

The SOUND
of the
TRUMPET



by W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

The SOUND OF THE TRUMPET

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by W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

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GAMBLING CHURCHES

We begin today a new series of talks! In the forthcoming weeks I expect to speak out plainly on some of the conditions that exist about us. I will assert my honest convictions, and pull no punches, although I shall do it in the spirit of meekness. I am not by nature a pessimist, but it seems to me that there is a moral, spiritual decay which is evident in our world, and someone must lift up his voice and cry out against it. There is a spirit of compromise which prevails in religion that threatens to let the devil in where he can hurt the lives and destroy the souls of thousands who are uninformed, indifferent or naturally gullible.

I imagine the majority of you saw the article last week which was written by George Gallup, as a release of his American Institute of Public Opinion, dealing with the subject of gambling. The headlines read, "Nearly Half of U. S. Gambled Last Year; Church Games Led." A part of the contents reads as follows: "Nearly one-half of the civilian adult population of the United States played for stakes in some game of chance, or laid money on the betting line, at least once in the last twelve months. But betting on horses, playing the 'numbers' game, plunking down chips on a roulette table or any of the more garish types of wagering are not the commonest form of chance-taking. The greatest number of bettors, although not necessarily the largest sums of money, are involved in plain, old-fashioned church lotteries or bingo parties."

Just think of it! At a time when our boys are fighting, bleeding and dying on foreign battlefields, we who remain at home are involved in gambling and betting, in playing cards and wagering. Our government has asked for all the money we can loan. But individual bond sales always lag, and the money that should go to the prosecution of an "all-out" effort to bring our sons back home is gaily flipped into the hands of some bookmaker or other crook, and the war effort goes begging!

But that is not the worst feature of this thing to me! To think that it would be emblazoned before the eyes of the world, that church-sponsored gambling leads all the rest. It is bad enough for

those who want to wager and bet to do it at some sporting event, or in a private dice game. But when men will gamble in the name of Jesus Christ, the immaculate Son of God, and take the devil's system into religion, it is time that someone opened up with more than a verbal poggun, and let the truth be known.

States pass laws against gambling, but churches are not indicted. I want you to know that it is just as bad to bet on a bingo game in a cathedral as it is on a horse race at a "pari-mutuel" booth. It is just as much gambling to purchase a raffle ticket for a quilt made by the Ladies' Aid as it is to roll the "galloping dominoes" down a back alley at night! And you can't deny that! The mere fact that a man calls himself "Reverend" and stands behind a counter in the church basement does not render the affair at which he presides a scriptural function, nor does it say that the "worldly shebang" which he operates is not illegal.

No wonder the world loses respect for religion! How can you expect those who are on the outside to appreciate an institution that puts the name of "church" over the door and runs a gambling dive during the week? How can the church win souls to the Lord if it follows the lead of Satan? The devil has captured the minds of a lot of people, and they are trying to turn religion over to him, "lock, stock and barrel."

My opposition to these things is not based upon mere petty, personal prejudice. They are unscriptural, anti-scriptural and worldly! Therefore when there are those who claim you can still participate in such and remain Christians, they must be refuted! Paul speaks of those "who subvert whole houses and whose mouths must be stopped." We are told to "contend earnestly for the faith." My contention against these false ideas of religion is based upon a love for God and an intense, undying hatred of sin—sin in any form!

Jesus plainly declared that the church had a higher mission than that of making money! As individuals, He exhorts us, "Set your affection on things above." He says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but rather lay up treasures in heaven. For where a man's treasure is there will his heart be also." Certainly,

if the prime object of an individual is not to be the amassing of earthly wealth, then it is obvious the church is not to exist as a money-making institution. Let Jesus define the purpose of His Father's house. When He went to the temple He saw there a group of gamblers and merchants, who were buying, selling, and taking advantage of their brethren. What did He do? Listen, now, "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21:12, 13).

A short time ago, I drove past a large church which had a sign in front of it. That sign had these words, "SERMON, 'What Would Christ Do If He Were Here Today?'" Underneath were these words, "Benefit Bridge Party Thursday Night." Well, sir, I think I could tell you what Christ would do if He came to that church today, or on Thursday night! He would drive them out and say, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. On second thought, though, I doubt that He would go to a church that had a sign like that up in front of it, for He would know it was not a church of Christ. He would not want to be seen in the company of a group of pious punchboard-punchers, religious roulette-runners or loyal lottery-losers.

In Romans 12:17, I find this, "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Can a church fulfill that command and put on a bingo game in which it is a foregone conclusion that someone is going to lose his hard earned cash and get nothing in return? It is an old adage that "A fool and his money are soon parted," but it certainly isn't the job of churches to assist a man in becoming a fool. It is wrong to cater to the world. I read, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). Isn't gambling conforming to the world? Can you prove the good, acceptable and perfect will of God, while indulging in it? To ask that is to answer it! Then, in the name of all that is right, rise up against

the evils that parade and masquerade under the name of religion today and help stamp them out!

Do you say that you understood the church was to be in the world? You are right, but the Bible did not teach that the world should be in the church. And when you get that reversed, you've got the cart before the horse and he is eating over the end-gate. Potatoes are all right in the dirt but let's keep the dirt out of the potatoes when we mash them for Sunday dinner! We are told to "Provide for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Corinthians 8:21). Again, "Now I pray to God that ye do no evil, but that ye do that which is honest" (2 Corinthians 13:7). Paul declares, "Let us walk honestly, as in the day. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof" (Romans 13:13, 14). That means that when we become Christians we are not to seek an excuse for doing the things that are wrong! We are not to say, "Well, everyone else is doing it." We are not to say, "We are living in an enlightened age, and we have liberty in the church." The apostle says, "Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh" (Galatians 5:13).

The gospel was given to the world to offer men something for nothing; but gambling gives them nothing for something! There are two times in a man's life when he shouldn't gamble—when he thinks he can afford to, and when he thinks he can't afford to! Those within the church should be an example to those without, but when the ones without are as good as the ones within, then the ones within will never get in the ones without! Here is the way the Bible puts it, "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing" (1 Thessalonians 4:12).

I'll close with a passage, which if followed will knock gambling out of your life, out of your heart, and out of the world. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8). If gambling can fill any of these qualifications, I'd like to know which one it is!

THE SOUND OF THE TRUMPET

Ancient cities lived in constant fear of attack from their enemies. As a result most of them had high walls surrounding them. Realizing, however, that such walls alone would not afford sufficient protection in case of secret attack, high towers were placed at strategic points overlooking the surrounding plain. In these were put watchmen, whose duty it was to be on the alert for any advancing foe. When a suspicious movement was noted, the watcher would lift up his voice, or sound a trumpet, and thus warn all of the inhabitants of approaching danger. The responsibility of such a man was great indeed. The fate of the entire city lay in his hands. Upon his shoulders rested the burden of saving every life within those walls.

If the watchman became careless, or if he spent his time thinking only of his own selfish needs, the enemy would gain entrance by force or stealth, and murder and carnage would result. Sometimes, though, the watchman warned his people, and they were too indifferent to care. Perhaps they put their confidence in their walls, or were lifted up with pride. They would be destroyed but the watchman could not be held responsible. He had done all that was within his power.

The Bible tells us that in our war against Satan, God has placed men as watchmen upon the walls. It is their duty to view danger from afar and warn the people. Preachers, elders and leaders of the church today act in that capacity. Upon their shoulders lies the great obligation of saving the souls under their care.

Listen to God's Word, "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezekiel 33:7-9).

Today, spiritual Israel is in great danger. The church is threatened by foes from without and "fifth columnists" within. Members profess to love the Lord and spend their time gallivanting around to taverns, saloons, dance halls and theaters. They have ceased to study the Bible, and spend their whole career in reading comic sections, pernicious literature and immoral magazines! They have time for the bridge club, the cocktail hour and the ball game, but no time for Christ and the church. Who is responsible for this? I want you to listen to me now! I'm going to say something that you'll not like! I may get plenty of letters this week protesting my stand, but I'm going to say it anyway! I'm going to say it because I believe it! I'm going to say it because I mean it! It is my wholehearted conviction that much of the reason for the disgraceful, ungodly, shameful, dishonorable and debasing conduct of today can be traced squarely to the preachers who stand in our pulpits!

Religion is compromising today! It is compromising with the world! It is compromising with sin! It is compromising with the devil! Men want to hold on to Christ with the one hand, but they want to keep hold of Satan with the other! And what are the preachers doing about it? Preaching sickly little, sentimental, forget-me-not sermons that tickle the ears of their hearers and let them believe that if they come to church on Sunday and pay the preacher's salary, they can do what they please the rest of the time! Where can you go and hear the preacher lash out against social drinking? His hands are tied, and his mouth taped shut, because some of his best-paying members sponsor parties where the guests down liquor in the same room that has a motto hanging on the wall which says, "Jesus Christ is the head of this house!"

How many preachers have the stamina, spiritually speaking, to get up and turn both barrels loose on profanity, dirty-stories and filthy language? How many climb into their pulpits and denounce the sin of suggestive theatricals which, it has been proven, have done more to undermine the morals of our boys and girls than anything else? One woman, member of a so-called Church of Christ, heard me not long ago, and said with a sigh, that she wished her minister would condemn worldliness. But she added that he and his family patronized the theater regularly, so she

supposed he couldn't condemn it with any degree of success. She wanted to know what I thought of a minister like that. Well, I think as much of him as I do of her! For she goes right on, pays her money to support him, upholds and endorses him, and she is just as guilty as he is. There are a lot of churches which have "Churches of Christ" stuck up over them, which are just "churches" but not "of Christ." Come out from among them and be ye separate!

Lot and his family were told to flee from Sodom, when the wickedness became so great it couldn't be corrected. If they had stayed there they would have been burnt up also. And they should have been, because those who will tolerate and uphold and encourage an ungodly condition by their time, presence and money are just as guilty as those who create that condition. You know that is true! The old Book I love says, "If any man come and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house and neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker with him of his evil deeds." Do you believe that? Do you accept it as truth? Then how long will you continue to support something that is contrary to God's Word?

I think it is the duty of a preacher to cry aloud and spare not! What difference does it make whether the people want it or not? We're not to give people what they want, but what they need! When you go to your doctor and he diagnoses your case, he never asks you what you'd like to take. He tells you what to take, and if you expect to get well, you'd better take it! Why is it that many public ministers do not condemn sin? Why is it that the sound of the trumpet is not heard warning us to flee from wrath that is to come? Why is it that you hardly ever hear the word "hell" mentioned? Why is it that these days we are always told about "the love of God" and never told about the indignation of heaven against sin of every form?

Again you may not like it, but I'm going to venture the opinion that we have too many "professional preachers." They are in the work from a business standpoint, not for the moral, spiritual good they could do. Too many are mere hirelings, time-servers and men-pleasers. They are cowards, afraid to condemn

sin, because of fear of losing their easy jobs. They have studied to be "good mixers" and in order to cater to the wishes of a group of society climbers, in the congregation, those preachers have become effeminate, using dulcet tones, and sugary, honeyed words in the pulpit. They are flatterers, rubber stamps in the hands of the worldly cliques which manipulate them to suit themselves. Like the worst ward-heeler in the precinct, they play politics in the church, until sincere people see religion as a disgusting, revolting, sickening, repellent institution turned to the commercial interests of those who conduct it!

It's time to tear the lid off of denominationalism! It's time to let the truth be known! It's time to tell you right now that this spirit of worldliness, of sectarianism, of little petty, trivial, trifling living is not the spirit of the Master! This does not constitute the church as He established it! Nor does He endorse those religious leaders who fawn upon sin, and toady to immoral living! That is just as far from the spirit of the New Testament as the North Pole is from the South Pole. People, let's get back to God! Let's make Christianity mean something—let's make it mean Christianity, in the fullest implication of that term!

We are not pleading for establishment of a new religious movement. We have too many already! We are not pleading for a reformation of Protestantism! You can't reform it! What we do plead for is a RESTORATION—a restoration of the New Testament church as set up on the day of Pentecost, a restoration of the ONE BODY as Paul called the church! We're pleading for all to get back to the Bible—in life, in practice, in teaching, in belief! We're pleading that you'll desert false teachers who point you to mirages in the desert—and that you'll listen to those who will lead you to the oases of God's eternal, unwavering, undying truth! The trumpet sounds! The fight is joined! Who is on the Lord's side today? Are you? Then let us hear from you!

BABIES FOR SALE

I am confident that many of my listeners saw in their newspapers this past week the article dealing with the racket that has grown up in our country, around the selling of babies. It is a proven fact that there are "baby brokers" who are dealing in tiny, squirming mites of humanity and selling them, for amounts ranging from \$25 to \$1,000. They are on the alert for some unwed mother who desires to get rid of an unwelcome child, and there are 80,000 such children born in our nation every year. This forms the greatest source of supply for this ungodly, nefarious and abominable traffic. But there are also a good many legitimate parents who will sell their offspring, it has been pointed out. They would rather hear the clink of silver dollars in their pockets than the patter of little feet in their empty rooms!

Not long ago, a man and wife bought a little baby for \$150, kept it for a few weeks and sold it for a bid of \$300. They are now in the business! And I want this day to lift up my voice against this traffic in human flesh and even in helpless souls! This nation has come a long way, when it will place its babies upon the bargain counter and create a market for them, so that the one who bids the highest amount will receive the guardianship of a little life. Of all the miserable, despicable, contemptible ways of making money, I consider that none is lower or viler than this which preys upon loneliness of heart, and makes a commodity out of a helpless little infant. Without considering the future of the child at all, it is placed in the hands of any person who "plunks down the cash" for it!

America is in a bad way when such a thing is even tolerated! It ought to shock the sense of decency, and outrage the principles of justice in every heart that hears about it! But I want to first say that it certainly does not speak well for our moral standard when tens of thousands of little children are born annually out of the legal, moral pale of marriage. But do not misunderstand me! I do not hold the little children responsible. The stigma may be placed upon them by the world, but I'll never place it there. After all, there is no such thing as an illegitimate child. There may be illegitimate parents, and you know there are, but there never was a child born into this world that did not have a father

and mother. A number of them have been born to parents who didn't deserve the title of "father" or "mother" though, for those names are too sweet and sacred to use with regard to some who are parents this day!

Wild animals fight for their young. Dumb brutes will give their lives for their offspring, and it is only among those who have the reason of human beings that you find wilfull desertion, malicious murder, and callous disregard for the fruit of their own bodies. I know there are some who hear this day, who will gather their youngsters closer about them, and whisper in their childish ears, "Daddy and mother would never sell you." But do not be so sure of that!

I know mothers who still have their children and yet are selling them! The high wages in modern war plants entice, and they turn the babies over to someone else and secure a job just to make more money. They hardly see the youngsters. Often those children are turned out on the street, and must find their own companions. They are condemned to become delinquents, and many will land in penal institutions before they arrive at maturity. They are being sold for a good pay check, by the mothers who bore them!

I know fathers who spend all of their time at the golf club, or at some other place of amusement, while their own boys and girls are neglected. Those fathers drink in front of their little ones, and threaten to destroy their lives and damn their souls, if they follow in the footsteps of the parent. Only recently, we all read of two little boys who died as the result of drinking whiskey. In one instance, a little fellow climbed up and got his father's bottle, and drank a large amount. He had seen his daddy do it often! He wanted to be like the one whom he worshipped. But the poison of that liquor was too much for the tiny heart. Today that little body lies under a mound in the cemetery, a tragic reminder of the fact that he was sold for the price of his father's lust for drink!

Parents, you have a great responsibility! You are entrusted with the care of a life that will continue through all eternity! What will you do with that one who is a part of you and a part

of the one you love? Will you not consider the Word of the Lord on this matter? Will you not heed His admonition. Of old, the God of Heaven declared, "Gather me the people together; and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children" (Deuteronomy 4:10). Again He says, "Only take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

Once more, I hear Him say, "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt *teach them diligently unto thy children*, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." It is true that our nation will be tomorrow what we of today are making it. Our boys and girls of this generation will be the fathers and mothers of the next! How are you building for the future of America?

We need more old-fashioned fathers and mothers who look upon children as a blessing from the Lord! We have too many feminine fashion plates with painted faces and purple lips, with blood red fingernails and toes painted like savages in Africa, who like to go swinging down the street in mannish attire, jingling their jewels, and puffing at a cigarette; and who think that children are a curse, and a detriment! One mother not long ago said she was going to have to put her baby on the bottle, because she dropped ashes in its eyes while it was nursing at her breast! Another drowned her infant in the bath tub because it interfered with her sleep when she had been out to a midnight dance, and wanted to catch up on her slumber the next day!

I thank God for an old-time mother! I can hear her yet as she sang those sweet old lullabies at the close of day. I remember the Bible stories that I learned at her knee. Her home was her castle; her children the chief concern of her life. She sat by their cradles until they went to sleep, lulled by the gentle pat of her

hand; she watched over their feverish forms when they were sick, and her tears dropped upon their baby faces as she prayed for God to spare them. And even yet, as I think of the bygone days, I recall the words of William Cullen Bryant,

*Lord, who ordainest for mankind
Benignant toils and tender cares,
We thank Thee for the ties that bind
The mother to the child she bears.*

*We thank Thee for the hopes that rise
Within her heart, as, day by day,
The dawning soul, from those young eyes,
Looks with a clearer, steadier ray.*

*All Gracious! grant to those who bear
A mother's charge, the strength and light
To guide the feet that own their care
In ways of love and truth and right.*

And I pray God today for mothers and grandmothers like Timothy had! The great apostle said to that young man, "I greatly desire to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; when I called to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice" (2 Timothy 1:4, 5). And that is where faith should dwell first—in the hearts of the parents and grandparents. Later, Paul told Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation."

Thank God for those who take their children to the House of the Lord! How wonderful that there are still those who read the Bible and pray before their little ones, who teach those lisping tongues to whisper a prayer, who guide them in returning thanks at the table! If you are not that kind of a parent, you are selling your children, selling their souls to destruction; selling them on the bargain counter of the world, for paltry pleasure, for wordly enjoyment, for a "good time." May God have mercy upon you and your little ones!

THE SILENT POLICEMAN

Ferdinand Voelker surrendered to the police this week. The 48-year-old farmer walked into the St. Clair County jail in Belleville, and said he had fatally poisoned his father in 1933.

In a signed statement he declared that his father had complained that he was drinking excessively and not bearing his share of the farm work, so after several days of argument, he placed a tablespoon of poison, used for spraying potatoes, in his father's coffee. The parent, 70 years old, was found unconscious in bed on the morning of July 18, 1933, and died later in the day. A physician said he had suffered a paralytic stroke, and so certified on the death record.

Insofar as the killing was concerned, it was a so-called "perfect crime." There was no suspicion attached to the son! There was no investigation made by the legal authorities. No detectives brought him to bay, no sleuths dogged his steps. Then, why did he give himself up? Why did he come to the authorities and admit this fearful act? He said that he did it because his conscience had bothered him ever since his father's death, and he finally decided that he simply had to "get it off his chest." He added that he felt much better since he had confessed his wrong!

If only men could see the working of a conscience, what a difference it would make. No doubt, when the murdered father was buried, and the soil was heaped into a mound above the coffin, the killer thought that he was safe. But he reckoned without the working of that inner sense of guilt. That father sat across from him at the table. Never did he take a drink of coffee without remembering! In the shadows of the night, when darkness obscured physical vision, the form of the aged parent walked through the room. Twelve years the culprit endured the agony, the torture, the driving sense of his life's greatest error. It became too much! He could not go on! He had to get it off his mind, or else become a raving maniac. This week he gave himself up to the law. Calmly he awaits the verdict for his crime. Conscience has triumphed. The silent policeman has brought another male-

factor to the bar of justice, but Ferdinand Voelker is not the first to be thus apprehended.

Long years ago, a group of jealous brothers hated their youngest brother. They despised him for his prophetic dreams! They waited, watched and plotted to destroy him. Finally they had the chance. He came walking across the hill to where they were tending their flocks. They conspired to kill him and take the patchwork coat he was wearing, and dip it in blood and carry it to the father and tell him a wild beast had killed the 17-year-old lad. The older brother intervened in the boy's behalf. They compromised by putting him in a pit. Then they raised him from the cistern and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who agreed to carry him into Egypt. They killed a lamb and dipped the coat that the brother had worn in its blood. The aged father saw it, and was frantic with grief. Gloatingly, the others congratulated themselves.

More than twenty years went by! A terrible famine came! Men became hungry and gaunt! There was no food in Canaan! And the Bible says, "Now when Jacob saw there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?" The very name of Egypt sent a shiver over the frames of these men now growing old themselves. They heard again the piteous cries of their little brother, they saw the tear-stained face as the foreigners took him away, they saw the torn, ragged, bloody coat. They had not, they could not have forgotten, even though they tried to blot the picture from their minds.

What was it that caused Judas Iscariot to come, wild-eyed, into the temple screaming, "I have betrayed innocent blood?" What caused him to cast down the burning, bloody thirty pieces of silver at the feet of the high priest? What caused him to knot the rope around his own neck and fling his sinful body over the precipice? *Conscience!* What was it that caused David to sit down and write a psalm when he had committed adultery with Bathsheba? What prompted his words, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow?" It was the hand of David but the voice of *Conscience!*

You may do things and hide them from the sight of others. You may leave your loved one whom you promised to love, honor and cherish while the two of you lived and, drawn by lust, you may give yourself to the arms of another! You may think that the sable curtains of night have safely hidden you! Your wife may not know it! The church may not know it! The world may not discover it! But it is known! For you cannot hide from yourself. In the stillness of the night that conscience will lash you like a whip. In the solitude of the day, your heart will revert to the act of wrong, until you would give your all if you could recall that deed which you have done. You can cry and weep, shed tears, and plead that it be blotted from your memory but you can't erase it! The very act of trying to forget only intensifies your agony! In sorrow, you'll wish that you had never been born, for life will become a hell for you. The zephyrs of spring will have no appeal to you, the songs of the birds will be lost upon you, the glory tints of the flowers about your pathway will hold no appeal! How sad that in one moment you can wreck the hopes of all your life, and bring your dream castles into broken, shattered fragments about your sinful feet!

In Shakespeare's "Richard III," on the night before the battle in which the tyrant received the reward of his deeds, ghosts of his victims killed by his tyranny, passed one by one through his tent. They summoned him to meet them on the battlefield. Finally the man, streaming with perspiration, sprang from his bed, screaming—

*"My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain."*

Solomon, the wisest earthly monarch who ever sat upon a throne, said in one of his pithy sayings, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are as bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1). No man pursued Adam in the paradise of Eden, yet he fled and attempted to hide himself. No man pursued Judas Iscariot, but he fled trembling, to the place of his self-inflicted

death. You cannot escape conscience! You cannot outdistance it! If you climb to the cold summits of the Sierras, it will be there when you arrive; if you go down to the depths of the ocean in a submarine, it will be there by your side. No rapid bounds over seas or continents can ever separate you from it; it is not at your heels, it is in your heart! You will hear the visionary pursuer in every sound; feel his warm breath in the atmosphere around you, anticipate his avenging clutch at every corner. Again we quote Shakespeare—

*“Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind,
The thief doth fear each bush an officer.”*

Then, what can you do, when you have sinned? Are you condemned always to go through life with remorse settling like a leaden weight upon your soul? Can there never be peace and quiet and hope within your breast again? Yes, there can be! But first there must be a solemn repentance for the thing that you have done. You must not only be sorry that you did it, but you must with firm resolution turn away from it, and ask God to help you never to do it again! Then, with an overburdening sense of your guilt and your own unworthiness, you must humbly come to Jesus! The Cross of Christ will bear your burden, if you will but place it thereupon. For the record says that “God hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.”

Cease then your life of sin today! Stop it now! For now is the accepted time, today is the day of salvation! When the murderers of Jesus were pricked in their hearts, when their consciences were stabbed as with a dagger, by the keen knowledge of their own damnable deed, they cried out to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” His answer came clear and concisely, “Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). They did that, and the burden of their sins rolled away! Why don't you do that today? Your heart is troubling you with your sin. Guilt is on your conscience but you can remove it this day, if you will accept Christ and obey Him!

A HUMAN BOMB

We've been hearing this week a great deal about a special operation, performed with an amazing degree of success. Dewey Dupre, is a seaman, second class, from Opelousas, Louisiana. He is just twenty years of age. In the great battle of Lingayen Gulf, on January 9, he was at his station as gun loader aboard a battleship, when an air attack came. "The first thing I knew," he said, "I was lying on the deck with a compound fracture of my left leg and other injuries about my chest."

He was taken to San Francisco, to a convalescent hospital. And he was doing nicely until last Saturday, he told the doctors that he felt "something" inside him, low in his body. Surgeons, thinking they had missed a stray piece of shrapnel, ordered X-rays. The pictures disclosed a live shell, of 20 millimeter size, still fused. "Because the projectile was of such a sensitive type and might explode on contact even with an operating instrument, the situation still remained full of danger," they said. Bomb disposal experts as well as medical men were consulted. In a tense atmosphere, Commander J. I. Hall operated successfully, with no explosion.

All of us rejoice over the triumphs of modern medical science in taking care of our boys during this terrible catastrophe of modern war. Those who listen today join with me in thankfulness for the success of the operation on this young man whom we have never met. Without realizing it, for forty-seven days he carried within his body the source of destruction for himself and all whom he loved. How fortunate that the condition was overcome without a resultant loss of life or limb.

But what would you say if I told you that all of us are "human bombshells?" It is a fact! You have within you a force that can destroy you—overthrow your happiness in this world, and bring about your utter destruction in the next world. Moreover, that same force can bring sorrow to the hearts of your loved ones, and all of those who are in close association with you. There is just one X-ray which will reveal the existence of that force, and

only one physician who can remove it. That X-ray is the Bible, and that surgeon is the Great Physician—Jesus Christ our Lord!

The world today is full of unhappiness. Discouragement, fear and disappointment stalk like ghastly specters upon the trails of many of us. And much of that condition is brought about by the selfishness and the corruption of man. Jesus said, "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man" (Matthew 15: 18, 19). The unregenerate heart is like a live bomb within those who have not been cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus!

The great apostle Paul declared, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Romans 7:18-23). Now, that is just another way of telling about the conflicting forces that are within every one of us. The desire to do evil, to follow after lust in this world, is present in your human and sinful heart. It follows you, and holds you back daily, like the ball and chain fastened to the limb of a literal captive.

And we should remember that in the days of old, it was the custom of the Romans to chain a criminal to a corpse. Day after day, the wretched offender dragged his ghastly burden, bumping along behind him. At night he had to lie down and sleep with this putrifying impediment ever near. When he awakened in the morning, there again would he see the decaying, bloated, rotting body. How horrible, how detestable. Yet that is exactly what Paul means when he cries out in piteous agony, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now listen to his answer, and take renewed courage, "I thank

God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7:24, 25). The way to get rid of that sinful heart is to first cleanse it, and then let Jesus Christ take possession of it and dwell therein!

We are shocked by the profanity that we hear this day. On the streetcar, in the bus, on the street, in the railway station, men and women, boys and girls take the name of God in vain, without apparent thought. What is the trouble? Why this disregard for the sacredness and reverence of the high and holy name of Jehovah? The answer is that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." I recall that in school, when youngsters would use a nasty word, the teacher would wash the mouth of the culprit with soap. But that isn't the remedy! You'll have to go deeper than that to cleanse the source of ungodly, reprobate and reprehensible language!

We see men staggering down the streets as they come from the taverns! Their reddened noses, bloated faces and thick tongues betoken the fact that they have indulged too freely in intoxicating liquors. Shakespeare said, "Men put into their mouths that which will steal away their brains." How much sorrow, murder, remorse and regret stems from the use of drink! How many homes are broken up, how many children forced to do without the necessary food and clothing, how many wives sit weeping forlornly because of the passion of the demon rum? But what is the remedy for it? Will smashing the whiskey bottles which men carry in their pockets do the job? No, it requires a better remedy than that! Jesus must be permitted to take up his abode in the heart, and reign there as supreme!

I plead with you this day to turn the searchlight of God's Word into your soul. Let its searing light reveal the hidden faults that lie concealed in your life. Then permit the Great Physician to prescribe the remedy which will take away the cancer that eats at your life, and threatens to deprive you of the home prepared for the faithful on the other shore! I'm confident that if you felt you had a dangerous shell imbedded in your flesh, you would go to every expense and even discomfort in order to have it removed. I know of men who have spent every cent of their life savings in

an attempt to get rid of a cancer that was eating silently at the fibers of their physical bodies! There isn't anything they would not give up in order to be cured!

But what about you today who are harboring hearts full of envy, malignancy, hatred, variance, wrath, strife? Will you continue onward through this existence with the danger of death always near, knowing that if you depart this existence you will be hurled into eternity unprepared to meet the God who will be your Judge in that last great day? Will you go on making the world more of a hell than a heaven, causing heartache and sorrow to those who love you, just because of your ungodly disposition, and wilfull disregard for God and His blessed Word? Isn't it about time that you went through an operation for the removal of that which is causing your life to be a wreck?

I call upon you this day to repent! I know not and care not what all you have done! It makes little difference how low you have gone in the scale of human behavior. I know that Jesus is a greater Savior than you are a sinner! If the father in the parable would welcome back his tired and dusty son from the pig sty, then I know that your Heavenly Father will go forth to meet you when you leave the slime and muck and mire in which you have been wading. On the day of Pentecost, three thousand persons who had conspired to murder the Son of God stood with the X-ray of truth piercing into the depths of their consciences. They cried out, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" The answer from the inspired apostle was, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). And that is my prayer for you this day, that you will repent and be immersed in water baptism for the remission of your sins!

Why did the Ethiopian eunuch go on his way rejoicing according to Acts 8:39? It was simply because he heard the gospel, believed the gospel and obeyed the gospel, by being baptized! He got rid of his sinful heart and was glad! You can be glad too, if you this day obey the voice of the Savior of men. Come to Christ before it is too late!

THE TOPSY-TURVY ANIMAL

I know all of you have heard about the old gentleman who went to the zoo for his first time, and there saw a rhinoceros. He stood in front of the barred enclosure and watched the animal for a long time. He saw the little red pig eyes, the small twitching ears, the elongated nose with the horn growing out of its center. He saw the tough, thick, scaly hide and the miniature tail switching from side to side. Finally, he turned away and in tones of disgust said, "They can't fool me. There ain't no such animal."

The rhinoceros is not the only funny animal at the zoo. I saw another over there a few days ago. It was hanging by its toes to the limb of a tree. And it was hanging upside down, so that the world must have looked downside up to it. Finally it started to move! And it moved backwards down the limb. Never once did it stand upright! Never once did it get on top of the limb! The movements of its body were slow, lazy, indolent and indifferent. It acted as if it didn't have any place to go, and wasn't particular about when it got there. It seemed to have nothing to do, and lots of time to do it in. It was slow motion come to life, but not very much life at that! I looked at the card which identified the animal, and saw that it was a sloth, and then, all of a sudden I realized what a lot of Bible passages mean!

For instance, in Romans 12:11, the apostle says we are to be "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." That proves that there are some two-legged sloths on earth, misnamed "men." In other words, it is possible for people to have the same characteristics in their spiritual life as that animal at the zoo possessed. And I know some folks in the church just like that! They are always upside down it seems. They carry their feelings around on the outside, and when you don't pet, baby and console them, they pout like two-year-olds. You've got to be running after them all of the time to get them to do their duty, but they have it in for this person or that in the church, because they didn't speak to them, or said something they didn't like, the last time they came. The whole world looks upside down to them, and they fret, stew and whimper about every trivial, trifling,

unimportant incident! The time you waste in running after them might be spent in saving a dozen other souls.

Such persons only hang on to the church by their "toenails," as it were, and when they do go, it is always backward. Anything that is suggested they oppose. Instead of going places and doing things, they just go places to *boo* things! If the church wants to make progress, it will always cost too much; if it doesn't want to make progress, they quit it because it is just hoarding money and not using it for good. They criticize the way the program is conducted but you couldn't get one of them to take part on it for anything. They give the best *jeers* of their life to the church! Such people are like the sloth.

Now the Bible says we are not to be slothful but fervent in spirit. That word *fervent* means intense, energetic, ready and willing to do. It is applied to heat, and "fervent heat" is "intense heat." We should be kindled in our spirits to the extent that we burn with a steady flame. Too many of us just flicker, and someone has to come along and set us on fire again! The word fervent is the exact opposite of slothful. The church would never exist if everyone in it was a sloth. It is kept alive by those who are alive themselves. No one can keep the flame of truth glowing in his heart unless he is filled with a burning desire to serve the Lord.

I want you to hear another scripture. It is found in Hebrews 6:11, and reads, "And we desire that everyone of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." I want you to think about that verse carefully. Notice the outstanding words, "diligence," "full assurance," "faith and patience." It takes all of those to inherit the promises. What about those of you who sit and listen to the message today, and say, "I'm going to obey the gospel some of these times?" Are you diligent? Do you possess faith and patience? If you do not, you'll not inherit the promises.

You know that you should attend the church services at the Churches of Christ, but you keep putting it off. Remember that "procrastination is the thief of time." One of these days it will be too late to try and come to God. Arouse from your state of

indifference! Awaken from your lethargy! Get awake for God! Get on fire for Christ! Be fervent in spirit.

The wisest earthly king who ever reigned said, "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger" (Proverbs 19: 15). That means simply that if you become negligent you'll find it harder to arouse, the longer you continue in that condition! You are wasting your very life when you waste time; for time is the stuff that life is made of. That is why Solomon said, "He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" (Proverbs 18:9).

I recall having heard of a minister who resolved to preach on the text, "Now is the accepted time; today is the day of salvation." While in his study, thinking, he fell asleep, and dreamed that he was carried to hell, where the demons of the underworld were holding a conference. They were discussing the problem of how they might deceive the most men and destroy their souls. One arose and said, "I will go to the earth and tell men that the Bible is not inspired; it is just a book of fiction, and is the work of mere men." But that was vetoed because it was felt men of good judgment would not accept the theory. Another evil worker suggested, "I will tell men that there is no God, and there is no hell." This brought a light into their eyes and each produced a fiendish smile, but they agreed they would not be able to get many to accept that.

Then one arose and with a wise smirk, like the serpent of old, said, "I will journey to the world of men, and tell them that there is a God, that there is a Savior, that there is a heaven—and even a hell—but I'll tell them there is no hurry; tomorrow will do, it is even as today." And they all sent him, for they knew that men would believe this and by their neglect be lost and damned forever.

I remember reading of a very poor woman, who had to do sewing for a livelihood. She was busily plying her fingers, as the flame on her kerosene lamp became dimmer. Someone asked her why she worked so fast and so anxiously. Her reply came quickly, "I must work while I can, for I fear that my light may go out, and I be left in darkness with my work undone." And that

should be the attitude of all of us. Will we be caught by the darkness of death, leaving our work unfinished!

You recall the parable of the talents! The man with the one talent was afraid and went and dugged in the earth and hid his lord's money. Then came the day of reckoning! He was condemned with the words, "Thou wicked and slothful servant." Not only was he damned because of his wickedness but because of his slothfulness. We intend to do better; we intend to speak to our neighbor about his soul; we intend to start to church. It has been aptly said that "hell is paved with good intentions." Once a gospel meeting was being held in a certain town. Two women were discussing the services as they met in a local grocery store. One was a Christian, and she pointed out to the other her need of Christ. But that one could not realize her need, so she replied, "Oh well, I suppose I must turn over a new leaf." The Christian woman answered, "But you might be at the end of the book, and there will be no more to turn over." Perhaps you are at the end of the book of life today! Some of you who listen in will not be here tomorrow. Why delay on the matter of accepting the Lord Jesus in humble obedience?

If you take a migratory bird from the flock as it wings southward and put it in a cage, it will beat its wings against the bars in an attempt to get free and continue its flight. But if you let it remain in captivity until the season is over, and then release it, it will not attempt to go. The instinct for motion is gone, and it will return to the spot of its captivity. So you may delay in making your decision for Christ until you pass the place where you have any desire for freedom from sin. "Be not slothful in spirit, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

SPIRITUAL SABOTAGE

Sabotage! You've heard that word many times in recent years! It seems to be closely connected with war! What does it mean? How does it affect our lives? Most of us know something about it! We know that when a foreign spy places a dynamite charge underneath one of our bridges so that it is set off by a passing train, it is sabotage! We know that foreign warring nations many times plant their men in our factories with the purpose of destroying machinery and overthrowing the morale of workers. That is sabotage!

The origin of the word is interesting to me. It really comes from the French word for "wooden shoe." You see, the workmen in France, Holland and Belgium generally wear shoes of wood, rather than of leather. When such workmen became incensed at their employers, they sometimes took off their shoes and threw them into the machinery. Many of the flywheels and gears were made of wood, so when the shoe was cast into them, it stopped the machinery by stripping those gears. Since the word for wooden shoe was the French "*sabot*," such destructive, detrimental action was called "*sabotage*." Nowadays most of our machinery is made of fine grade steel. If one wants to wreck it, a wooden shoe would prove ineffective. Moreover, most of our workers have no wooden shoes. So instead we speak of "throwing a monkey wrench into the machinery." That is just another expression for sabotage!

I should like to talk with you today about sabotage of a different kind! I'm not talking about that which is practiced by skulking, sneaking, sinister figures planted on our coast from submarines which land under cover of darkness. I'm talking about the kind of sabotage which perfectly "good" people, in the eyes of the world, are guilty of committing. It is spiritual sabotage, for there is such a thing as throwing a spiritual monkey wrench into God's machinery of salvation and holding back its work.

By way of example, one of the worst saboteurs in the world is the so-called "good moral man" who doesn't obey the gospel! He doesn't drink, swear or gamble. He loves his family and would do anything for his wife and children. He is free-hearted and

generous in charity drives. He always is present to help a neighbor in time of need. He visits the sick and helps those who are destitute. He is just an all 'round good fellow. But he will not obey the gospel. He refuses to be baptized, doesn't see that being a member of the church will do him any good. That man is going to be lost! But worst of all, he is going to take a lot of souls to hell with him. You may not think so, but he is the worst enemy the church has. He is even more an enemy than a drunkard who fills his body with intoxicating liquor and lies down on the sidewalk in the filth of his own vomit!

Let me prove that! Did you ever know a mother to choose as an ideal example for her son, such a drunkard as we've described? Did you ever hear a mother say to her little boy as she pointed to such a pitiful specimen of weakness, "Sonny, mother wants you to grow up and be like that man?" Indeed you have never heard that, nor will you ever hear it. But I call to your attention that thousands will pick out a "good moral man" and say, "If I can just be as good as he is, I don't care whether I ever become a member of the church or not."

There is an idea extant today that if one will be a good neighbor, if he will pay his debts, and live a clean moral life, God will save him. Nothing is further from the truth! God never did promise to save one on those conditions alone! It is true that one has to have those qualifications in order to be a Christian, but it takes more than that. A man has a twofold obligation to fulfill. He has a responsibility to his fellow-man but he also has one to his God. Being a good moral man will keep him out of jail, but it won't keep you out of hell. I want you to stay out of jail, but I also want to keep you out of hell! And there's only one way to stay out of torment and enter into heaven, and that is by obedience to God's commands. Listen, "Blessed are they who do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

Your morality will not save you! It is not the gate of entrance into the grace of God. Jesus says, "I am the door, by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). He again declares, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the

Father but by Me" (John 14:6). Our own righteousness or moral conduct is described as being "filthy rags." And so it is until it is ennobled by the proper motive of respect shown to the Son of God.

The second coming of Christ is going to bring vengeance on two classes of persons. One will be those who have scoffed at, ridiculed and sneered at religion. The other will be those who have recognized the power of truth as it is set forth in the gospel, but for one reason or another have not obeyed it. You don't have to be an atheist, infidel or agnostic to be lost. Here's what the record has to say about Christ's coming, "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:8). It shows that both of these shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

No man is so good he does not need a Savior! A Savior is to help those who are lost. If men could be saved without a Savior, then God made a mistake in sending His Son to die for the world. But if man needs a Savior, then he must come to that Savior and accept the terms set forth in his plan of salvation, else his very life will serve to overthrow the work of the Savior. Jesus says, "He that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad." You must either be in the church working for Him and with Him, or you will by your very neglect be scattering abroad those who might otherwise be saved! You will be a spiritual saboteur! Can you afford to continue in that condition? I'm sure if you give it a moment of sincere thought, you will conclude that you cannot! "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." That is the command to you in Acts 2:38.

I'm sorry to say that all of the saboteurs are not on the outside of the church. There are many who are members thereof and yet are guilty of holding back the work of the Lord. Do you want me to mention some of them? What about the member who is always criticizing, finding fault, stirring up discord, and is never satisfied with anything that goes on? What about those who gossip and repeat every choice morsel of false report in order to undermine the character of others? What about those who are

jealous and envious, who want to "run or ruin, boss or bust," as it is sometimes said? What about those little, petty, unconverted, un-Christian, dried-up souls who have their trivial feelings stuck out on every side for ten feet, so that they always imagine they are being ignored, and fuss and pout, and threaten to quit because they are not noticed? What about those who make a profession of loving Christ and then tell dirty, ungodly, immoral, lowdown, filthy, obscene stories where they work? What about those who sing on Sunday morning, "I love thy kingdom, Lord," and then rip out an oath on Monday morning which takes the name of God in vain?

While we are on the subject, we might as well suggest a few more! And as we do so, don't be thinking of the fellow who sat across the aisle from you this morning! If this hits you, take it! Don't be a coward and turn the knob and dial us out. If you can't take it, get so you can! We are not on this program to soothe the feelings of a lot of would-be, hypocritical, pretending church members. We are here to tell the truth, regardless of who it hits, and if the shoe fits wear it—even if it's a wooden shoe—don't throw it in the machinery, and stop the works!

Yes there are spiritual saboteurs in the church! The minister who is afraid to come out and condemn the damnable worldliness, the ungodly fashions, the hell-inspired practices of those around him is a saboteur! He is giving comfort to the enemy and defeating the purpose for which Christ died. The mother who turns her children loose to roam the street, while she traipses off to a bridge club, to play for prizes and sip cocktails, is not only holding back religion, but is guilty of undermining the strength of this nation. Father in heaven, how much this old world needs old-fashioned, home-loving, God-fearing mothers today! I want all of you to look down inside that guilty soul of yours and ask yourself if you would be willing to face Christ tonight. Are you walking in His footsteps, are you always doing good? Or are you sabotaging the spiritual army of the Living God?

RADIO RELIGION

In 1901, an Italian inventor, Marconi by name, perfected a means of sending, without wires, telegraph messages that could cross the Atlantic Ocean. In 1906, Lee DeForest constructed a vacuum tube which became the basis for transmission of spoken words. Thus the radio was born! In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the Westinghouse Company built Station KDKA, and started regular broadcasting with the election returns on November 2, 1920. With this began a new era in American life—an era in which famous men walked into the living room of every home and delivered speeches, an age in which grand opera vied with buffoons, symphony wrestled with jazz for supremacy, and pills, potions and poultices were freely talked about as the family sat down to dinner.

The radio is a remarkable invention. It has ever been a mystifying mysterious force to me. Few of us understand it, but all of us can enjoy it. One does not need to understand a thing in all of its details to be able to appreciate it. I do not know how a little watermelon seed, planted in the ground, can take up enough moisture and swell and grow until it develops into a luscious green globe weighing fifty pounds or more, but that doesn't keep me from eating watermelon. As another has said, I may not be able to tell why a black cow can eat green grass and give white milk with yellow butter in it, but I can mix that butter with my sorghum molasses and get a lot of pleasure out of it when spread on hot biscuits.

But it seems to me an unfortunate thing that all of the inventions made by man have been given over to a dual purpose. They can be used for good, but often are used for evil! It is that way with the automobile. One would think that when the self-propelled car came into existence and it was no longer necessary to "hitch old Dobbin to the shay" that more people would go to church. But it hasn't been that way. In many instances the automobile has been a distinct detriment to righteousness. It has provided a means of speedy escape for the criminal, has proved a source of immorality in many cases, and has given men an excuse to keep from obeying God.

Now that same thing holds true as regards the radio! It is not the fault of the inventor, it is not the fault of the mechanism! But it seems to be one of the tendencies of our age to abuse the things that God has given us. There are some of you who listen in to me this day who did not assemble with the church this morning. You say that you can listen to a good sermon on the radio and get as much out of it! But you have violated a sacred command of the Bible. God says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is" (Hebrews 10:25). There would be no churches to preach the Word of the Lord if everyone took the attitude that some of you are taking! You want others to bear the responsibility for keeping alive the gospel, and then you'll share the results without effort.

Moreover, you did not partake of the Lord's Supper. The early disciples met together on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7). Jesus says, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until He comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26). One cannot show Christ's death to the world, nor can he be faithful until the Master comes by staying away from the House of God. Too, the record says, "As I have given orders unto the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let everyone of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him" (1 Corinthians 16:1, 2). Now if the Lord prospered you this week, if you could work and make a living, and then you've merely pocketed that for your own pleasure and enjoyment, you have robbed God of what belongs to him. And do not think that He will forget your deliberate stealing of that which is His.

There is a very peculiar, absurd, ridiculous and unscriptural idea in this land today as to the power of radio in religion. Not long ago a man told me he got religion over the radio! I want to tell you that he was deluded! I'm sure he was sincere! I'm certain he was not hypocritical! He believed that, because that is what he had been taught! But the mere fact he had been so taught, and the mere fact that he believed it did not make it so. If you had never before seen a rhinoceros, I might convince you that one was a hippopotamus, but my telling you so wouldn't make it so,

and neither would your believing it. I know that man didn't get religion over the radio, and I know you'll not either!

In the first place you can't "get religion" anywhere! It is not something you get! Religion is "what you do," not "what you get." It is what you are in your daily life. It is your words, your thoughts, your deeds! I read for you in James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The religion of Jesus Christ appeals to the reasonable faculties of man! It is that course of life or conduct which makes one a better father, husband, brother and citizen of this nation!

But there are those who appeal to the emotions instead of the reason. They recite "death bed stories" and get the audience all weeping, then work upon their sympathies, until they hardly know what they are doing. And some confuse this with religion. But the religion of the New Testament does not make a man scream, pull out his hair, jump and cavort around and try to climb the wall. It does not consist of quaking and quivering, shaking and shivering, weeping and moaning, groveling and groaning. It is neither a fit, spasm or spell. It is merely becoming more like Jesus every day that we live. And Jesus was not a contortionist. He did not act in such an unbecoming way as some who profess to follow him seem to think!

While we are on that subject, we might as well take time right now to nail down another false theory. You may tune in on any number of stations to hear someone shout, "Just kneel down by your radio and find Jesus right now." It is broadcast far and wide that all you need to do is to place your hand upon the radio and you'll be healed! There is not a word of scriptural truth about any such statement! Those who so teach are either wilful misleaders, or else they are themselves ignorant of the Word of the Lord. Charity demands that we take the latter view! But those who know better and teach a doctrine of that kind should not be permitted to speak; those who do not know better are in no position to instruct others.

I insist upon it this day, that you'll never be saved except by

your obedience to the commandments of Christ. You're not going to be saved by your feelings, you're not going to be saved by your emotions! The record says, "Blessed are they that do His commandments" (Revelation 22:14). Jesus says, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). When Saul of Tarsus was lying in the dust of the road leading to Damascus, he did not say, "Lord, what must I feel?" but he asked, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?" On the day of Pentecost, when thousands were convicted in their hearts of the fact that they had killed Jesus, the Book says, "Then they being pricked in their hearts, cried aloud unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" If Peter had been one of these modern radio enthusiasts he would have said, "There isn't anything you can do—just kneel down and Christ will save you." But instead he said, and I quote, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38). Did he tell them the truth? Remember the Holy Spirit was guiding him! Then if he told them the truth, and I get up and tell men there isn't anything they can do of themselves, am I telling the truth?

The Bible tells you exactly what to do to be saved. It even gives you examples of those who heard about Jesus Christ for the first time, and came to Him under the teaching of inspired men. Read the Book of Acts, chapter eight, and you'll learn of an Ethiopian, who was secretary of the treasury for a queen. He heard the gospel from Phillip, who preached unto him Jesus. He confessed his faith in Christ, was buried in water baptism, and arose to rejoice in the Lord. He had done what God told him to do! Have you done what he did? If not, then you haven't done what God has told you! I say to you this day as it was said to Paul, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." That's God's plan for your obedience!

CELEBRATION OF EASTER

A great many of our religious friends are astonished at the fact that the Churches of Christ do not have a special celebration of Easter. They are constantly questioning as to our attitude on this matter. In answer to those questions, I have prepared this talk today, and I ask that you listen to it carefully, and then you will have at least a partial exposition of our position on the matter.

It should be remembered always that the Church of Christ has no other creed except the New Testament. We are bound to do what it says without addition, subtraction or modification. If we go beyond what is written we will be condemned, for the record says, "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18). If we leave out any of the divine requirements we shall likewise be punished, for we are told, "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book" (Revelation 22:19).

Now it may appear strange unto you, but nevertheless it is true that the New Testament nowhere commands the observation of Easter as a special day in the church. The only time the word is used in the New Testament it is misused, and refers, as the reader can determine, to the Jewish Passover. Let us note some other things which the New Testament does not mention! It does not mention Lent. It does not mention Ash Wednesday! It does not refer to Good Friday as such! It does not refer to Holy Week. Not only does it not refer to these, but there is not a semblance of record that the apostles and New Testament church ever kept any of these in any special way. Rather, the apostle Paul says to the congregation in Galatia, "Ye observe days, and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain" (Galatians 4:10, 11).

The question naturally arises then, as to how this festival day came into religion so prominently. I answer that you can determine the reply to this by consultation of any standard encyclopedia. "Easter" takes its present name from "Ostara," the pagan

goddess of spring, in old Teutonic mythology. When the idolatrous, superstitious pagans were brought into the church, they still clung to some of their former rites and ceremonies. The church of Rome, in order to hold them, conceived the idea of converting their pagan feast days into so-called Christian festivals. Thus the worship of the "goddess of spring" was changed into the Resurrection adoration. That Jesus did not rise from the dead on this day is very obvious, for if he did, then last year he arose on April 9, next year it will not be until April 21, while in 1940 it was on March 24.

Since the date was originally that devoted to a pagan rite celebrating the advent of spring, and the reawakening of life, it was carried out with wild orgies, which are indescribable on the radio. It may be pointed out, however, that symbols of the ancient belief still cling to us today. We ordinarily associate rabbits and eggs with Easter, and the stores are full of both, which have been sold at a heavy profit for the past several weeks. The rabbit is especially prolific and multiplies with great rapidity; thus it came to represent the fertility and increase of life. Among the ancient barbarians, the egg was a mystery, for it contained within it the elements of life, so they associated it with the worship of spring and their idol. I may pause long enough, and digress far enough to say, that to a lot of us lads who came from the country it was about as much a symbol of death as of life, for it was our custom to hide out a bunch of eggs, which we appropriated, and then boil them in secret on Easter. One doesn't feel so good after having consumed a couple of dozen of hard boiled eggs, just to demonstrate his capacity to overwhelm the eating powers of his companions.

But back to our subject! There are some of you who went to church today for the first time since Christmas. You no doubt felt very holy and sincere as you sat in the chapel, eying the beautiful flowers, and wondering if anyone was noticing your own beautiful new spring outfit, complemented by one of those little arrangements which have been falsely accused of being a "woman's hat." I want it distinctly understood that you are not fooling God for a moment. He knows what is in your heart. And He knows, I know, and you should know that you cannot

please God by dressing up once or twice a year and going to church with a sanctimonious look on your face. There's a great deal more to Christianity than that!

One of my brethren said to me once, "Well anyway, you'd better not criticize those who only come once a year. At least it is worth something to get people to church even that often." I disagree! It isn't worth anything! It isn't going to profit the one who comes to show off; it isn't going to help the church, for if the church had to depend on that kind of people to keep it alive, it would have closed its doors long ago. I'm pleading for pure, unadorned, humble, contrite, devoted Christian service every week of the year and every day of the week. Can't you realize that every week is a holy week to the man who loves Christ? Can't you see that Christianity is not vainglorious display once a year, but it is sincerely walking with the Master every day and every hour of life? People, we need less pretense and hypocrisy, and more godly living in our homes, our business and our daily conduct! Let's come back to the pure ideals of our Master who died for us!

But perhaps you ask if the Church of Christ believes in the resurrection of the Son of God. Yes, we believe in it with all of our hearts. I believe that He died for my sins, that He was buried the three days in the tomb and that He arose for my justification. I hold no brief for the man who denies the central fact of all history! Thank God for the risen Savior and the glorified Lord! But you ask again, if the Church of Christ observes any special memorial to this great event.

Yes indeed! But not just once per year! Rather, we observe it every first day of the week. Jesus himself gave us the memorial service by which He wanted to be remembered. It was the Lord's Supper. Listen to the words of the great apostle, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: And when He had given thanks, He brake it and said, Take, eat: this is My body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me" (1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

Now, when did the early church observe this memorial? Remember they were guided by the Holy Spirit directly, so what they did was certainly under approbation of God. I read in Acts 20:7 that the disciples met together upon the first day of the week to break bread. Why did they gather on the first day of the week to do this? Why, simply because it was the resurrection day! The Bible tells us the day of the week He arose, but does not tell us the day or month of the year. It looks as if God purposely shrouded that feature of it in silence to keep us from setting up some special day of pride, display and luxury, doesn't it? Now, when you attend services at the Church of Christ you will find them with the communion table set every first day of the week.

When the Jews were delivered from Egypt, they went out on the Sabbath or seventh day of the week. God gave them that day as their Sabbath of memorial. They were to recall their deliverance from bondage every week when that day rolled around. But we were delivered from the bondage of sin and death on the first day of the week, when our Savior arose from the dead! Do you feel that we should celebrate it less often than did the Jews their temporal deliverance? When the Lord told Israel to remember the Sabbath, they did not ask which one. They knew that the Sabbath came each week! Now we are to remember Jesus upon the resurrection day. We know that it was the first day of the week, and we know that each week has its first day. Let's not be weary in well-doing! Let's not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is! Let's never get the idea that we can come to church once per year, and earn the approval of heaven! It cannot be done!

THE DIFFERENCE

He was a fine young married man, and I enjoyed the privilege of calling in his home. I had been doing personal work all morning, visiting with various ones who have written in to this program. It was almost noon and I hesitated to ring the doorbell, for fear that I might disturb a family at its luncheon period. But he came to the door with a cheerful smile and invited me in. His wife also sat down with us in the room, and we remarked about our purpose on the radio. Then he flashed the question true and straight, "Just what is the difference between the Church of Christ and other religious bodies?" With a rather sincere look, he added, "You know, my wife and I are not members of any church. We are confused. But we do want to be Christians, for we have a little boy and girl growing up and we want to rear them properly." And that's how it happened that I pointed out to them the following facts.

The Churches of Christ have no other creed than the Bible. We believe that creeds are no better than those who make them. If they are formulated by finite men, they will be fallible; but if originated by God and written by the Holy Spirit, the items set forth must certainly be eternally correct. Moreover, it is our contention that no man or set of men has a right to make laws for the government of the church. Nor do they have power to execute such laws or enforce them. To reason that such power is to be given into the hands of elected delegates is simply to take the position that the spiritual welfare of humanity is in the hands of men and not the hand of God. God's law is perfect. It cannot be improved upon! Tampering with it will render it imperfect!

Every political party has a fundamental basis upon which it stands. That foundation is called a platform. The Democrats have one; so do the Republicans. If one wants to be a Democrat he has to subscribe to his party platform. If he wishes to be a Republican, he cannot become one by espousing the teachings of the other party, but he must stand upon the Republican platform. That platform is really a creed of the party.

The same thing holds true with regard to fraternal orders or lodges. Each has its own creed, which is called, in this case, a

ritual. If one wishes to belong to the Masonic Order, he would have to subscribe to its own particular ritual. The same if you wished to belong to the Odd Fellows. You could not belong to one by assuming the ritual of the other.

Churches all have creeds. The Methodist Church has its Book of Discipline; the Presbyterian Church its Articles; the Latter-Day Saints its Book of Mormon; Christian Science its Key to the Scriptures. Now if one wishes to belong to the Methodist Church, he does not become a member by accepting the Book of Mormon. If he wishes to be a Christian Scientist, he cannot become one by accepting the Methodist Discipline. A man will be religiously just what he accepts as his creed.

The Church of Christ has a creed also. It is the New Testament! No other Discipline, Catechism, Articles, Key to the Scriptures, or Doctrines and Covenants are accepted. As stated before, we believe that the New Testament is God's perfect will to man. We accept it as it is! But what will a man become if he accepts just that creed and nothing else? What will it make of him? Will it make a Christian Scientist? No, for we have found in order to be that, you'll have to accept also Mary Baker Eddy's "Science and Health; with Key to the Scriptures." Will it make a Mormon of him? No, for we have found that in order to be that, you'll have to accept the "Book of Mormon." What will you become, then, if you accept the New Testament and it alone?

Well, hundreds of years before there were Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Mormons, Christian Scientists, Congregationalists, Catholics, or any other of the modern denominations, men and women accepted the New Testament. We read in Acts 2:42, concerning those who accepted the gospel on the day of Pentecost, that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Now what were they? Certainly they were not called by any of the names that were mentioned. The truth of it is that they were simply disciples of Jesus, until the Gentiles were brought into the church, and then in Acts 11:26 we read, "The disciples were called Christians, first at Antioch." *Christians!* That is what these disciples became by obeying the inspired teaching of God. And that is what they will still become if they obey that same teaching. Just that and nothing more!

And that is the thing the Church of Christ is interested in making in this world—Christians! We do not represent a new denomination; as a matter-of-fact, the Churches of Christ are not sectarian bodies at all. They do not represent a “branch” of any religious body! They are not a reformation of anything! Instead the Church of Christ exists as a restoration movement, a “Get-Back-to-the-Bible” movement, a restatement and reaffirmation of the principles laid down by the apostles!

Let us suppose for a moment that the last member of the Masonic Order was to die or be killed! But there is hidden in a safe place a book containing full and complete information as to establishment of that society, as well as its history, and the laws of entering the same. Two hundred years pass on, and suddenly one day that book is discovered. Men search it and study it, and then resolve to restore that institution. How will they do it? The answer is simple. They must follow the instructions contained in that book. Now, suppose that twelve of those men obey that ritual exactly in every detail. What will they become? They will become Masons, will they not? Certainly, they could not become anything else!

Now let us suppose that we throw away all human creeds, confessions, disciplines and humanly-devised doctrines! Then let us begin the study of the New Testament, with the expectation of obeying it. If we faithfully follow out its teachings, what will we become? What will we be religiously? The answer is that we will become just what those became who obeyed it first, nineteen centuries ago. We will become *Christians*! Now, I should like to ask if it would not be better for us just to remain Christians? How shall we do so? Simply by continuing to follow the directions given in that book! As long as we believe just exactly what is in the New Testament, without adding anything or subtracting anything, we will be just Christians. If we wish to be anything else, we will either have to add something, or leave out something! We must either believe less than what the Bible teaches or we must believe more than it teaches! That is easily understood, isn't it?

Now, the Churches of Christ do not wish to be bigoted. They do not wish to be narrow-minded or hateful! They do want to

be as broad as the truth but, also, they must remain as narrow as God's revelation! They are only interested in making Christians. It is our contention that if we do what is commanded us in the New Testament, and live up to all of its requirements, we shall have all we can do, without attempting to follow some humanly-ordained doctrine! We are pleading for unity—not mere union—but unity. We are commanded to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (read Ephesians 4:1-6). But we believe that the world can never be united upon the doctrines and commandments of men. Even if they were, no salvation would accrue therefrom. It is our firm contention that we can only permanently unite upon the teachings of God! Therefore we have resolved to "speak where the Bible speaks; remain silent where it is silent."

Too, the very name "Churches of Christ" is scriptural (Romans 16:16). It honors Christ as the head of the church! It gives Him due recognition as the bridegroom, for the church is His bride! The worship of the congregations of Christians is scriptural. There are no other organizations through which the work is done. The teaching work is not done through Bible colleges, seminaries or parochial schools, but through the church! The preaching is not done under the auspices of a college or missionary society, but solely under direction of the church—the One Body! Thus the church, and not a human organization, receives the glory for what is accomplished. We earnestly trust that you will give these facts consideration, when pondering upon the matter of your spiritual obedience, and that you will unite with us in restoring the apostolic church!

A NEW CHURCH OFFICER

Every honest student of the New Testament is convinced of the fact that the early church was an institution characterized by both humility and simplicity. These two attributes were essential to its perpetuity in the form for which the Savior gave His life to establish it. But men are not content to let God's arrangements alone. They have a desire to tinker and experiment with everything, and the church has not escaped. It is altogether possible that one might work on his car, and improve its running qualities by adding a new feature here or there, but remember that the car was made by man in the first place. No individual, however, can improve the church, by messing with its divine arrangement and government.

Strange to say, some of those who cry the loudest that they are desirous of leading men back to "the old paths" have themselves added institutions and fostered innovations upon the church. There are Churches of Christ (so-called) which are as sectarian as any other denomination. Of course, they will not admit it, but the charge can be proven just the same. For instance, Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and *teach* all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." We believe that this teaching was to be done in both instances by the church!

There is teaching to be done in leading souls to Christ; that is, we must take the gospel to them in order to convert them! That is the duty of the church. But some have organized missionary societies to do that first teaching which Jesus commanded! Such societies have their presidents, secretaries, treasurers and other officers. They are separate institutions set up by men to do the work which God has authorized the church to do! We oppose those institutions as being additions to the plan of God!

Then there are others who cry out against the societies which have been established to do that *first* teaching commanded; and turn right around and establish Bible colleges and seminaries to do the *second* teaching that is commanded. Such institutions have

their own presidents, secretaries, treasurers and other officers. They too have been organized to do a part of the work which the Lord has ordained for the church to do. What is the difference between organizing a missionary society to preach the Bible or organizing a Bible college to teach the Bible? The plea is sometimes made that the latter are private institutions! That is not true; but suppose they were, would that make them scriptural? Suppose a man organized a private missionary society to preach the gospel, and did that work through it? Would it be God's plan? Would it be scriptural?

As a result of these institutions, there are churches which designate themselves as Churches of Christ, but which are drifting toward sectarianism as fast as they can. They are nullifying the plea to return to the New Testament church! They are endangering the restoration movement by their compromises. I call attention to one of the most prevalent conditions among them, in direct opposition to the teachings of the New Testament.

Remember that a nation, home, school or church is just as strong and pure as its government! God's church has a divine system of government! If you destroy, weaken or add to that government, you will strike at the very heart of the church! In the New Testament arrangement, following the plan of simplicity, God has ordained elders to look after the spiritual welfare of a local flock; deacons to care for the immediate temporal needs of the congregation; and evangelists to carry the gospel to the world, establishing new units for Christ and strengthening the congregations which have been established.

Modern religion has set up a new office. It is that of "the pastor." And some Churches of Christ, aping the denominational world about them, are falling headlong into the modern swim! A few days ago I talked with a very fine member of one such congregation, who told me that Brother So-and-So was pastor, and young Brother This-and-That was assistant pastor! Later on, one of our brethren had occasion to call on one of these "located ministers" and said, "I believe you are pastor of a certain congregation," whereupon, without denial, the preacher said, "Yes, I am their regular preacher."

Years ago, in his paper, "The Christian Quarterly," Moses E. Lard said, "We cannot but feel alarmed at the disposition on the part of many of our churches—a disposition which is clearly on the increase—to create a new office in the church and fill it with a class of men wholly unknown to the Bible." Later he asserted, "This one-bishop and one-pastor doctrine is incipient popery, and no legitimate inference from the Bible will sustain it."

What would happen to our government if the President were to arrogate to himself the powers of Congress? What would happen if the Congress were to take over the rights of the Supreme Court? Would not turmoil, chaos and constant contention arise? Certainly so!

In the church the elders are the feeders of the flock. They are to watch, guide, lead, direct and rule the church! It is their duty to see that all who have talent in the local congregation be given training in the use of that talent, and likewise opportunity to employ it in the edification of the church. When they hire someone and turn their responsibility over to him, they create a new office in the church which God has not created! I know of several churches which have a "located minister" and there are a number of brethren in the church who are excellent speakers. They are never given opportunity to use that God-given talent, unless the regular minister is sick, on a journey or otherwise indisposed! If such want to develop themselves they must go out to little weak churches which have not the money to hire a regular man. Thus the best talent is grabbed by the big churches which need it least, and the developing talent is put in the place which is in need of the very best. Suppose we were to fight a war that way. What would happen if we would put our best men in the places where the enemy had already been conquered, and then put our raw recruits out where the going was hardest? Doesn't sound sensible, does it? Yet that's the way a lot of churches are fighting sin!

The plain, simple, unvarnished truth is that a lot of people in the church are not converted at all. They are not followers of Christ. They are only followers of men! They do not come to worship God! They come to be entertained. They do not study the Bible. They want to hire someone to do that for them, then

get up and recite a little piece when they arrive! So the elders hire the best entertainer for their stage—beg pardon, I mean pulpit, and they turn it over to him!

The excuse is made that God does not tell a man how long he can preach in one place! Yes, but it tells him how long he can't! God has told the elders to feed the flock. He has told the church to "edify one another." And when any man stays in a place, preaching Sunday morning and night, year in and year out, so that the elders cannot feed the flock, and the church cannot edify itself, he has been there too long. Mind you now, any man who obstructs the work, plan or system of God has been there or here too long!

The church in a lot of places depends upon one man! Let the preacher die, get sick or be run over by an automobile, and immediately a frantic search is made to get a man to "fill our pulpit." It would be a little nearer the truth to say "get one to fill our pews." A church which depends on one man for its existence might as well be dead anyway. That one man can't take them to heaven, and if they all quit because he does, they won't make it anyway. They might as well close up shop, put a padlock on the front door, haul down their sign and stay home. It isn't a Church of Christ!

It has been argued that it's all right so long as the minister doesn't take over the "authority" from the elders. Generally, he will sooner or later! But let's see if it is all right for a minister to do all the feeding so long as he doesn't do the ruling? The very same scripture which tells the elders to "take the oversight" tells them to "feed the flock." Now if they can hire someone to do the last, why can't they hire someone to do the first? And if a man usurps the last prerogative, what is to keep him from taking the first? The one-man preacher-pastor system is unscriptural!

HAS CHRISTIANITY FAILED?

The other day I got a letter from a serious-minded young man who is a regular listener to this program. Among other things, he wrote this statement, "It seems to me that Christianity is a failure, and I wonder what we will need to try in the future to save civilization." Now it occurs to me that some of the rest of you may be thinking that same thing today, so I want to talk with you a little while about that subject. Has Christianity failed?

I answer that with an emphatic negative! NO! Christianity has not failed; as a matter-of-fact, it has hardly been given even a fair trial in this generation, so how could it fail? But you point to the empty church pews, you mention that some churches can hardly have prayer meeting in midweek because not enough are interested in coming! You show the unrest, the division, the worldliness that is rampant in the religious world today, and once more you ask, "Isn't it true that Christianity has failed to meet the modern test?"

Let's look this thing squarely in the face. I'm going to admit that modern religion has failed all right! But whether you like this statement or not, let me tell you that there is a vast difference between modern religion and old-fashioned, New Testament Christianity! What the world calls "Christian" in these days is everything else than what God means by the use of that term. But why has religion failed? Now straighten up in your chair and get a good hold on the arms. I'm going to say a few things that you'll not like. It may rub the fur the wrong way, but all you need to do is turn around, and then I'll be rubbing it the right way! That's what religion needs—a good turning around, and heading the right direction!

Religion has failed because of the conduct of those who preach it! Men stand in the pulpits today who see in their congregations those who cater to the world, the flesh and the devil! Do they come out against the ungodly, damnable, hell-inspired lives of the membership? No, sir, for they might stir up some of those dancing, card-playing, social cocktail-sipping sisters, and might arouse the animosity of those beer-guzzling, gambling, profanity-using brethren, and the result is they would lose their nice easy job!

There are ministers standing in the pulpits of this land who are there for the money they get out of it, and I'm telling you with grief in my heart that they'll play dirty, contemptible, lowdown politics in the church; and sell the souls of men on the bargain counters of the world, just to keep in good with everyone! Why don't those who profess to love the Lord come out against worldliness? Haven't they the nerve to preach their convictions, or have their consciences been seared over with a hot iron, and their convictions stifled?

In some places the preachers are mere pawns in the hands of the leaders! They must pussyfoot around, and walk easy when they trample upon sin, for often the families of those leaders are living a sin-filled life that is a disgrace to the Cause of the Blessed Master! If one of the elders' boys gets out and chases around, goes to places of worldly amusement, the preacher has to be careful about what he says, for that boy's father will fire the man who condemns his family! You people know that is true! You've seen it yourself! I tell you, before I would preach in a place where my mouth was muzzled, my tongue gagged, my hands tied and my heart roped in, I would walk out and go somewhere else, if I had to dig ditches all day to support myself to preach at night. At least I could be free then to preach the truth!

Religion is compromising today! That's why the world is getting disgusted, disgruntled, discouraged and disturbed with conditions! Just a short time ago, a man who is a preacher told me that the leaders where he was preaching were worldly and modernistic. He declared that one of them at least was guilty of frequenting dances, and even denied the virgin birth of Jesus. By-and-by he took a group and walked out. He asked the leaders of another church to take the oversight of his group. Well sir, they did, and then went right on fellowshipping the other bunch also! Now there's something fishy in Denmark! If that preacher told the truth, then they have no right advertising with and fellowshipping the group of modernists and worldly-living members. If the preacher lied, then they have no business of fellowshipping him and the group that stands with him. Yet they'll advertise the meeting of the one bunch, then turn around and advertise with the other! People, how can a church call itself a Church of

Christ and carry water on both shoulders? How can you fellowship Christ and Satan at the same time? Has it come about at last that these modern religionists have discovered that there is concord and agreement with idolatry and Christianity? Indeed not, but there is a spirit of fear. Preachers are afraid to preach the whole truth to their congregations. They will fight sectarianism, throw the harpoon into other religious bodies, and at the same time build up institutions that are just as full of worldliness as anything can possibly be!

Religion is failing to meet the needs of the world because of the lives of those who are in the churches. Many of them are hypocritical, double-dealing, two-faced, deluding pretenders. What good does it do to go to the House of God on the first day of the week, and then lie, cheat, steal and stoop to every form of trickery the other six days? How can the church advance when those who sing "Lord, I care not for riches" on Sunday night will swindle their neighbors on Monday morning? You may say this indictment is too strong! You may say it makes you tremble to hear anyone talk in this fashion. You ought to tremble! The devils believe and tremble! So if you believe, you ought not to come behind the devil in trembling, when you realize the eternal fate of those who are base traitors to the Cause they pretend to uphold!

Let's get down to brass tacks! The church will never get anywhere as long as it tolerates a fifth column within its ranks. The devil smirks and grins when the invitation is extended to people to come into a church that is not a bit different than the world—where the membership walks, talks, acts and carries on just like they do in Satan's kingdom! The devil doesn't even mind your uniting with the church, if you'll just act like most of the ones who are already in it! He doesn't care whether he gets you in the church—or out of the church, just so he gets you! And he is going to get a lot of you, if you don't straighten up your lives!

I want to thank God this afternoon that I live in America, where I can still preach the truth! I want to thank the personnel of this radio station which has made it possible for us to reach into your homes with messages of fighting, militant truth. I want to thank my friends of this broadcast, who have written letters

of encouragement and help, who have given me the incentive to go on, and let the truth be known! Truth isn't always nice and pleasant! Sometimes it cuts like a glittering sword. Sometimes it strips the glistening garments of sham from the body of society, and leaves it exposed in all the shame of its corruption and nakedness. But truth is the only thing that will save this world! It is our only hope! When the day comes that sermons like this can no longer be preached, then civilization will go down and democracy will crumble! OH GOD, grant that we may still contend for the faith of Christ and against sin of every description! Otherwise, America will become like Sodom and Gomorrah, and will reap the whirlwind of destruction even as we are sowing now!

I make this plea to all who hear me this day! Take your stand for the Lord Jesus Christ! Live a CHRISTIAN life in all the implications of that word. If you are contributing your time, talent and treasure where worldliness is rampant and uncondemned, then come out from among them and be ye separate. That is the call of your Lord to you this day! Fight against evil! Resist the devil and he will flee from you! Let's still try to rescue our nation from the destruction which will come upon her if she continues in fornication, adultery, drunkenness, gambling, lying, stealing and lusting!

The Churches of Christ sponsoring this program stand four-square against sin—SIN of every kind! Not all who call themselves Churches of Christ will dare to thus preach, but we will preach against it as long as we have the power and strength. Do you stand with us in our fight against hypocrisy both in the pulpit and the pew? Then may God bless you! Let us hear from you and let us work together against the sin which doth so easily beset us, and take our stand upon the gospel, the hope of our salvation!

MEETING GOD'S APPOINTMENT

In the St. Louis Art Museum there is a wonderful statue called, "The Angel of Death and The Sculptor." It depicts a young man, in the flower of his youth, working upon his masterpiece. He has his chisel against the marble, and his hammer raised to strike it. But the angel of death has just touched him on the shoulder and is beckoning him to follow her. There is a look of almost unbelief on the artist's face. He cannot believe that his great work must be left unfinished! Nevertheless, there is also a look of resignation. The task is ended.

A few days ago, a man sat in his cabin atop a pine ridge in Georgia. At ease in his leather chair, he posed as another painted his portrait. The cheery warmth of a log fire took away the coolness of the day. All of a sudden the man who sat there put his hand to his head and exclaimed, "I have an intense pain in my head." He lapsed into unconsciousness, and soon left this mortal sphere. The angel of death had touched him on the shoulder and she led the President of the United States away just as he was preparing to complete his greatest work at the San Francisco Conference for World Peace. The nation was shocked, incredulous, unbelieving! But death calls to all of us, and when we are summoned there remains no time to finish the task.

I think it should be borne home to each of us that we are enroute to that appointment which God has made for us. There is no escaping it! But we can be prepared to meet it when it comes! You make appointments to meet your friends. Other things intervene and you cancel or postpone those appointments, but you'll do neither with the appointment of death, for it is not within your power to dispose of in such a fashion. God has made it! The appointment is divine and you will keep it. The Bible says, "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment." If you are prepared for the one of these, you will be prepared for the other. If you are not prepared for one of them, you are not prepared for either.

"Procrastination is the thief of time," it has been said. Many who listen in this day are resolved to make some readiness to meet

the Lord in death. I wonder if you will be like that individual whose watch was wrong. When someone called to his attention that he had better start for the train, he looked at his faulty time-piece and said, "I still have plenty of time." Just then the train whistled, and he exclaimed, "I was mistaken," and began to run, but he was too late. Are you fooling yourself into believing that the frail expectancy which you have of the future is correct? Do you say, "I still have plenty of time?" God help you not to be mistaken, for eternity is long, and condemnation sure to those who do not accept the Lord.

Doesn't it appear foolish to you, the way so many make arrangements, as if they were going to live here on earth always? They have elaborate plans, projects in the making, and conduct themselves in general as though they felt death would never reach them. But the Bible warns us along this line in the statement, "Come, come now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will enter into such a city, and continue there a year and buy and sell and get gain. Whereas, ye know what shall be on the morrow! For what is your life? It is but a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." Men insure their houses, garages, barns and cars against fire. But they do not insure themselves against the flames of eternal hell! They insure their belongings against the windstorms which might sweep them away, but they forget to insure their lives against the winds of fate which may sweep with gale-like suddenness upon them and carry them to the next world.

The Bible constantly points out the brevity of life. Existence on earth is described as a weaver's shuttle, a vapor, a flower or grass! And we recall the words of the song,

*As the life of a flower, as a breath or a sigh,
So the years that we live as a dream hasten by.
True, today we are here, but tomorrow may see,
Just a grave in the vale and a memory of me.*

I know there are those who deny the existence of a life after death. In their gross material views, man is no better than the dumb brute. When he dies, according to their theory, he is like the dog or the swine. But the mere denial of a thing does not

make the fact! I have heard men say even when they had read of the existence of the spirit in us, "I just can't see it." Well, that doesn't change it any! A blind man can be taken out in the yard, and you can point out the sun to him. The mere fact that he says he cannot see it does not prove there is no sun. It only demonstrates his own blindness!

The same thing holds true with those who deny the existence of hell! A lot of people would like to convince themselves that there is no hell. A sense of guilt and wrong impending in their hearts forces them to try and find some degree of comfort from falsehood. But just as surely as there is a law of justice which operates in this life to bring the guilty to punishment, just so there is an eternal law of justice which will some day reward the righteous and punish the wicked. Refusal to believe there is a hell will not keep you out of it, any more than refusing to believe in jail will keep you out when you have committed a crime against the state!

And it should be pointed out that good intentions will not suffice to save you. I have no doubt that all ten of the virgins in the parable of the "Ten Virgins" had good intentions! You could not tell the difference in looking at them. They all had lamps! They were all dressed up! They were all no doubt equally excited over the roles they were to play in the wedding. Had you questioned them as to their intentions you would have received ten identical answers. What then was the difference? The Bible says five were wise and five were foolish! But what is the basic difference between wisdom and foolishness as God looks at it? I reply that it lies simply in the fact that five were prepared for an emergency and the others were not. It makes no difference as to the goodness of your intentions, if you have paid no attention to the matter of preparedness! Someone has aptly remarked that "hell is paved with good intentions."

You have a responsibility! And where there is a responsibility there must always be a reckoning. If there were no giving account, there would be no responsibility. You must answer for the talent that God has given you! You must stand before him and justify the use that you have made of your time on this earth. Nothing is more precious than time. When men come to die,

when the sands in the hourglass of time are running low, they would sacrifice all that they possess in order to have just a few more hours on earth with their loved ones. What are you doing with this valuable substance?

Things change in value when you are face to face with death. I recall hearing about a certain rich woman who was on the Lusitania at the time it was torpedoed. All was in wild confusion! Her jewels became scattered on her stateroom floor. The pearls in her necklace lay strewn helter-skelter. Her diamonds glistened from the refuse and debris which lay in the corner. She ran up to the commanding officer on the bridge just before the final lifeboat was launched and asked him if she could have just one minute to return to her stateroom. He granted it, but told her she must hurry. And this woman ran back to the room where she had been staying. What do you think she picked up? The pearls? The diamonds? No, she grabbed four apples that were lying on a ship's table and ran with them to the lifeboat! So our sense of values will change when we know that we have but a few moments left.

You're interested in making money today! You are too busy with your social life to go to church! You have been elected to a political office and you haven't time from your duties to serve the Lord! You feel the need of recreation, so you waste the first day of the week lolling about at the club or playing with the rest of the fellows. That all seems important now. But what will it mean when you come to die? How eagerly you would trade all of your money, your wealth, your fame, your prestige, for the comfort and consolation of the Christian life.

Tomorrow may not come! Yesterday is past! All that you have is today! Make use of it for God! Now is the accepted time—today is the day of salvation! Harken to the invitation of Christ who says, "Come unto Me." Go to the nearest faithful Church of Christ sponsoring these programs and obey the gospel. Do it today!