g. Tears of regret at parting from those for whom we have a great affection in the Lord, 2 Timothy 1:4
- 2. Do we consider tears a weakness?
 - a. Have we become so materialistic that we fear to display our inward emotions? Are we ashamed to be found weeping?
 - b. Let us turn our eyes to the Lord. Let us learn from His example

SERMON OUTLINES

THE OPEN WAY

Isaiah 59:1, 2

- I. "I AM THE WAY...", John 14:6
 - A. Matthew 11:28-30, "Come unto me..."
 - B. Revelation 3:8, "...set before thee an open door..."
 - 1. Open, no man can force you—not even God. Free to choose, to act, etc.
 - 2. Choose to be saved, or choose to make Christian experience harder for others
 - C. Hebrews 5:2, "...compassion on them out of the way..."
 - D. Man "out of the way," Acts 8:27
 - 1. Treasurer of the Queen of Ethiopia
 - a. Honest, educated, financier, but not a Christian
 - b. Bible reader, but not all Bible readers are Christians
 - c. Religious, but not all religious people are Christians
 - d. Worshipped God, but not all men who worship God are acceptable to Him
- II. THE OPEN BOOK
 - A. "Read Isaiah the the prophet..." v. 28
 - 1. "He was led as a sheep to slaughter...", vv. 32, 33
 - B. He was reading, interested, concerned.
 - C. Bible is open today in our country
 - 1. If law passed today against reading it, would you read it any less? Care? Want it continued?
 - 2. Then, beware of Communism and Catholicism
 - D. It must be open if we learn how to become a Christian or learn how to live, work, and worship
- III. THE OPEN MIND
 - A. V. 30, "...understandest thou...?" "How can I except some man guide me?" Asked Philip to sit with him
 - B. V. 34, "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? Himself, or some other man?"
 - C. Honest, sincere, unashamed, seeking—unprejudiced

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IV. THE OPEN MOUTH

A. V. 35, "Then Philip preached unto him Jesus"

B. What else could he preach? No other message for a world dying in sin, Acts 4:12

1. 1 Corinthians 2:2, "...to know only Jesus..."

2. 2:1, "...came not with excellency of speech..."

3. Galatians 6:14, "God forbid I should glory..."

4. Romans 1:16, "...not ashamed of the gospel..."

5. Ephesians 6:19, "Pray...open my mouth boldly..."

V. THE OPEN POOL

A. V. 36, "...here is water...hinder me to be baptized?"

1. "Nothing, if you believe with all your heart"

B. "Baptized? I have preached Jesus. Water is not your Saviour, Jesus is. Putting your faith in baptism"

1. "No, my faith is in Him whom you preached. I want to obey His commands for salvation," Mark 16:16

C. V. 38, "...both into water... baptized him..."

VI. THE OPEN FOUNTAIN

A. Zechariah 13:1, "...a fountain opened..."

B. Matthew 26:28; 1 John 1:17; Hebrews 5:8, 9

C. V. 39, "... and he went on his way rejoicing"

1. Saved, child of God, in the church

CONCLUSION:

1. In New Testament times, none were saved until baptized. This explains why there was no delay in administering baptism. No "delayed baptisms" in New Testament

2. None are saved today until baptized. This explains why YOU should be baptized NOW

SERMON OUTLINES

A FATHER CHARGES HIS SON

1 Chronicles 28:9, 10, 20

INTRODUCTION:

1. This was a very solemn occasion
 - a. David's days were numbered: called his son Solomon to him. Wanted Solomon to carry on the work he had begun. His deepest concern was that Solomon be a faithful servant of God and do the special work which awaited his care

I. KNOW THOU THE GOD OF THY FATHER (v. 9)

- A. He needed to know many truths if he is to be a good ruler for Israel
 1. Learn all he could about the affairs of state
 2. Needed to know whom he could turn to for counsel and advice
 3. Needed to know whom he could trust and on whom not to turn his back
 4. But, more than anything, he needed to know God
 - a. Many things we, our children, and grandchildren need to know, but the most important truth is to know God
- B. What did he need to know about God?
 1. That He is holy, pure, ever-present, and all-observing
 2. That He claims our reverence, love, obedience, and submission
 3. That He condemns our ingratitude, our departure from Him, and our sins
 4. That He is ready to receive, forgive, and restore all who will return to Him
- C. Can we as fathers give this same advice to our children?
 1. What if our children knew the God of their parents?
What would they know about Him?
 - a. Conclude that He is too weak to help?
 - b. That He can be deceived, Galatians 6:7, 8?

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c. That He is nothing more than gold, a job, recreation, or your family?

2. If our children knew our God, would it prepare them for eternity?

D. May God help us to say to our children, "Know thou the God of thy father"

II. SERVE HIM WITH A PERFECT HEART AND WITH A WILLING MIND

A. Think of what He has done for us, James 1:17

1. Gave us His Son; plan of salvation; all spiritual blessings, Ephesians 1:3; the hope of eternal life; good friends and wonderful companions; good health, and good minds. Is He not worthy of our service?

B. How are you to serve Him?

1. "With a perfect heart"

a. A heart attuned to His will

b. Not half-hearted service

c. 1 John 2:15, 16, "Love not the world..."

d. James 4:4, "...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?"

2. "With a willing mind"

a. Service to be voluntary

b. No draftees in the service of our king. Voluntary

C. What is the scope of this service?

1. Involves every area of life: school, home, play, vacation, etc.

a. God comes before family, Luke 14:26

b. Before a boy friend or a girl friend

c. Before sports—before entertainment

2. Are you serving Him with a willing mind and a perfect heart?

III. REMEMBER, NOTHING IS HIDDEN FROM GOD (v.9)

A. Hebrews 4:13, "Neither is there any creature..."

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1. 1 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear..."

2. He knows every bad joke, every unkind word, when you cheat on a test, and when you disobey your parents

B. But his knowledge is good

1. He never overlooks a good deed you perform and He will give you credit for all the good you do

IV. SEEK HIM AND YOU WILL FIND HIM (v. 9)

A. Acts 17:27, "...who seek the Lord shall find Him"

1. Matthew 7:7, "...seek and ye shall find..." Therefore, we can have His assistance any time because He can be found

2. James 4:8, "Draw nigh to God and He will draw..."

3. Isaiah 55:6, 7, "Seek ye the Lord while He may..."

V. IF YOU FORSAKE HIM HE WILL CAST YOU OFF FOREVER (v. 9)

A. Sounds harsh, but it is true

1. So, don't deny Him, and don't ignore Him. Stay with Him and He will stay with you

VI. GOD HAS A MISSION FOR YOU (v.10)

A. Do all the good you can

1. Make the road of life smoother for others

2. Practice the Golden Rule

3. Let your good light shine before others

4. Be a soul-winner for Jesus

VII. BE STRONG (v. 10)

A. David knew that if Solomon were to accomplish much and do all he had to do, he would have to be strong

1. Will need strength to say no to evil companions and sinful pleasures

2. Will need strength to deny yourselves

B. The weak will fall by the wayside

1. Revelation 2:10, "Be thou faithful unto death..."

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VIII. AND DO IT (v. 10)

A. Do we listen, but do nothing?

1. Matthew 7:21, "...that saith unto me, Lord...but he that **doeth** the will of my Father..."

2. Luke 6:46, "...call me, Lord, and do not..."

3. James 1:22, "But be ye **doers** of the word..."

B. Don't just talk about the Lord's work—do it.

Don't just talk about helping others—do it.

CONCLUSION:

1. Look at verse 20

a. "Be strong"

b. "Be of good courage"

c. "Do it"

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CHOOSE CHRIST THAT HIS BLOOD BE NOT WASTED

INTRODUCTION:

1. Galatians 2:20, "...I am crucified with Christ..."
 - a. There is no way my love for Him can approximate His love for me. But he doesn't ask that of me. He only asks that I choose Him as my Lord and Saviour. In view of the manifestations of His love, that should not be hard to do
 - b. He gave Himself. He died for me. He willingly shed His blood for me
 - 1) Leviticus 17:11, "For the life is in the blood"—He gave it all for me.
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, "...Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached..."
 - 3) Romans 5:9, "...being justified by His blood..."
 - 4) Ephesians 1:7, "...redemption through His blood..."
 - 5) 1 John 1:7, "...walk in the light as He is in..."
 - 6) Hebrews 9:22, "...without shedding of blood..."
 - 7) 1 Peter 1:18, 19, "...with the precious blood of..."
 - 8) Matthew 7:13, 14, "Enter in at the strait gate..."
 - a. Why few? Only the few choose Jesus. He shed His blood for all, but few are saved. Therefore, His blood is wasted

I. HIS BLOOD IS WASTED IF WE TRY TO BE SAVED BY THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW

- A. Galatians 2:21, "...if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."
 1. He shed His blood in His death, John 19:34. The life is in the blood, Genesis 9:4.
- B. Galatians 2:16, "...by the works of the law shall..."
- C. 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse..."
- D. Vv. 19-29, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added

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because of transgressions, til the seed..."

E. Illu: Man guilty of crime—goes undetected for thirty years—keeps the law—would thirty years of law-keeping erase his guilt? No. What he needs is clemency, mercy, pardon. That was what the law could not do

F. If the Old Testament law is still binding, that makes the shedding of Christ's blood a meaningless event, and any doctrine which makes the shedding of His blood a meaningless event is a false doctrine

II. HIS BLOOD IS WASTED IF MORALITY ALONE SAVES

A. There were some good, moral people before His blood was shed. If salvation can be obtained through morality alone, why did Christ die?

1. Not trying to minimize the importance of a good life. Essential to one's being a Christian, but it, by itself, is not sufficient to save us

B. Illu: Cornelius, Acts 10

1. Had to send for Peter. To tell him what to do
2. Salvation by morality alone makes the blood of Christ unnecessary, and any doctrine which makes the shedding of Christ's blood unnecessary is a false doctrine

III. BLOOD IS WASTED IF ONE CAN BE SAVED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

A. Acts 20:28, "Take heed unto yourselves and to all..."

B. Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives as..."

C. 1:22, 23, "...put all things under His feet, gave Him to be head over all things to the..."

1. Jesus died that the church might exist

2. Illu: Boy, cold, freezing, ill-clad. You go into a store, buy warm outfit his size, cost \$50. Give it to him.

He says, "Thanks, Mister, for the \$50." Makes no effort to put on the clothes. You say, "Son, if you are to benefit from the \$50, you must get into that which the \$50 purchased." Same with the church and our being in it when we are saved

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3. Jesus gave Himself, His life, shed His blood to purchase the church. If I am to benefit from His shed blood, I must get into that which the blood purchased

a. He bought nothing else with His blood

D. If I can be saved outside the church, this makes the blood of Christ non-essential. And, any doctrine which makes the blood of Christ non-essential is a false doctrine

IV. HIS BLOOD IS WASTED IF YOU DIE LOST

A. All He has ever been and done for you is wasted—in vain

B. Erring member: 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins..."

C. Romans 6:17, 18; 6:3, 4, baptized into His death. Why? That's where His blood was shed

D. Now, all that is wasted—goes for naught if you do not choose Jesus. Which will it be, my Friend, Jesus or Satan?

CHOOSE CHRIST FOR THE LAND OF NO TEARS

I. THIS OLD EARTH IS THE LAND OF TEARS

A. It is full of tears

1. Sun might shine for us for a little while, but soon it is gone and shadows gather around us, and we are bound to shed our bitter tears
2. There are tears of disappointment
 - a. Moses and the goal of his life: To take the people of Israel into the land of promise, the land that flowed with milk and honey. And, just when it seemed he was going to realize the fulfillment of his dreams, the great disappointment came—"You shall not go in"
3. There are tears of our shattered dreams
 - a. Our air castles come crashing down to the earth
 - b. We have some wonderful and happy dreams which never come true
 - c. We have our high hopes which never materialize
 - d. We look forward to great days which never dawn for us.
 - 1) Baby we prayed and hoped for didn't live
 - 2) Children do not turn out all right
 - 3) Marriages of our children fail—divorce, etc. Oh, the heartaches and tears
4. There are tears of death
 - a. Oh, the utter darkness and bitter loneliness of the sorrow which crushes us when a loved one is taken from us. How we "long for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still"
 - b. We'll never get away from this on this earth. It is, indeed, the land of pain, sorrow and tears. Why are we so attached to it?

B. But, there is another land and it is a place where all tears are wiped away.

1. Revelation 7:17, "...God shall wipe away all tears from

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their eyes”

2. 21:4, “And God shall wipe away all tears...”

C. But, I shall know none of these things; neither shall I ever see the land of no tears unless I choose Christ

II. HEAVEN IS THAT LAND OF NO TEARS

A. What is heaven?

1. It is a place—not just a dream or imagination

a. John 14:1, “Let not your heart be troubled...”

2. Christ has prepared the place and He has prepared the way to that place

a. Are you prepared for that place? “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.” But only for those who choose Christ

B. Heaven is a perfect place

1. City is 12,000 furlongs each way and the length, breadth, and height of it are equal—perfect symmetry. It has gates of pearls, walls of jasper, and the street is of pure gold

C. It's a place where many people will be

1. All who died while children will be there

2. Those with only the mind of a child will be there

3. All faithful under the patriarchy will be there

4. All faithful under the law will be there

5. All faithful in Christian Age will be there

6. Not “just a mere handful”—not “just a few”

D. Heaven is a permanent city.

1. Hebrews 13:14, “...here... no continuing city...”

a. Where are Carthage, Sparta, Pompeii, etc.? Babylon once had population over 2 million. Now? Snakes and lizards crawl across its surface. (Ruins)

2. New York, London, Moscow, Rome, etc. will all one day be gone. But, thank God, the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city, will abide forever and forever. Permanent

E. A place of perfect singing

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1. Revelation 5:9, "...they sung a new song..." And the angelic symphony, vv. 11, 12. Singing praises to the Lamb that was slain

F. It will be a perfect home

1. Even though our homes here are the dearest things we know, but you will never find a perfect one
 - a. Daughter marries and moves away; son goes away to a distant place to seek his fortune or to fight a war he didn't start, and our homes are broken up. But they will never be broken in heaven.
2. During the first forty years of my life, I had no interest in a city called Vienna, Austria, but then our oldest son, his wife, and our only grandchild (6 mos.), went there to live. Then I got deeply interested. Even made a trip over there. Why? Had loved ones over there. I have loved ones in heaven and I have just got to go there. Song: "Heaven Holds All To Me"

G. A place where Jesus is

1. So, it's more than streets of gold, walls of jasper, gates of pearl—it's a place where we shall see His face, Revelation 22:4
 - a. Illu: Wm. E. Gladstone, whose countenance was so bright with human intelligence, that it was worth a trip across the ocean just to look upon his face.
 - 1) Then, what will it be worth to look upon the face of Jesus Christ, our Saviour

CONCLUSION:

1. Don't you want to live in the land of no tears?
2. Must accept Christ now—must make preparation to live in heaven. This preparation must be made while we live here
3. Time to begin that preparation is now—right now

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DIVINE PARADOXES

INTRODUCTION:

1. A paradox is a seeming contradiction—seemingly absurd, and yet true in fact

I. A CHRISTIAN IS DEAD AND ALIVE AT THE SAME TIME

- A. Dead to the law—alive unto God, Romans 7:4
- B. Dead to sin—alive unto righteousness, Romans 6:2.
1 Peter 2:24, "...that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness..."
- C. Eternal death overcome by eternal life, John 10:27, 28

II. A CHRISTIAN FORSAKES ALL AND YET POSSESSES ALL

- A. Must forsake all to be Christ's disciple. Luke 14:33, "...who forsaketh not all...cannot be my disciple."
- B. Receive a hundred-fold in this life, Matthew 19:27-29

III. A CHRISTIAN LOVES HIMSELF AND YET DENIES HIMSELF

- A. Love of life. Exodus 20:12, "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." John 15:13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends"
- B. Self-denial. Acts 20:23, 24, "...bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me..." Matthew 16:24, "If any man will come after me, let..."

IV. A CHRISTIAN IS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE WHOLE WORLD AND YET IS CONTENTED WITH BUT LITTLE

- A. Worldly gain counted as loss. Philippians 3:7, 8, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted..."
- B. Looking for the inheritance. Hebrews 11:8-10, "By faith, Abraham, when he was called..." 1 Peter 1:4, "...to an inheritance incorruptible..."

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V. A CHRISTIAN DOES GOOD AND YET DENIES THAT THERE IS ANY GOOD IN HIM

- A. Created unto good works. Ephesians 2:10, "...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus..." Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men..."**
- B. Unprofitable and sinful. Luke 17:10, "...when ye shall have done...say, We are unprofitable..." 1 John 1:8, "...say no sin, deceive ourselves..."**

CONCLUSION:

- 1. A study of paradoxes will fill a sinner with despair and drive him to Christ**
- 2. Should fill a Christian with joy and cause him to cling closer to the Lord**

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DO YOU BELIEVE IN SEGREGATION?

2 Corinthians 5:14-18

INTRODUCTION:

1. Only line God recognizes is that which separates righteousness and unrighteousness
 - a. Color of skin means nothing to God
 - b. But whether he is a part of the "world" or a part of the "church" does
 - c. Took blood of Christ to produce this separation. We cannot ignore or destroy this distinction

I. GOD HAS ALWAYS DEMANDED SEGREGATION

- A. Covenant of circumcision—separated Hebrews from their neighbors
 1. Demanded being separate in marriage relationships, blood line to remain strictly Jewish
- B. In New Testament, this separation is maintained by a circumcision of the heart—not flesh, Romans 2:29. The family of God was restricted.
 1. In this age, the family of God is restricted and segregated, not by lines of blood or by color of skin, but by willing obedience to the word of Christ. Out of every nation those who fear God and keep His commandments become a unique nation and a separate people
 2. Intended that we maintain a type of distinctiveness that will make us easily discernible from all others about us

II. CHRISTIANS DIFFER FROM OTHER PEOPLE

- A. 2 Corinthians 6:17, "...come out from among them..."
 1. Our challenge to separate ourselves from the world
 2. This is what the church is. Still in the world, but are not of the world. Thoroughly and completely separated
- B. Christians believe differently, have different values, behave differently

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1. Not different garb, length of hair, etc., but God's people are distinguished by the way they live

C. God provided for the complete separation of the church from the world

1. Members may mingle with the world, look like other people, dress like other people, but they cannot act and talk like other people. This distinction is to be so great and complete that the whole world can recognize it

III. CHRIST SEPARATES PEOPLE

A. He prayed that God would keep His disciples separated from the world, John 17

1. Jesus Himself was in the world but was not of the world
2. He gives the means and methods of separation
 - a. "Sanctify them," John 17:17—that is, "set them apart" segregate them "through Thy word." The word separates Christians and non-Christians
 - b. If one is a Christian you can tell—not by his dress or self-mutilation but by his speech and his character

B. Day of Pentecost

1. "What shall we do?" "Repent and be baptized." "They that gladly received his word were baptized..."
 - a. Immediately there was formed something brand new upon the earth—the church of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - b. Those baptized were forgiven—freed from their sins—first time since the Garden of Eden. No longer like other men. Blood of Christ had made them separate
2. This group was "called out"
 - a. Lord added to the church—the "EKKLESIA"—"called out"—"separated"—"sanctified"

C. A new people, purchased—separated—given a new name, Acts 11:26

1. So Christ-like in life and devotion no other name would fit them. But just the title without the separation avails nothing

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D. Only two kingdoms in the world

1. Kingdom of God and kingdom of the devil. The obedience to the gospel of Acts 2 took them out of the devil's kingdom and put them into the kingdom of God, Colossians 1:13, 14. How different they are. All who are in the kingdom of God are separated from the world

CONCLUSION:

1. God has His line of separation. It has been running since the Garden of Eden—throughout the patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian ages, and will be running through the judgment and eternity
2. We have no right to draw lines where the Lord has drawn none, but we have no right to ignore the line the Lord has drawn
3. God's people must always be a separate people
 - a. We dare not do anything that rubs out the distinction it took the blood of Christ to produce. To do so is to face the wrath of God
 - b. All Christians must observe and help keep distinct the segregation of the church from the world

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OLD-FASHIONED FAITHFULNESS

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

INTRODUCTION:

1. Three bars before which a preacher's work appears:
 - a. Private judgment—a preacher judges himself
 - b. Public opinion—he is judged by others.
 - c. Divine justice—he will finally be judged of God
 - 1) This is the one judgment which really matters
 2. Paul did not worry about what people thought of his ministry, and he realized he was not capable of measuring himself
 - a. When Jesus sent His disciples out to preach, they returned and reported to Christ, not to a committee
 - b. So we are to report one day to the judge Himself and He will appraise our work
- I. "REQUIRED IN STEWARDS...FAITHFUL," 1 Corinthians 4:2
- A. Two words stand out—stewards and faithful
1. Stewards of "the mysteries of God," v.1
 - a. Not a glorified puzzle—not incomprehensible—not mystical—but something not known until it was made known. Holy Spirit has revealed this mystery, Ephesians 3:1-6
 - b. So today, a preacher is not a depository, but a dispenser. Word is not in us as in apostles
 2. But we are all stewards—not just of money, but of time, talents, and all we have
- B. Faithful (trustworthy)
1. Puts high value on old-fashioned faithfulness
 - a. God is faithful, 1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:13, and He expects His people to be faithful
 - 1) 3 John 5—John to Gaius, "...thou doest faithfully..."
He was not fitful or flashy but he was faithful. After all, the greatest ability is dependability
 2. Have a terrible time trying to keep people faithful. Reward, coax, picnic and tantalize us into doing what we don't want to do, but which we would gladly do if we loved the Lord

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- a. True faith shows up in faithfulness
- 3. Maybe to us there is not much glamour in just being faithful—anybody can do it
 - a. Go up like rockets and come down like rocks. Prefer to be flashy comets instead of faithful stars. But God prefers those who faithfully let their lights shine to those who fitfully tell about it
- 4. Today everything must be huge, gigantic, colossal, super-duper.
 - a. Even new drugs are “wonder” drugs. (Take them and wonder what will happen next)
 - b. Thus, hard to interest people in plain old-fashioned obedience and faithfulness
 - c. Bible has so much to say about being steadfast, grounded, settled, not carried away by every wind of doctrine. Not to be weary in well-doing
 - d. We are too restless—always getting right and never being right—always finding the perfect church and never finding it. Always finding the perfect preacher and never finding him
 - 1) Need to remember that stabilization is mixed with salvation
- 5. Loyalty in giving, living, teaching, soul-winning, and serving is what the Lord wants from us

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Judge is coming and will reward every man according to his work, 2 Corinthians 5:10. Are you ready to give account of your stewardship?
- 2. What does the desk of your life look like? A lot of unfinished business on it?
 - a. Are you up-to-date with your Bible reading?
 - b. Up-to-date with your prayer life?
 - c. Some things between you and others that ought to be straightened out?
- 3. The judge may come at any time to check with His stewards, and the requirement He made of us was that we be faithful