MATTHEW

Ernest Renan says that the book of Matthew is the most important book ever written. There are others who heartily agree with him. It is not the oldest book in the New Testament, but it fittingly occupies the first place. It is a gospel in the truest sense of the word. Yet there is no other book that could so well serve as a connecting link between the Old and the New Testament. Where it was written it is not known. The time of its writing was about A.D. 66. It was written by Matthew an apostle of Jesus Christ.

PART I.

The Author.

Comparatively little is known about Matthew. We are told that he was the son of Alphaeus. We are also told by Mark that James the less was also the son of Alphaeus. If we assume that Alphaeus is the same man in each case, this would make Matthew and James the less brothers. It is also worthy of mention that Matthew and Thomas the twin are always put together. This has led some to believe that Matthew and Thomas were twin brothers. This, however, is by no means certain.

What is sure is that Matthew, before his calling, was a publican. That means that he was a hired servant of Rome. He was a tax collector. The office was profitable financially. It was held, however, at the price of almost universal hatred. The Jews felt about a publican as we would feel about a traitor in the time of war.

The fact that Matthew was a publican indicates at least two characteristics that he possessed.

(1) He was a lover of money. Matthew loved money more than he loved his native country. He loved money more than he loved a good name.
Matthew.

He loved money more than he loved his religion. Money was perhaps the supreme passion of his life. He was determined to get rich, however great the cost.

(2) The fact that Matthew was a publican indicates that he was a man of a certain type of strength. Matthew was an intelligent man. It was not easy for such a man to make himself deliberately despised of the best people of the day. It required a certain toughness of fibre on his part. It is always hard to be scorned and hated. To enter deliberately upon a road that must end at such a goal requires a man of both strength and character.

But this man became a disciple of Jesus then an apostle. That Matthew should be converted was doubtless a tremendous price to all who knew him. Those who heard it were at first probably tempted to make a joke of it. They could not think of worldly, grasping, close-fisted Matthew forsaking his ledgers and his money bags to follow a poverty stricken carpenter. But if the fact that Matthew chose to follow Jesus was surprising, the fact that Jesus chose Matthew was far more surprising still. At that time the Master was popular. Think of the effect upon his popularity such a step as this would make. Such a move would naturally threaten the success of His enterprise. All the best people would naturally resent it and resent it keenly. It arose more antagonism than if a religious leader were to come to Memphis and choose a negro for one of his intimate friends.

In spite of difficulties, however, one day Matthew looked up from his books to find himself face to face with Jesus. Every man does this sooner or later. Jesus is looking at him. Not with eyes full of hate but full of tender yearning and find friendship. He sees the evil
Matthew.

in Matthew. He also sees his fine possibilities. And He speaks home to Matthew's larger and better self. "Matthew follow me." And how simple and majestic the story is! "Matthew rose up and followed Him."

From that day this publican became a new man. How humble he is. How beautifully modest. How little he has to say for himself. Luke says that Matthew left all to follow Jesus. That "all" doubtless meant a great deal. But Matthew makes no mention of the fact that he left anything. He will not parade his sacrifices. He will not tell how much he had to give up. I like that.

Then Luke tells us that Matthew made a great feast in his house and invited his out-cast friends, his fellow publicans, the harlots of the city, may be a few Gentile dogs. Jesus was a guest of honor. Doubtless there were not a few who dated their spiritual birthdays from that feast. Matthew merely says, "there was a feast." He does not say that he had any part in it at all.

When the other evangelists give the names of the apostles, they simply say that one of them was named Matthew. When Matthew himself gives the list, he says that Matthew the publican was one of them. He will not try to cover up his evil past. Not that he adds this word by way of parade, he is telling those to whom he writes that Jesus will even welcome the publicans. He is also confessing the worst about himself. The man who confesses his sin has nothing to fear from exposure. I imagine when Matthew wrote his own name he hesitated a moment and then with a sob in his throat and with eyes blinded by tears, tears of penitence and tears of gratitude he added, "the publican."

Jesus told a story once that must have been very cheering to
Matthew.

Matthew. If he had had a root of bitterness in him how gladly he would have used it against his bitter enemies, the Pharasees. This story was of a man, a Pharasee who went up into the temple to pray. He did not pray at all but paraded his virtues. He came away from the house of God no better than he was when he went in. The other was a publican. He smote upon his breast and said, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." God answered his prayer and he came away transformed. It read almost like Matthew's own story, but he would not tell it. He would not thus defend himself. A modest and humble man is Matthew.

PART II.

When Matthew became a disciple of Jesus, Luke says that he left all to follow. There is one exception to this "all." He did not leave his pen. He brought that with him and dedicated it to Jesus Christ. I have an idea that Matthew was not a great preacher, but he was accustomed to using the pen. To carry on his business he had to be accurate and systematic and pains-taking. This fitted him in a special way for the work of secretary. He gave himself to this hidden task and wrote a gospel that has left a track of life through all the centuries.

Now there are certain characteristics of Matthew's gospel that distinguish it from the others. I am going to name only five of these characteristics.

1. The gospel of Matthew is the gospel of orderly arrangement. He does not record the deeds and words of Jesus in their chronological order. He rather groups them together in topical fashion. For instance,
Matthew.

He groups the beatitudes. He groups the sayings of Jesus contained in the Sermons on the Mount. Then follows a group of chapters given up to the miracles of Jesus. Then there is a chapter given wholly to the parables. The last chapters of the book reach a climax in the record of the rejection of the King. The King's judgment of the people and salvation, through the death and resurrection of the King.

2. The second characteristic of Matthew is that he presents Jesus as the King. In his genealogy he shows that Jesus is the son of David. He is called the son of David eight times in this gospel. Therefore, he is King both by right of human birth and by right of divine origin.

When the wise men come to seek Him they do not ask for Jesus of Nazareth. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews." When Herod slew the innocents, he does so because he is undertaking to kill one who is of royal blood. He acknowledges this baby that has been born in Bethlehem is a rival. The deeds of Jesus are the deeds of a King. He is King over the physical world. The winds and the sea obey Him. He is King in the realm of life. The dead are raised by Him. He is King in the realm of the spiritual, demons banish at His word.

He exercises the authority of the King. Matthew is the only one who records the fact that Jesus spoke with authority. He tells us how that Jesus said "Ye have heard that it hath been said of them of old time -- but I say unto you." Matthew alone records that Jesus said "All authority in heaven and in earth is given unto me."

According to Matthew Jesus died as a King. When Mark and Luke tell the story they simply say expired. John said, "He gave up the
Matthew.

Ghost." Matthew says "He dismissed His spirit." There is something kingly about that. When the King was ready to depart he was not flung out of life against His will. He went out in kingly fashion. He summoned His servant death and dismissed His spirit into His keeping. Matthew's gospel is the story of the King.

3. Matthew's gospel is the gospel of the Kingdom of heaven. Matthew uses the expression "the Kingdom of heaven" thirty three times. He is the only New Testament writer that uses it at all. The rest generally use "The Kingdom of God." Matthew's is, therefore, in a peculiar sense the gospel of the Kingdom. When John preached his first sermon was "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When John was put in prison and Jesus began his ministry, he also said "Repent ye for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

The parables of Jesus as recorded by Matthew are also exclusively the parables of the Kingdom. He records fifteen parables. Twelve of these fifteen begin by saying "The Kingdom of Heaven". For instance, "The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hid in a field." "The Kingdom of heaven is like a merchantman seeking goodly pearls." "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He taught this prayer. "Thy kingdom come." Jesus is the King, but His Kingdom is not yet fully established. There is a sense in which He rules the universe, but the rule for which He seeks is that which comes from the surrender of loving hearts. Matthew shows that He is seeking to establish His kingdom on the earth. He is seeking to so establish it that His will shall be as
Matthew.

fully done here as it is in heaven. In Matthew se find the gospel of the Kingdom.

4. The gospel of Matthew is in a peculiar sense a gospel for the Jews. Matthew wrote it with this supreme purpose in mind. To convince his own people that the Jesus that they had rejected and crucified was the Messiah of prophecy. He was profoundly convinced of this fact himself and he gave himself pains to convince others.

The fact that he was especially writing for Jews is proclaimed by many evidences. He begins his book, for instance, by giving the genealogy of Jesus. That was the Jewish method. He traces this back to Abraham. When Luke gives one he traces his back to Adam. Luke wanted to show that Jesus was the son of man. Matthew wanted to show that he was the son of Abraham and the promised Messiah.

When you read this book you are impressed at once by the way Matthew fits in almost every movement of Jesus a fulfillment of some Old Testament prophet. The expression "That it might be fulfilled" is found not at all in Mark and Luke, six times in John and thirteen times in Matthew. It is found five times in the first two chapters.

I do not think that Matthew had been convinced of the deity of Jesus from the study of the Old Testament. He had been convinced by Jesus Himself, but when with the knowledge of Jesus in his heart, he set himself to the study of the Old Testament he found an amazing fulfillment of the prophecy in Jesus. He hoped, therefore, to bring this fact to his own people. He quotes from nineteen books of the Old Testament in order to accomplish his purpose.

Matthew had a keen realization of how the Jews had come to
misunderstand Jesus and to fail to recognize Him as the Messiah. Being themselves persecuted they had come to construe all promises of deliverance as promises of political deliverance. They, therefore, thought that the Messiah was to come as a worldly conqueror. When He came as a suffering servant, they did not recognize Him. Matthew made labors to show that this suffering servant of the Lord is also Israel's anointed King.

5. But while the gospel of Matthew is written especially for the Jews, it also has a universal appeal. Matthew recognized that Christ came first to his own people, but that fact did not prevent his being the Saviour of the whole world. He is for the Jew first, but he is finally a universal Saviour. This fact is evident throughout the whole book.

Among the ancestry of Jesus, for instance, there are the names of four women, Tamar, Rāshāb, Ruth and Bathsheba. The first two or these are harlots. The last is an adulteress and the third is a woman from Moab. While Ruth is personally clean, yet the law said a Moab should not be received in the congregation of the Lord. Therefore, all of these are outcastes. Why are they put into the record? Some have thought that Matthew was hitting back at those that claimed that Mary was an unclean woman and that Jesus was not really virgin born, but the real explanation is that Matthew wants to show that Jesus while the son of a Jew is yet the Saviour of the race.

A second interesting fact is that the first worshipers of Jesus were not Jews but Gentiles. Who first saw in this little baby in the manger God manifest in the flesh? It was a small group of outsiders. The wise men were Gentiles. They were not born under the cove-
nant. They were not the sons of Abraham.

The third significant fact is that Matthew recognizes the failure of his own people and the coming opportunity of the Gentiles. He alone tells the parable of the marriage of the King's son. When the supper was ready the servants went out to call those that were bidden to the feast. But they would not come. Then it was that servants were sent out into the highways to invite everybody with the result that the wedding was held with guests. By this Jesus meant the Jews to understand that their rejection was not going to spoil the feast. Even though they failed and refused to come, the Gentiles would respond.

Finally it is significant that Matthew alone records the great commission. Here is a gospel written by a Jew and especially for Jews, but its climax is reached in this majestic statement, "Go ye therefore and disciple the nations -- and lo I am with you always, even unto the end." The gospel is narrow as his own people is the gospel of Matthew. It is also a gospel as wide as the world and as lasting as time.
The Book of Mark was written by John Mark. John was his Jewish name and Mark was his Roman name. He was the son of a wealthy widow of Jerusalem. His mother was named Mary. She was identified with the work of Christ almost from its very beginning. It is probable that in her home Jesus celebrated His last supper. It was in her home also, in all probability, that the disciples were praying when the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost. Peter was a frequent inmate of the home and it is thought that Mark was converted under his influence as Peter calls him "my son."

John Mark does not figure in the gospel story until after the crucifixion of Jesus. That is unless he was the young man who followed Jesus into the garden the night of His betrayal. I think there is some likelihood that he was the man. He alone tells this story. "And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young man laid hold on him: and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked." I believe that this might have been Mark for another reason and that is that he seems in his youthful days to have been somewhat impulsive and a bit cowardly. He acts as you would expect a spoiled son of a wealthy and indulgent mother to act.

When Paul came up to Jerusalem and Barnabas took him under his wing, it is very likely that they were both entertained in the home of Mary. And John Mark had the privilege of becoming acquainted with the great apostle. A little later when Barnabas
and Paul set out on their first missionary journey, it is quite natural that this young man desired to go with them. He got on very well in Cyprus. That was his ancestral home. The little company was doubtless held in honor there, but when they left Cyprus and went to work in Asia Minor, Mark found that the work of the missionary was not all a romance so he left and went home. Just why, we are not told. But his reason whatever it was, did not do him honor.

Two years later when Paul and Barnabus were preparing to go on a second missionary tour, John Mark doubtless ashamed of his past record proposed to attend them a second time. Barnabus, being a kinsman and naturally a very generous man, was eager to take him. Paul strenuously objected. He knew that the exacting work of a missionary was not to be undertaken by one who was too soft to face dangers or to undergo hardship. Being unable to agree, Barnabus took Mark and went to Cyprus.

But John Mark shows that one failure need not be fatal. He made good in the end. Paul speaks of him in complimentary terms in later years. He calls him a fellow worker. He says that he has been a comfort to him. In his last letter, II Timothy, he writes "Take Mark and bring him with thee for he is profitable unto me for the ministry." I fancy that Paul's refusal to take him was a help to him in that it woke him up. The generosity of Barnabus was also helpful, but the greatest factor I think under God in the re-making of John Mark was Peter:

It is easy to understand why this would be the case. Peter had proved a coward himself. He knew the shame and bitterness of it. He knew how to sympathize. Then he knew through
experience that Christ was able to make something even out of a failure. He took Mark under his wing. Mark became his secretary. Thus Mark's gospel is also Peter's gospel. In fact it is safe to say that what Mark knew he learned almost wholly from Simon Peter. The marks of Peter's influence are seen again and again. The first event that he records after mentioning the preaching of John the Baptist is the calling of Peter and his brother. Then follows a story of a strenuous day in Capharnaum. Jesus healed in the house of Simon and Andrew and at eveningtide many were brought to the door to be cured. It is this gospel alone that records the fact that when Jesus rose from the dead he said "Go tell my disciples and Peter."

There are special blunders on the part of Peter that are emphasized in this gospel. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter proposes the building of three tabernacles. It was a foolish proposition. He realized it in after days, but Peter always had to say something. If he could not think of a wise thing then he would say a foolish something. Peter probably said to Mark, "I felt something ought to be said, but did not realize until later how silly my proposition was."

The gospel of Mark paints the denial of Peter in darker colors than any other gospel. Mark tells us that the cock crowed twice. That is that Peter was doubly warned. He tells us that Peter stood by the fire so that they could see his face. The other gospels say that when Christ looked on Peter he went out and wept bitterly. Peter's gospel simply says that he wept. He has no disposition to parade his repentance.
Then there were honors done to Peter that are not mentioned in this gospel. Mark does not tell us that Peter walked on the water. He does not tell us that Peter was the one man to draw a sword in defense of Jesus. He does not tell us of the blessing that Jesus pronounced on Peter when he made his great confession. Then according to Luke, Jesus said to Peter one day, "Satan hath desired to have you (all of the disciples) that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not. And thou when thou art converted, strengthen they brethren." That was a signal honor, but Mark does not mention it.

II

In studying the peculiarities of this book as in the case of Matthew we mention five.

1. This gospel was written for the Romans. Just as Matthew wrote for the Jews, so Mark wrote for the people of Rome. He was doubtless in Rome at the time of writing and he had the needs and characteristics of his immediate readers in mind as he wrote. This is shown by a number of facts:

(1) Mark does not deal with the genealogy of Jesus. He has nothing to say of His birth. He makes practically no effort to connect the New Testament and the Old. He quotes independently from the Old Testament one time and gets a bit mixed on that. He knew the Latin people were not the least concerned about the Old Testament. Therefore, the phrase of Matthew "That it might be fulfilled" has no place in the work of Mark. The other evangelists have much to say about the law. Matthew mentions it eight times, Luke nine, John fifteen. Mark never mentions it at all.
(2) Mark mentions names that he knew would be known to the Romans. For instance, when he tells that the cross of Jesus was laid on the shoulder of one Simon, he mentions the fact that this Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Why call attention to this? Because he was writing at Rome and Rufus was a prominent man in the Church over there. This is evident from the fact that Paul says in Romans 16:13, "Salute Rufus and his mother and mine."

(3) Mark is careful to explain Jewish customs and to give the translation of certain Aramaic words. He tells, for instance, that the Jews would not eat without washing their hands. That they also practiced the washing of cups, etc. When he mentions the Sadducees he tells that they did not believe in the resurrection. There would be no need to mention this had he been writing to Jews. Further, he sees fit to translate certain words that the Jews would not need to have translated. Among these are Corban, given to God Ephphatha, which is, be open. Talitha cumi. That is, damsel arise. Then he gives the exact words of Jesus on the Cross.

This is above all others the realistic gospel. That is Mark produces no argument. He seeks to prove nothing. He is satisfied to show us Jesus as he was. His book is beyond all others a moving picture of Jesus Christ. Matthew undertakes to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. Mark is content to let us watch Jesus live. None of the evangelists give us, I think, quite so clear and accurate a picture of the Master Himself.

Mark lets us see Him as He really lived. We know His very gestures. We know His emotions. He tells us that he sighed when men asked him for a sign. He tells us that he got angry when there was objection to His healing the man with the withered hand;
He shows us little children climbing into His arms one by one. He tells us that the Master was indignant when the disciples tried to keep them away. He shows us the Master asleep on a cushion in the stern of the boat. He shows us the transfiguration scene and brings out its sharp contrast with the scene at the foot of the mountain when the disciples are baffled in their effort to cure the demon possessed boy.

Everywhere it is evident that Mark is not undertaking to preach to us. He is not undertaking to explain Jesus. He is making us see Him. He is sure of the result if he can only get us to look at Him. He believes that we will be stirred as those were stirred who saw Him as he did the marvelous deeds about which he is speaking. And Mark likes to tell us that they were amazed. They marveled and said it was never so in Israel.

This is the gospel of vivid and stupendous action. Matthew was interested in the discourses of Jesus. He records the sermon on the Mount in three lengthy chapters. Mark puts it in two or three sentences. Mark's interest is chiefly in the deeds of Jesus. He records but four of the parables. Of the thirty-six miracles he records eighteen. When you open this book you plunge at once into a scene of intensive activity. Mark's favorite word is "immediately." It is used no less than forty times. It is Mark alone that tells us twice over that Jesus was so busy that he had not time to eat bread. He tells us that His friends thought He was mad. So weary did He become that He went to sleep in a little open boat in the midst of a storm.

The Roman people were a people of energy and activity. They would appreciate a gospel of deeds. They would be interested
in a man of action. Such a man was Jesus as Peter saw Him and as He made Mark to see Him. Mark writing for these practical energetic Romans pictures Him as a strenuous worker.

Mark is by far the most vivid of the evangelists. He makes us see this story that he tells as if it were being enacted before our eyes. The other readers use the past tense. Over and over Mark uses the present. "There cometh a leper." "They come bringing a man sick of the palsy." "They come asking Jesus about the Baptism of John." "They come saying, 'Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?'" Mark's gospel is strenuous and vivid.

4. Then Mark's gospel is of all others a gospel of retirement. One who worked with such energy and enthusiasm as Jesus must have frequent rest periods. Mark in his sixteen chapters tells us of no less than eleven times that Jesus retired either from His enemies or for rest and prayer. He would have thought it a sin to work so tirelessly as to make Him nervous and irritable. Jesus believed in taking a vacation.

Then He believed in the absolute necessity of recharging the batteries of the soul. He was constantly giving. He knew that if He did not replenish His spiritual energies He would become exhausted. After His first strenuous day at Capernaum we read that on the morrow rising up a great while before day He went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed. After every retirement of Jesus there was always the new advance into the enemy's country.

This is the lesson that our generation needs especially to learn. Ours is the day of strenuous activity. We are great workers, many of us, but we have forgotten that other necessity without which all our efforts are little more than the efforts of
a galvanized corpse. We have forgotten how to retire. We have forgotten how to rest. Above all else we have forgotten how to be alone with God.

5. This gospel is the gospel of the Son of God. That is what Mark says in his first sentence. That is what he makes us see in almost every verse as he proceeds with his vivid and aggressive story. Now since this is the gospel of the Son of God, we are not surprised to find it in a practical sense.

(1) A gospel of power. Virtue among the Romans meant strength. There was nothing that they so hated as weakness. There was nothing they so admired as strength. Mark says to them, "If you want to see a strong man, look at Jesus." The Romans had misunderstood Him. They felt that His death was of a king that should cause shame. But Mark answered, "If you want to see strength, if you want to see power, look at Jesus."

His power looked in every direction. He had power over disease. He had power over the forces of nature. He could still the seas and hold the winds in His mighty hand. He had power over the spirit world. He had power to forgive sins. He had power to raise the dead.

(2) Not only was Jesus a man of power but he was a man who never used His power except for others. Rome had seen power, but it was power used selfishly. Here was One who was strong, stronger than man, stronger than nations, stronger than the forces that hold the universe together. Strong as God. He put that strength at the disposal of the weak.

(3) Not only was this Son of God mighty and mighty to save, He was, and will forever be a conqueror. The Son of God that Mark portrays is a victorious Son. He is never baffled. He
LUKE

PART II

Not very much is positively known of the man that we call
St. Luke. His name is only mentioned three times in the New Testament.
In Philemon 24, Paul mentions him among his fellowlabourers. In Col-
ossians 4:14 he is called the beloved physician. In 2 Timothy 4:11
However, there are certain facts about him of which we may speak with
almost full assurance:

1. Luke was a Gentile. He was a Greek. He is the only writer
in the entire Bible who was not a Jew. But for Luke every word of the
sacred record, both Old and New would have come to us at the hands of
the Hebrew people.

2. Luke was a physician. Evidently he was a good physician.
Otherwise a man of Paul's culture and enlightenment would not have treated
of him as he did. The best physicians of that day were among the Greek.
Not only as, but they were among the Greeks of Asia Minor. The best
medical school of that day was located at Tarsus. It is highly probable
that Luke attended this institution. If so he may have become acquain-
ted with Paul while they were both attending the university of Tarsus.

Luke writes from the standpoint of the physician. He uses
medical terms. The six miracles that he alone records are with one
exception miracles of healing.

3. Luke was a man of culture. He was the best educated man among
the New Testament writers, with the exception of Paul. His gospel is the
gospel of a scholar. It follows an exact outline. First is the intro-
duction; then the ministry in Galilee; then the ministry outside of Galilee.
Then the concluding days. Luke declares that he determined to write
in order, and so he did with the frankness and ease and accuracy of a
scholar.

4. Luke was a beautiful Christian. We are not told anything about
his conversion. There is fairly good evidence that he was a native of
Antioch. If so he probably heard and received the message when the
Christians were scattered at the death of Stephen.

If this was not the case he may have been converted under the
direct influence of Paul. It is known that Paul had an attack of illness
just before his tour into Europe on his second missionary journey. While
he was sick in Troas he may have learned that his old school friend Luke
was in the city. He may have requested his services. It is possible
that while Luke attended him physically, Paul ministered to the spiritual
needs of Luke. Any way, it is certain that Luke went with Paul into
Europe. Luke remained at Philippi for seven years. After this he was
the constant companion of Paul till the great apostle was executed.

5. Luke was a faithful friend. It is impossible to guess how much
Paul and Luke meant to each other. Their ministry was to all sorts and
conditions of men, but they themselves were refined, cultured, high-class
scholars. Paul had a thorn in the flesh. He needed a physician near him
constantly. Luke filled that place. He was with him in Jerusalem. He
was with him during his two years of imprisonment at Caesarea. He journeyed
with him to Rome. When other friends had proven faithless, Luke stood by.
It is a noble testimony to the fine loyalty of the man that Paul writes.
"Luke, only Luke is with me."
PART II.

Luke was a most beautiful character. We naturally expect that he should write a beautiful book. Renan says that the gospel of Luke is the most beautiful book ever written. It is the longest of the gospels. One-third of its material is not contained in the other gospels. Of the twenty-three parables that Luke records, eighteen of them are recorded by him alone. Only ten are recorded by Matthew only and only one by Mark only. There are a number of characteristics by which we might distinguish Luke's gospel, but I am going to mention only four.

1. Luke's gospel is the gospel of a song. He is the only man who has preserved for us any of the hymns of the early Church. He records five songs that the early Christians were accustomed to sing.

   (1) Is the song of Zacharias, which begins, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed His people.

   (2) Is the Gloria. It is the song that the angels sang at the birth of Jesus. "Glory to God in the highest."

   (3) Is the Magnificat of Mary, beginning "My soul doth magnify the Lord.

   (4) Is the Ave Maria or "Hail Mary."

   (5) In the Eumediilloso of Simon. You remember when He took the child Jesus he said, "Lord lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.

2. Luke's gospel is a gospel for the world. Matthew wrote especially for the Jews; Mark for the Latin, Luke for all men. This is evident from the following.

   (1) The genealogy. Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus to Abraham. Luke traces it to Adam. Luke wants to show that Jesus is not the son of Abraham simply, but that he is a child of the race.

   (2) When Matthew tells the story he has the wise men asking, "There
Luke

is He that is born King of the Jews." Then Luke tells us, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

(3) Matthew quotes from Isaiah about the voice crying in the wilderness. Luke continues this quotation in where it says, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low — and all flesh shall see the glory of the Lord."

(4) Luke alone tells of how Jesus angered his own people in his home church. What was it that made the congregation so indignant that day when he read that shewing message "The spirit of the Lord is upon me." And presented to show God's mercy to the Gentiles. There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elisha, but to none of them was the prophet sent. He was sent rather to a Gentile woman. There were many lepers in Israel in the days of Elisha, but the prophet cured none of them. He only cured the leper Naman. Luke's gospel is the gospel for the whole world.

(5) Luke emphasizes the humanity of Jesus. All the evangelists teach this but in Luke it is emphasized. It is Luke that records the human birth and that the baby was wrapped in swaddling clothes. It is Luke who tells of the presentation to the temple and how they did for him according to the Jewish law. It is Luke who tells us that he increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. He did not know everything as a boy. He was a normal baby. He was also a normal human youth. He was a man among men.

(6) Luke emphasizes the social side of Jesus' life. He records more intimate scenes in the home than any others. He lets us know that Jesus accepted the hospitality of all sorts of people when he had opportunity. He went into the home of aristocrats when he was invited. He went into the home of other people without social standing. He went down among all sorts of people in their homes. It was on occasions of this kind that he

... preached some of his most marvelous sermons. It was here that He taught some of his most wonderful transformations. It was here that He administered some of His sharpest rebukes.


(a) He alone tells us that at the baptism it was when He was praying that the heavens opened and that the Spirit came upon Him.

(b) He alone tells us that after the cleansing of the leper Jesus retired for prayer.

(c) He alone tells us that at before the cleansing of the apostles Jesus spent the whole night in prayer.

(d) He alone tells us how the Lord's Prayer came to be given. He says that Jesus was praying in a certain place when one of His disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

(e) He alone tells us that it was while Jesus was praying that He was transfigured.

(f) He alone records the fact that Jesus told Peter that He had prayed for him that his faith might not fail.

(g) He alone records the parables that tell of the friend that came at midnight, and the one that begins, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint."

(h) He records Jesus' dying prayer of forgiveness on the cross, "Father forgive them for they knew not what they did."

In Luke, Jesus is preeminently a man of prayer. God does not have to pray. Prayer is the privilege of humanity. In emphasizing the prayer life of Jesus, Luke emphasizes the humanity of Jesus.
The gospel of Luke is in a peculiar sense the gospel of the grace of God. As you read the epistles of Paul along with the gospel of Luke, you will realize that there is a deep kinship with them. They both give emphasis to the grace of God. The unsearched love of God for all men especially for those most in need. This fact is brought out by the following:

1. Luke’s gospel is the gospel for the poor. Jesus so stated. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. When Luke quotes the beatitudes, he does not say "Blessed are the poor in spirit," but "Blessed are the poor." He does not tell of the coming of the wise men with their rich gifts. He tells of the poor shepherds. He alone records the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. He alone tells us the story of the rich fool.

2. Luke’s is the gospel of childhood. Children did not count in that day. Even John has not a single child in his book. The first chapters of Luke’s book frolic with children. Matthew tells us a little of the child Jesus, but Luke goes back and tells us of the child John. He also gives us a more intimate view of the child Jesus. He shows Him to us as a child in the temple. He tells us that the children that Jesus gathered in his arms to bless were little children, infants.

3. This is the gospel of womanhood. Luke has as much or more to say about women than Matthew and Mark together. Women did not count in that day either. But Luke gives them a prominent part in his story. We are indebted to him for what we know about Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. He presents us with three widows, Anna the saint in the temple; the widow of Nain who had just lost her boy; the troublesome widow who would not let the unjust judge alone. He gives us the most intimate picture of Martha and Mary. He tells us that Jesus was followed, not by an official
Boast of dignitaries but by a company of women. He alone gives us
that word of Jesus to the women who went over Him as He went to the
condemnation. "Women, keep not for us but for yourselves and your
children."

(4) Finally this gospel emphasizes the grace of God in that it
is the gospel for the out-cast.

(a) Luke alone tells us that Jesus was entertained in the home
of the out-cast publican, Zacharias. He tells us also that it was a
publican praying in the temple that was justified.

(b) The most hated people of the day were Samaritans. But
Jesus took their part. When he painted his picture of the ideal neighbor
he was not an orthodox Jew, he was a Samaritan. He called him a good
Samaritan. Luke alone tells us this story. He alone tells us of the
healing of the ten lepers. One of them returned to tell Jesus of his
appreciation. He was not a Pharisee, he was a Samaritan.

(c) He alone tells us the story of the prodigal son.

(d) He alone tells the story of the repentant thief.

(e) He alone tells the story of the most tragic out-cast of them
all—a woman that was a sinner. If you want about the sweetest and
tenderest story in the New Testament, you will find it in the seventh
chapter of Luke. Luke's gospel is a gospel for the wide world. There-
fore it is in a peculiar sense a gospel of the grace of God, because
we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.
LUKE

PART I.

Not very much is positively known of the man that we call St. Luke. His name is only mentioned three times in the New Testament. In Philemon 24, Paul mentions him among his fellowlabourers. In Colossians 4:14 he is called the beloved physician. In 2 Timothy 4:11 Paul writes, "Only Luke is with me." Luke never mentions his own name. However, there are certain facts about him of which we may speak with almost full assurance.

1. Luke was a Gentile. He was a Greek. He is the only writer in the entire Bible who was not a Jew. But for Luke every word of the sacred record, both Old and New would have come to us at the hands of the Hebrew people.

2. Luke was a physician. Evidently he was a good physician. Otherwise a man of Paul's culture and enlightenment would not have trusted him as he did. The best physicians of that day were among the Greek. Not only so, but they were among the Greek of Asia Minor. The best medical school of that day was located at Tarsus. It is highly probable that Luke attended this institution. If so he may have become acquainted with Paul while they were both attending the university of Tarsus.

Luke writes from the standpoint of the physician. He uses medical terms. The six miracles that he alone records are with one exception miracles of healing.

3. Luke was a man of culture. He was the best educated man among the New Testament writers, with the exception of Paul. His gospel is the gospel of a scholar. It follows an exact outline. First is the introduction; then the ministry in Galilee, then the ministry outside of Galilee.
Then the concluding days. Luke declares that he determined to write in order, and so he did with the fluency and ease and accuracy of a scholar.

4. Luke was a beautiful Christian. We are not told anything about his conversion. There is fairly good evidence that he was a native of Antioch. If so he probably heard and received the message when the Christians were scattered at the death of Stephen.

If this was not the case he may have been converted under the direct influence of Paul. It is known that Paul had an attack of illness just before his tour into Europe on his second missionary journey. While he was sick in Troas he may have learned that his old school friend Luke was in the city. He may have requested his services. It is possible that while Luke attended him physically, Paul ministered to the spiritual needs of Luke. Any way, it is certain that Luke went with Paul into Europe. Luke remained at Philippi for seven years. After this he was the constant companion of Paul till the great apostle was executed.

5. Luke was a faithful friend. It is impossible to guess how much Paul and Luke meant to each other. Their ministry was to all sorts and conditions of men, but they themselves were refined, cultured, high-class scholars. Paul had a thorn in the flesh. He needed a physician near him constantly. Luke filled that place. He was with him in Jerusalem. He was with him during his two years of imprisonment at Cesarea. He journeyed with him to Rome. When other friends had proven faithless, Luke stood by. It is a noble testimony to the fine loyalty of the man that Paul writes. "Luke, only Luke is with me."
LUKE

PART II.

Luke was a most beautiful character. We naturally expect that he should write a beautiful book. Renan says that the gospel of Luke is the most beautiful book ever written. It is the longest of the gospels. One-third of its material is not contained in the other gospels. Of the twenty-three parables that Luke records, eighteen of them are recorded by him alone. Only ten are recorded by Mathew only and only one by Mark only. There are a number of characteristics by which we might distinguish Luke's gospel, but I am going to mention only four.

1. Luke's gospel is the gospel of a song. He is the only man who has preserved for us any of the hymns of the early church. He records five songs that the early Christians were accustomed to sing.

(1) Is the song of Zacharias, which begins, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath visited and redeemed His people.

(2) Is the Gloria. It is the song that the angles sang at the birth of Jesus, "Glory to God in the highest."

(3) Is the Magnificat of Mary, "My soul doth magnify the Lord."

(4) Is the Ave Maria or "Hail Mary."

(5) Is the Nunc Dimittis of Simeon. "Fear not, for now shall thy male child be called."  

2. Luke's gospel is a gospel for the world. Matthew was especially for the Jews, Mark for the Latins, Luke for all men. This is evident from the following:

(1) The Parable. Matthew traces the parables of Jesus to Abraham. Luke traces it to Adam. Luke wants to show that Jesus is not only of Jewish stock, but that he is a child of the very race.

(2) When Mary tells the story of his incarnation with wonder, "There

is he that is born King of the Jews." Then Luke tells us, "Joseph I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

(3) Matthew quotes from Isaiah about the voice crying in the wilderness. Luke continues this quotation to a new level. "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The rough places will be made smooth." And Luke proceeded to show God's mercy to the people. This was shown through Abraham in Israel in the time of Elijah, but to all men who followed, not just to the people of God. He was called on to be a prophet to all men. Here we can see a great contrast in the days of Abraham, a prophet who was called to rescue the leper Naaman. Luke's Gospel is the Gospel of the leper Naaman.

3. Luke emphasized the humanity of Jesus. We are reminded of this but I feel it is emphasized. It is Luke that records the birth story and that the baby was wrapped in swaddling clothes. It is Luke who tells us of his presentation to the temple and the way he followed Jewish law. In Luke we see that he was presented in swaddling clothes and in accord with God and man. He did not know everything as a boy. He was a normal boy. He was also a normal human child. He was a true human being.

(1) Luke emphasizes the human side of Jesus Christ. He portrayed Jesus and the events in the same way that we are. He shows that Jesus accepted the humanity of all sorts of people who he was with. He went into the home of sinners and sinners who felt rejected by society. He went into the home of common people without social standing. He went with all sorts of people in their homes. It was an occasion of this kind that he
Luke,

preached some of His most marvelous sermons. It was not until we get some of His most wonderful transformations. It was not until we consider some of His sharpest rebukes.

(2) Luke further emphasizes the humanity of Jesus in telling us of His prayer life. Luke too, Jesus had some times in prayer. In having us see Jesus at prayer.

(3) He alone tells us that in the garden He was saying that the heavens opened and "He was agonizing in appassionato."

(4) He alone tells us that after He emerging after a long time in a retired for prayer.

(5) He alone tells us that before the crucifixion of the Messiah Jesus spent the whole night in prayer.

(6) He alone tells us that the Lord's Supper was not given. He says that Jesus was praying in a tear. Jesus said to one of His disciples said, " negócio".

(7) He alone tells us, that it was while Jesus was praying that He was transfigured.

(8) He alone records the fact that Jesus told Peter, "Go and pray for him that His faith might not fail."

(9) He alone records the parable that told of the two at that same at midnight, and for this that He said, "Thou art going to pray and shalt not find it."

(10) He records the songs and prayers of transcendence in the house, "I am forgiven thee. for I know not what I may do."

In Luke, Jesus is predominantly a Man of Prayer. So does not care to pray. Prayer is the privilege of humanity. In exemplifying the proper life of Jesus, Luke emphasizes the humanity of Jesus.
Luke:

4. The gospel of Luke is in a peculiar sense the gospel of the grace of God. As you read the epistles of Paul along with the gospel of Luke, you will realize that there is a deep kinship with them. They both give emphasis to the grace of God. The unmerited love of God for all, especially for those who are sick. This fact is brought out by the following:

(1) Luke's gospel is the gospel for every person. Jesus said:

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to minister to the captives, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19)

(2) Luke's is the gospel of childhood. Childhood is the root of all. Even now we get a glimpse of the Lord. The Lord's message of Luke's gospel begins with a child. Matthew tells of the birth of the Child Jesus, but Luke goes back to the child Jesus. He tells us how a poor humble woman of the child Jesus. He shows us to us that a child is the root of the child Jesus. He tells us that the child Jesus was brought up in this area where there were little children, both he.

(3) This is the gospel of compassion. Luke is in love with love. The love of Jesus is shown in the acts of compassion. Jesus did not come to cast away the key of David, but to find those who are in need of help. He illustrates this with three widows, whom the scribes and Pharisees had used the widow of Nain and came to seek help. He gives us the most intimate picture of Martha and Mary. He tells us that Jesus was followed, not by an occasion
Board of dignitaries but by a company of women. He alone gives us
that word of Jesus to the women who wept over him as He went to the
Crucifixion: "Women, weep not for me but for yourselves and your
children."

(4) Finally this gospel emphasizes the grace of God in that it
is the gospel for the outcast.

(a) Luke alone tells us that Jesus was interested in the lives
of the outcast people, the Samaritans. It tells us that he was a
publican praying in the temple. He was interested.

(b) The worst with people of this day were Samaritans. But
Jesus took their part. When he joined the prayers of the local king
he was not an outcast Jew, he was a Samarian. He joined with the
Samaritans. Luke alone tells us this story. It makes telling of the
healing of the woman. Lots of the people go to tell fame of his
appreciation. He was not a Pharisaean, he was a Samarian.

(c) He alone tells us the story of the Prodigal Son.

(d) He alone tells the story of the Samaritan. That

(e) He alone tells the story of the outcast. The outcast of
him,

all, a woman that was a sinner. If you will search the

Luke's story in the New Testament, you will find it in the seven

for, it is in a position to be a gospel of the outcast of the,

we have all sinned and sinned short of the glory of God.
THE GOSPEL OF JOHN.

There is something about every one of the Gospels that makes you feel like saying, "This is the best of them all." We love Matthew's Gospel of the Kingdom. We love Mark's Gospel of action. We love St. Luke's Gospel of the Son of Man. But is it my opinion that the Gospel of John is a favorite of more Christians than any of the four.

PART I.

John was the disciple of John the Baptist. He was one of the first disciples that Jesus won. It was to them that John was speaking when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!" John went with Andrew for an interview with Jesus. This interview changed his whole life.

Jesus named John and his brother James sons of thunder. John was, therefore, an ardent, enthusiastic soul. He was a man of strong convictions; a man capable of the most passionate devotion to a cause, and of undying love with the one to whom he gave his affections. When he came to Jesus he came with all his heart. There was a fineness about him; a magnetic sensitiveness and capacity in matters of the spirit that enabled him to understand Jesus better than any other man. He won his way further into the heart of Jesus than any other man. He is the disciple that Jesus loved. Peter and James and John belonged to the inner circle. John belonged in a class by himself. He was the disciple that leaned on the bosom of Jesus. I think there was a bond between John and the Master that was more intimate than existed between Jesus and His other disciples. It speaks volumes for the moral worth of John that Jesus felt so drawn to him. There was a kinship between them that made the finest friendship possible. This does not mean, however, th

This does not mean, however, that John was by any means per-
The Gospel of John.

fect to begin with. It was John that wanted to call down fire from heaven and burn up those Samaritans when they showed a lack of hospitality to the Master and himself. It was John, with James, who wanted a seat on the right hand and on the left. It was John that brought that report to Jesus, "We saw one casting out demons in thy name, and we forbade him because he followed not us." John was a bit narrow and prejudiced but in the fellowship of Jesus he came to be one of the spiritual giants of all the centuries.

Part II.

The Gospel of John was written a good many years after the writing of the synoptic Gospels. When John wrote, Christianity had spread far and wide and seemed destined soon to conquer the world. When John wrote heresy had sprung up in many sections. There was one school that demanded the humanity of Christ, and another which demanded His deity. When John wrote he had had years of experience behind Him. Years of brooding over the teachings of Jesus and his friendship with Him in the flesh. His book was written somewhere about 90 or 100 A.D.

PART III.

The fact that John wrote so late and after so many years of meditation accounts in some measure for the fact that his book is very different from those of Matthew, Mark and Luke. In John you find yourself in a little different atmosphere. Not that John contradicted the other evangelists, but there is a spirituality and depth about his work that the others do not have. I am going to name a few of the characteristics about this book.
The Gospel of John,

1. It is a theological Gospel. The other evangelists made it their business to tell the facts about the life of Jesus. John not only tells these facts, at least some of them, but he gives their meaning. When he records the first miracle he declares that it was the beginning of signs. That is, that this miracle was an indication of the kind of Messiah that Jesus was to be. John was fond of symbols, but it is rather strange that he does not record one single parable. He gives a number of miracles. He also gives the final charge of Jesus to His disciples with a fullness beyond all others.

2. John's Gospel is the Gospel of the Son of God. No other of the evangelists so gives emphasis to the Diety of Jesus as does John. Look at the beginning of the book. "In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, etc." Look at these assertions.

(1) Christ is God.
(2) Christ existed before He was born into the world.
(3) Christ was the creator of all things.
(4) Christ, who is God, became flesh.
(5) In Christ and thru Christ we know God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory.

This emphasis of the unique diety of Jesus does not belong to the first of the book only. It runs all thru it. "Lord show us the Father and it is enough," said Phillip. And what does Jesus answer. "Hast thou been so long time with me and dost thou not know me Phillip?" Ye that hath seen me hath seen the Father." It is in John that Jesus says, "I and the Father are one." While Jesus of the Gospel of John is God, it is true that he says nothing of the virgin birth, but none
The Gospel of John.

of the evangelists is so emphatic as John of the unique deity of our Lord. In proof of the deity and lordship of Jesus, John introduces seven witnesses.

(1) The witness of John the Baptist. John bore his testimony to the crowds. He also bore his testimony to John and Andrew in person. What did he think of Jesus? Answer, he thought He was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He was the one who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.

(2) John introduces a witness of the disciples of Jesus. "But," said Andrew and Nathaniel after their interview with the Master, "we have found Him of whom Moses and the prophets in the law did write." "We have found the Messiah. We have found God's anointed."

(3) John introduces a testimony of the Bible. "Ye search the scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life, but these are they which testify of me." According to John it was the claim of Jesus that He was the subject of the Old Testament scriptures. Jesus fulfilled in Himself the prophecy of the Old Testament.

(4) The fourth testimony to the Deity of Jesus is His works. "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, or else believe me for the work's sake." Nicodemus said to Jesus, "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God for none can do the miracles that Thou dostest except God be in him. That is the contention of John of Jesus. These works meant something more than the turning of the water into wine. It meant something more than opening blind eyes. It meant the giving of spiritual vision. It meant the making of the woman at the well into a new creation in Christ Jesus.

(5) The fifth witness John introduces is the Holy Spirit. In this
The Gospel of John

particular he is putting the emphasis on the future. "But when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth that proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me." The Holy Spirit gives His testimony in favor of Jesus Christ.

(60) There is the testimony of the Father. In John 8-18 Jesus says, "The Father that sent me beareth witness of me." He bore witness to Him thru the life that he lived. He bore witness to Him openly when He declared from heaven in answer to prayer of Jesus that He would glorify His name. "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

(7) Finally there was the testimony of Jesus to Himself. Over and over again Jesus bore witness to His own unique lordship. In order to make it easy to remember I call your attention to the seven great "I Ams" of Jesus.

(1) "I am the Bread of Life."
(2) "I am the Light of the World."
(3) "I am the Water of Life."
(4) "I am the Resurrection of life."
(5) "I am the door."
(6) "I am the Good Shepherd."
(7) "I am the way."

Of all the absurd position ever taken, that while Jesus was not the Son of God in a unique sense, He was still the best man that ever lived. What could be more absurd than that, I care not how good or how great a man be making such declarations as these. Jesus was either divine as He claimed Himself to be, or He was the most perplexing and puzzling man that the world has ever seen.

3. The Gospel of John is the gospel of Christian living.
John tells us what it means to be a Christian. It means a new birth. We are to come into the Kingdom of God as we come into the physical world, by process of birth. The agency of this birth is the Holy Spirit. The condition upon which we may be born anew is faith in Jesus Christ. And the procuring cause of this privilege is the love of God. It is John alone that gives us that verse which is one of the jewels of the Bible. John 3-16.

John tells us that the Christian life is not keeping a set of rules or of observing a code of ethics. It is keeping in vital living touch with Jesus. We are to be related to Jesus Christ as the branch is related to the vine. The branch clings to the vine. It shares its very life. Thru this clinging the branch lives and bears fruit. Without this consistent abiding the branch withers, becomes fruitless, dies and is destroyed.

This is the Gospel of the Cross. John entered further into the meaning of the death of Christ than did the other evangelists.

He stated more plainly than the others that the death of Jesus was a voluntary act. Matthew points out how Jesus was going to Jerusalem to suffer. But there is a plainness about the statement of John that even surpasses the statement of Matthew. Speaking of the giving up of His life he says, "No man taketh it from me but I lay it down of Myself."

John had come to look upon the Cross not as a dim and disgraceful tragedy, but as something transcendently beautiful. It was not the degradation of Jesus, but His glorification. "And Jesus answered them saying, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified."

The Cross of Christ was to be the power by which Jesus should conquer the world. "And I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all
The Gospel of John.

men into me." 

5. John's Gospel is the Gospel of the heavenly home.

(1) He tells us that it was a certainty. "If it were not so I would have told you."

(2) He tells us that one day He is coming to those who belong to Him. "I will come again and receive you unto myself."

(3) He tells us that thru eternity we are going to live with Him. If the Gospel of St. John had no other claim to immortality, the fourteenth chapter would be sufficient. It has dried more tears and comforted more broken hearts than any other one chapter in the Word of God.
ACTS

This book is commonly called the Acts of the Apostles. However, it is not so named by the author himself. It cannot be properly called by that name. Most of the apostles do not appear in the book at all except to have their names mentioned in the opening chapter. John appears three times in a subordinate role. James appears as a martyr. The heroes of the book are Peter and Paul. Peter occupies the center of the stage in the first twelve chapters and Paul has the center in the last sixteen.

The book as Luke named it is the Acts. By this he may have meant the Acts of the risen Christ. In his preface he tells that he has written a former treatise of all that Jesus began to do and to preach till the time He was taken up. This was a record of what Jesus continues to do and teach thru the Holy Spirit. He is operating thru His disciples.

This book might also be fittingly called Acts of the Holy Spirit. Luke lays a greater emphasis on any other of the New Testament writers on the power of the Holy Spirit. In this brief history he tells a story that is not told anywhere else. He tells of the coming of the Spirit. He tells of how the early Christians were baptized and how in the power of this baptism they spread the gospel everywhere. But their work was not always in the energy of the flesh but of the Holy Ghost. In their church councils they were able to say "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us."

Then this book might be fittingly named the Acts of the Early Church. It tells one of the most heartening stories ever told. It shows how a little handful of unlearned men and women were so used of God that in a few short years the gospel that they preached spread literally over the civilized world. Inside of thirty years, there was not a nation
ACTS.

along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea where there were not strong and vigorous Christian churches. The world holds no other such record of bloodless conquest.

This book is the earliest church history. There are several possible divisions. It might be divided into two parts. The story of Peter and the story of Paul. There is another outline in Acts first chapter and eighth verse. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The first seven chapters give account of the witness in Jerusalem and Judea. The eighth tells the story of the witness in Samaria. But the remaining chapters tell how the gospel spread to the ends of the earth.

But possibly an easier way to get a grasp of the book is by remembering the six principal events that Luke puts into his narrative. Understand there are many things of importance that are left out. Luke does not tell us what become of a single one of the apostles except James. There are hundreds of questions we would like to ask here that remain unanswered. But the facts that he did tell were those that he deemed, under the guidance of the Spirit, most important.

PART I.

The first big event of the book of the Acts is the coming of the Holy Spirit. "They were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a rushing mighty wind,--- And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost." There are
certain facts here that are of vital importance to the Church of today.

1. The Holy Spirit is for every believer. It was never intended that we should carry on the work of the Kingdom without Him.

2. The Holy Spirit is given to everyone who surrenders to God.

3. The Holy Spirit is to impart power. He is spoken of under two figures, as wind and fire. The fitness of these are easily seen. Wind is invisible but strong and life-giving. Fire reveals, purifies and empowers.

PART II.

The second great event in the book of the Acts, is the scattering of the Church from Jerusalem. After the coming of the Spirit, the Church grew so rapidly that opposition arose. That opposition culminated in the martyr of Stephen. The authorities of the Church became so indignant against it that they mobbed him. Having had a taste of blood they began to seek other objects of prey.

The outcome was that the Christians at Jerusalem had to flee for their lives. All of them left, the story says, except the apostles. Just why they were allowed to remain we do not know. But the measures that these people took to exterminate Christianity was the best possible means of spreading it abroad. Had this church been left alone, Christianity might have become another Jewish sect and, therefore, failed in its purpose altogether. But when it was scattered it set the world on fire. The story says, "They that were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word."

PART III.

The third big event that Luke records, and one of the greatest
events in human history was the conversion of St. Paul. In the ninth chapter of Acts, the story of Paul's conversion is told for the first time. Paul had been a bitter persecutor of the early church. He was the chief hope of the opposition. His conversion meant the changing of a foe into a friend. It meant the making of a menace into a missionary. Paul became the greatest theologian of his day. He became one of the greatest preachers and missionaries of all time.

PART IV.

The fourth big event that Luke records is the conversion of Cornelius. This is told at length in the tenth chapter of the book. The significance of this is that it meant the breaking down of a high wall that had been built between the Jews and the Gentiles. Up to this time Christianity has been a religion of the Jews and of the Jews only. But here it breaks out of bounds and becomes the religion of the world.

It is next to impossible for us to realize the importance of this step. For Peter to go into the house of the Roman soldier, was to be guilty of an almost unpardonable breach of conduct. Never would he have done so but for the direct leading of the Holy Spirit. How the spirit came to be leader in this matter is very significant.

1. Two men were praying. Cornelius was praying at his house and Peter was praying on the housetop. In answer to their prayers both men saw visions. The message that came to Cornelius thru his vision was to send for Peter. The message that came to Peter was to obey the invitation that had come to him. In answer to their mutual prayers the great service in the house of Cornelius was made possible.

PART V.
PART V.

The fifth great event in the book of the Acts was the setting out of the first missionaries. This story is told in Acts 13. We read: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted the Holy Spirit said, separate me Paul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have called them." Then a little further, "So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed." Here too are certain facts of permanent value.

1. These people at Antioch were capable of hearing the voice of the Spirit. They were in a listening attitude. This is signified by the fact that they were ministering to the Lord and fasting. I take it they were engaging in fasting and prayer.

2. God told them where to go and what to do. The constraint of the Holy Spirit was laid upon them. The Spirit constrains. At other times He restrains. He not only knows the work we ought to do, but He knows the field in which we ought to labor. We read a little further in the book that Paul undertook to Bithynia but the Spirit suffered him not.

In ways that we do not understand, the Holy Spirit operates in the lives that are submissive to His will. One wants to go into the foreign field, is strangely held back. Another wants to remain in the home field is strangely led to go to the foreign field. But happy the soul that whatever the work, can go to the task with the consciousness that he is sent by the Holy Ghost.

PART VI.

The final great event in the book of Acts is the crossing of Christianity into Europe. In the crossing of his second missionary journey Paul came down to Troas. While there he saw a vision. It was a man of
Macedonia who said, "Come over and help us." And the story said, immediately Paul and his friend responded. "Assuredly gather that the Lord had used them to labor in that place."

More than one army in the course of human history has crossed at this place. From Asia into Europe or from Europe into Asia. Here crossed the army of Darius. Here crossed the army of Xerxes, at that time the largest army that had ever marched into a field. Here crossed the army of Alexander the Great. But by far the most mighty and significant army that ever crossed was this little army of Christian missionaries. They were four in number. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke.

We read of their reception in the big Roman city of Philippi. We discover that the man of Macedonia turns out to be a woman. The first European convert was Lydia. The place of her conversion was near a battlefield where the fate of the ancient world was in a large measure decided. But more important than this was the conversion of Lydia. Thus the gospel spread at the hands of men who were full of faith and the Holy Ghost.

The book of Acts leaves off with Paul, the greatest of the missionaries, in Rome, the center of the world. The book does not end, it stops. This might be the case because Luke was martyred before he finished the book. I like rather to believe that it is the case because the book of Acts is still being written. It will never be finished until the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.
"O Lord of Souls, Who has chosen and called me to service in Thy Church, all my trust is in Thee, for in Thee are the springs of my life. Abundantly give me of Thy Blessed Spirit, without Whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; and use me as it shall please Thee for the glory of Thy Name. Make my will patient, my conscience pure, my temper bright. Empty me of self, and fill me with the meekness of wisdom. Increase my faith, mellow my judgment, stir my zeal, enlarge my heart. Let my life enforce what my lips utter. Do Thou choose for me the work I do and the place in which I do it; the success I win and the harvest I reap. Preserve me from jealousy and impatience; from self-will and depression. Make me faithful unto death and then give me the crown of life.

"All this I ask for Christ's sake. Amen."

THIS MOMENT

"He's helping me now- this moment
Though I may not see it or hear;
Perhaps by a friend far distant-
Perhaps by a stranger near;
Perhaps by a spoken message,
Perhaps by the printed Word;
In ways that I know and know not
I have the help of the Lord.

He's helping me now- this moment
However I need it most;
Perhaps by a single angel
Perhaps by a mighty host;
Perhaps by the chain that frets me
Or the wall that shut me in;
In ways that I know and know not-
He keeps me from harm and sin.

He's guiding me now - this moment
In pathway easy or hard;
Perhaps by a door wide open,
Perhaps by a door fast barred;
Perhaps by a joy with-holden,
Perhaps by a gladness given;
In ways that I know and know not
He's leading me up to Heaven.

He's using me now - this moment,
And whether I go or stand;
Perhaps by a plan accomplished
Perhaps when He stays my hand;
Perhaps by a word in season
Perhaps by a silent prayer;
In ways that I know and know not,
His labor of Love I share."
This is by no means the first of Paul's letters. It was written A.D. 58. Paul was then at the height of his ministry and his usefulness. It was written during a lull in his busy and active life. It was written while Paul was in Corinth. Unlike his other letters, it was written to a church to which he had never preached. Almost all his other letters grew out of some particular need. In this letter Paul is able to enter a wider field. He sets forth His gospel more fully here than anywhere else.

PART I.

The first fifteen verses of the book constitute the introduction.

1. Paul introduces himself. He does not present himself as the leading star and preacher of the day. He introduces himself as the bond slave of Jesus Christ; a called apostle, a man separated unto the gospel of God. This gospel, he declares, has not come unheralded. It had been a theme of prophecy. As to its content, it concerned Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, but who was declared to be the Son of God. Therefore, Christ was both human and divine.

2. Then he tells to whom he is writing. He is writing not to Rome in general or to the Jews in Rome, but to the saints in Rome. In teaching a Bible class on one occasion I asked, "What is a saint?" The best trained student there answered, "A saint is a religious old person." So we often feel about it. But the saint in the New Testament is anybody who is a Christian. If you are not a saint then you are not a Christian at all.
3. Next follows Paul's greetings. First, he expresses his gratitude. It is to be noted that for which he is grateful. "I thank God," he says, "that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." He was not thankful for their social position, for their wealth or culture, but that which is fundamental, which is supremely necessary, for their faith. Next, he tells them of his unceasing prayer for them. Then how he longs to see them that he might have some fruit among them as among other Gentiles. And fearing that that might sound a bit conceited he adds, that is that we may be comforted together by the mutual faith, both for you and me.

PART II.

The second division of the book is doctrinal. This extends from 1:16 to the end of the 11th chapter.

1. In the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, Paul states his text. He sets forth the simple truth around which his whole letter centers. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." The theme of the book as you can see from these verses is this, the salvation of man. How can a man be saved?

2. The next step in the letter, Paul emphasizes the matter of salvation. That, of course, is necessary. A man would not seek a physician unless he realizes he is sick. He will not undertake to learn except as he realizes that he does not know. Neither will he seek salvation unless there comes to him the consciousness that he is lost,
that he really needs to be saved.

In proof of a man's need, Paul first sets forth the tragic moral plight of the Gentiles. There had been a time, he said, when they had a certain knowledge of God, for there is a revelation of God in nature. But they had rejected this knowledge. Therefore, God had given them up to vile affections. He had given them up because he could not help it. They had gone from bad to worse till they had plunged into a veritable orgy of ghastly, nameless sins. And history bears testimony to the fact that Paul's charges are true.

But, of course, the case with the Jews was a bit different. They were not abandoned. They were not without faith. They were God's chosen. They set in judgment upon all the others of the world. Surely they did not come under the same condemnation. But Paul affirms that in the sight of God they were no better than the Gentile. He declares that they have no superiority at all in themselves. The sole advantage of being a Jew is that to them has been given the oracles of God. The inevitable conclusion, therefore, is that since both Jew and Gentile are alike sinners, the need is universal. The whole indictment is summed up in the one declaration, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Every mouth is stopped, every one is guilty.

3. Paul sets forth the basis of this salvation, the source of it. How can a just God still remain just and pardon a guilty man. He can only do so on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus. Sin involves suffering. It involves suffering unto death. God so hated it as to give His Son to suffer the penalty of death. Jesus so hated sin and so loved us as to take our place. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities."
4. Then the apostle tells us how this salvation that is needed by all and that is provided for all, may be possessed by all. What is the condition? It is faith and faith only. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Of course, faith means far more than intellectual assent. It means that which leads to personal surrender.

Paul recognized that there were those who rejected this gospel. "Was not Abraham justified by works," he asked. "No," is the answer. Abraham was justified before the law, about which they were so scrupulous was instituted. And he tells again the marvelous story of Abraham which is the first summary of a religious life to be found in all the Bible. What a definition of faith is here. "Being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." The fifth chapter is taken up with the blessings that grow out of our justification. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God, etc."

5. Then in the next chapter, the sixth and seventh, Paul answers further objections. Since salvation is of the grace of God and comes as a result of our faith, the law is, therefore, discredited. Some claim that grace increases sin. Paul declared that it killed it. The law is useful but only to awaken us and make us more deeply conscious of our need. It could tell us what to do but could give us no power to carry out its demands. Paul had tested it as all have. It was his experience when he said, "The good that I want to do, I do not. The evil that I hate, that I do." There was no remedy but in Christ. Thru faith we become identified with Him. We become dead to sin and alive to God.

6. Then Paul proceeds to describe the life of victory that is
going to grow out of our faith in and our identification in Jesus Christ. The burden of sin is passed. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that is in Christ Jesus." The consciousness of that experience has been possibly the inspiration of more joy than any other single fact in human history. How many have sung of the blessedness of it? We find it ringing thru the Psalms. "Blessed is he whose transgressions is forgiven." We find it in the great hymns of the Church. "My God is Reconciled." We thrill with Bunyan's pilgrim as he comes in sight of the Cross and his burden is dropped from his shoulders and disappears forever from his glad eyes. And we sing again with relish, "At the Cross, at the Cross, where I first saw the light. And the burden of my heart of my heart rolled away."

7. Then follows three chapters in which Paul concerned himself with one of the bitterest problems, and one of the keenest disappointments of his ministry. In greater and greater numbers the Gentiles were turning to Jesus, but the large part of the Jews seemed bent on rejecting Him. It broke Paul's heart. "I find myself wishing that I may become a curse from God for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Why was it that they were not saved? It was not because God had rejected them. It was not because God did not love them. They were unsaved for the following reasons.

(1) Salvation is not a matter of birth. It is not a matter of nationality. It is a matter of faith.

(2) If a man or if a nation rejects God, God must in the nature of things reject that nation. He cannot help it. He can save no man against his will.
There was one consolation to which the apostle had come. The rejection on the part of Israel was not complete. There were some Jews who heard the Word and accepted it. Furthermore, it was not final. There would come a time, according to his faith, when the Jews should yet be Christianized and all Israel should be saved.

PART III.

This third part covers chapters twelve to fifteen - thirteen. It is practical. Paul has built up a body of doctrines. Here are certain things he says that are true. Next, what are you going to do about them. Listen. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren by the mercies of God." He has just enumerated them. All have sinned. God has provided a salvation for all. Now because of these mercies he pleads for a life of practical holiness. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice to God." Be transformed. Be loving. Overcome evil with good. Let the strong bear the infirmities of the weak.

What a tragedy it is when we accept great spiritual doctrine but allow that doctrine to have little, or no power over our lives. For many of us it becomes mere seed by the wayside. Every truth must end in action or it will cease to be the truth to the one who once believed it. There is nothing so dangerous as the possession of the gospel. It is either the savour of life unto life or death unto death.

PART IV.

Then follows Paul's conclusion from 15:14 to the end of the book. First he gives his reason for writing to these Romans. He realizes that it might seem presumptuous on his part. He is a stranger to the Church as a whole, and yet he has taken it upon himself to write them a lengthy
letter. Why so? He is in a special sense the apostle to the Gentiles. He has been sent for the evangelization of the whole non-Jew world. Therefore, they are a part of his parish. He expects to visit them soon. He is already as vitally interested as if they were his own sons in the gospel.

Then follows requests for prayer. Paul never forgot to ask the saints to whom he wrote to pray for him. This request he made of every church to whom he wrote, except the Church of Galatia. He made no such request of that Church because they had backslidden.

Next comes an extensive list of salutations to personal friends. This to me is one of the most interesting parts of the book. Here Paul's human side comes out. In the heart of the book we see him as a great thinker, as a theologian of unusual ability. Here we see him as a Christian friend, with a great big tender heart. He loved all sorts of people. His heart was a veritable house of many mansions. How tenderly he writes of these folks, many of whom were obscure social nobodies in the eyes of the world. Yet, Paul makes them immortal by loving them and expressing to them his personal appreciation. The letter ends with the benediction.

I am sure Paul was in no sense conscious of the fact that when he wrote this letter he was shaping the theology of all the centuries that were to come after him, but such was the case. The book of Romans is the most profound book of the Bible. The simple message is this, that thru the atoning death of Christ, man may be justified by faith. The just shall live by his faith. This is the word that shot into the heart of Martin Luther as he was slowly toiling up the stairs of St. Peter. It transformed his life and sent him back home to bring in the Reformation. God forbid that this truth should ever grow old to ourselves.
On leaving Athens during his second missionary journey, Paul came to Corinth. Paul's message at Athens had not been entirely successful. He spoke to the intellectuals on Mars Hill, but his message met with small response. He declared the city was given over entirely to idolatry. This was so completely the case that the moral earnestness of a great many seemed dead. Paul's spirit was stirred within him as he looked on the appalling need. He spoke his message with deep earnestness but when he left he did not feel that his message had been a success.

If Athens was bad, Corinth was worse. This was a great commercial center of some four hundred thousand population. It was famous for its luxury, for its learning, especially of a pompous and superficial kind. It was more famous of all for its infamy. It is possibly the most impure of the ancient world. Here stood the famous temple of Aphrodite. A thousand young girls were kept in this temple for immoral purposes, and immorality was the religion of man. So appalling was the situation that even such a dauntless man as Paul seems to have been struck dumb in the presence of such sodden wickedness.

But his silence was not for long. There came to him a special harkening from his Lord. "Fear not, babble on and hold not thy peace." The sages over at Athens had called him a babbler. Now the Lord says "babble on and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city." At once Paul began preaching. He labored there for more than eighteen months and large and vigorous was the result.

Paul is not at Ephesus. Since his leaving Corinth the Church there has had other strong ministers among whom were Titus and Apollos but in spite of the great opportunity of this Church it has not got on well. Messengers came to Paul with information so startling and dis-
I Corinthians.

couraging that the preacher is all but heartbroken.

Being human I am confident Paul was tempted to do one of two things. He may have been tempted to write these disgraceful church-members exactly what he thought of them. That I am sure might have been a relief. Or again he might have been tempted to give up in utter discouragement. That was probably more natural still. But he did neither. He called his friend Sosthenes and dictated this letter. He tells us that he wrote it with many tears. It is a plain practical letter shot thru with the spirit of Christian love.

The letter falls naturally into two parts. These parts overlap in some measure. The first six chapters constitute the first division. It is devoted largely to reproof. The remaining ten chapters are given over to instruction.

PART I.

Reproof.

This letter opens, as all epistles do, with a greeting. It is addressed to the Church of God at Corinth. It is well to bear in mind that Paul calls these folks the Church of God. He does not mean by that that all of them are saints. He does not mean that any of the saints are perfect. This letter shows for a certainty that some of the early churches at least were far from perfect. We feel at the present that many of our churches are in a bad way, but it would be difficult to find a single one that was worse off than this at Corinth.

Now Paul proceeds to bring a certain definite charge against this Church. He says that it is worldly. That is a common expression that has come down to this day. What is a worldly church. It is a
church that fundamentally is dominated by the same spirit that dominates
the world. It does not indicate any definite kind of sin. It denotes
the fountain-source of every possible sin. Christians are to have the
mind of Christ. This Church had the mind of the world. This fact,
Paul said, was indicated by three great evils.

1. It was a church that was made up of factions. It was divided
into parties. There were four groups, each fighting the other over some
doctrinal point. There was one group that claimed to be of Paul,
Another claimed Peter as their leader. Another Apollos and the fourth
group claimed Christ. This was made up of a little handful that had
seen Jesus Himself. They were about the narrowest and the most cock-
sure of them all.

Now Paul seeks to cure this by reminding them that it is
Christ crucified who is the head and center of the gospel. He and
Apollos and Peter are only servants. He reminds them further that
where ever truth is spoken by any of them, they have a right to claim
that truth for their own. "All things are useful," he says. We need
to remember that to this day. What ever is true and fundamental in
modernism in any church belongs to me.

Then Paul puts his finger delicately upon the cause of these
dissensions. It is because each faction is trying to display its own
wisdom. It grows out of their lack of humility, their love of display.
They liked to argue to create, to show how clever they are. They care
little for the work of Christ in itself. They did not hide behind the
Cross and display its power, they put the Cross behind them to display
themselves. Paul calls attention to the fact that with him it is dif-
fent. "I determine not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ,
and Him crucified -- And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom -- That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God."

2. Not only were there party factions among them, but there were positive hatreds growing out of their mutual efforts to defraud and over-rate each other. He was amazed to learn that there were different members of the church who were engaged in lawsuits with each other. And what made matters worse, these lawsuits were being conducted before unchristian judges. They were carried on in heathen courts. Paul cannot shut his eyes to the terrible injury that was being done to the cause of Jesus Christ. He urges either one of two remedies. Settle the matter within the Church. If you cannot do that it is better to suffer wrong than to harm yourself and harm the cause of Christ as you are doing.

3. Then there is a more serious charge still. There is rank uncleanness in the Church. That is a case so flagrant that such a breach of conduct would not be tolerated even among the heathen. Paul urges that they refuse fellowship with this man until he repents. He then presses home the absolute necessity of moral purity. You are the temple of the Holy Ghost. "If any man defile the temple, him will God destroy."

PART II.

Then Paul proceeds to answer certain questions that these Christians young in the faith have asked him.

1. About meat offered to idols. Paul had taught them that an idol was nothing. After he was gone some of them began to attend the feast given in the heathen temples. As a result many slipped back into
the old life. Some even came to look upon eating meat offered to idols as a sin. Paul did not agree with these, but in order to help them he himself refused to eat meat offered to idols. Not for the sake of his own conscience, but for the sake of his influence. He then lays down this fundamental Christian principle. "If eating meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no more meat while the world stands."

2. From what Paul writes them about how to conduct themselves in God's house, their worship must have been rather horrible. He finds it necessary to warn the women not to speak with heads uncovered. He says that long hair is a shame to a man, but short hair to a woman. We are not to understand by this that Paul looked upon any virtue in hair one way or the other. That was the attitude of the people of Paul's day. Therefore, Paul was too wise a man to stir up needless prejudice. Christians were accused of almost every kind of evil. Paul urged the women, therefore, that they obey the custom of the day with regard to their headdress.

3. Is the question of marriage. Paul's teaching on this question is in line with the rest of the Bible. He teaches that marriage is sacred and binding. He teaches that a man is not to leave his wife if he is a Christian. Nor is she to leave him on that basis. Paul's personal attitude toward marriage, however, is not altogether friendly. He himself is an old bachelor. He believes his state is the best policy. Had he not thought so doubtless he would have married. But we are not to judge him except in the light of what he believed.

Why did Paul say that he who marrieth doeth well, but he that marrieth not doeth better? Paul said this because he believed in the
I Corinthians.

immediate return of Jesus. Since the end of the age was so near he did not think it wise to further even concern ourselves about God's method for carrying on the world. Then he thought further that unmarried folks would be more free to give themselves to the task of winning the world in the few days that were left.

4. These people had misunderstood the use of the Lord's supper. They had changed it into a banquet where some made utter gluttons of themselves; some got beastly drunk and some who were poor had almost nothing to eat at all. Paul reminds them of the meaning of this sacrament. He says, "He that taketh unworthily falls under condemnation." The worldliness, however, consisted not in the fact that the one who takes it is a sinner, but rather in the fact of his failing to see that the Supper is a symbol of the broken body and shed blood of Jesus.

5. Spiritual gifts was another question that disturbed these people. They were great on speaking with tongues. There were half a dozen yelling at the same time. Paul reminds them that if one were to come in while they were so engaged he would think them insane. He does not deny their power to speak in tongues is a gift of the spirit. That does not mean, however, that the spirit necessarily imparts such gifts today. God is an intelligent God and acts according to human needs. He then proceeds to tell them in seeking for gifts to seek for the best.

What is God's best gift? Paul says it is love. Not the privilege of being loved, as important as that is, but the privilege of loving. So important is it that though you have every other gift and have not love it comes to nothing. If you have love on the other hand and nothing else you are still rich.

6. Finally Paul sets them right on the subject of the resurrection.
I Corinthians.

His gospel, he declares, includes three fundamental facts.

1. Christ died for our sins.
2. Christ was buried.
3. Christ rose again.

If Christ be not risen then there are certain tragic results.

1. We are found false witnesses.
2. We are yet in our sins.
3. Those who have died in the Lord are perished.
4. We are most miserable.

But Paul asserts the resurrection of Jesus is a certainty.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead." Since He is risen we too shall rise. Since we are to live forever nothing that we can do for Him will be lost. "Therefore, now beloved brethren be ye stedfast, unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord. -- For as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."
II CORINTHIANS

Of all Paul's letters, the Book of II Corinthians gives the deepest insight into the heart of man. We would never have known how intensely human Paul was but for this letter. Here we catch a glimpse of his hot indignation, of his intense suffering, of his anguish mentally and physically. We find in this letter stern rebuke, keen disappointment, bitter irony, intense heartache, abounding love. The letter has three natural divisions though the last and the first sections are very close akin.

PART I.

One part is a leaf out of Paul's diary. He gives us a glimpse of this great man as he fought his battles and lived his life.

1. Notice first his experience. He was a man of great tribulation. He knew sorrow and suffering and heartache in abundance. His intense suffering was no doubt one of the secrets of his power. The people who help us most are almost always those that have passed thru Gethsemane. Paul's tribulation came from varied causes.

(1) He was vexed by a most persistent and unfair bunch of enemies. Paul was in a peculiar sense the apostle to the Gentiles. As such he broke early with conformity to Jewish ritual. While he at least conformed himself, he did not teach his converts to do so. This raised against him hot opposition. There was no length, as a rule to which these antagonists would not go in order to discount the great man.

(2) Then Paul had his heart broken again and again by his friends. So often they sided with his enemies. So often they were led away by those who were seeking not their good but only to win them from Paul's
II Corinthians.

doctrine. He was criticized by those who should have defended him. He was a source of shame to some who should have been proud to own him as their father in the gospel. There were those who apologized for him who should have boasted that he was their friend. There were some who even learned to hate when they should have deeply loved. Their backsliding and disloyalty was a source of keen disappointment and heartache to Paul.

(3) Then Paul was a man of many burdens. He had a task on his hands that was too great for his strength. Besides the opposition and bitter enemies, besides the disloyalty of not a few friends, there was the burden of planning for and carrying on the work of widely scattered churches. When Paul enumerates his difficulties he adds that there is upon him daily the care of all the churches.

(4) Paul was further troubled by physical weakness. He had a thorn in the flesh. There were times when he was so ill as to, according to his own language, despair of his life. He had passed thru one of those trying experiences just before the writing of this letter. No doubt his grief over the sin and failure of some that he loved made his physical infirmity all the more painful and pernicious. Thus you see Paul as a man of many sorrows, as a man who was passing daily thru genuine tribulation.

2. But if his tribulation was real, equally real was his comfort. Therefore, in spite of the fact that this letter has much that is tragic in it, it opens with psalm of praise. Paul was joyously thanking God for the comfort that has come to him in the midst of his tribulation.
II Corinthians.

This comfort was also from varied sources.

(1) He had been comforted by definite help from God. When he was so low that he disapproved of life he declared that God delivered him but his deliverance was not simply an event of the past. He declares that God delivers still in the present. He asserts his confidence that He will continue to deliver in the future.

(2) Then Paul had a consolation, the comfort of a clear conscience, and what a comfort that is. Some said that his motives were selfish. He knew them to be pure. Some accused him of not being what he pretended to be; of not preaching the pure gospel, but he had the bracing assurance that he had led a blameless life and the message that he was bringing was the true Word of God./

(3) He was encouraged by the friendship of Titus. Titus shared his hope and his faith. Titus was under his burdens with him. Titus rejoiced as he rejoiced over whatever was good in the Church at Corinth. It is always a blessing in any situation to have a friend. Nobody ever appreciated more keenly than Paul the boon of a true friend.

(4) Paul was comforted by the fact that many of those whom he had rebuked in his first letter had repented. At first he was sorry he had written them so sharply. He was afraid he had caused them grief. He now declares that he is not sorry any more. He has caused them grief but that grief has led to repentance and that was the great end that he sought. (5) Continued references

3. Then Paul speaks of his work. He tells what his business is, what he is undertaking to do, the position that he occupies.

(1) He is not God's prosecuting attorney. He is an ambassador.
II Corinthians.

He is here to speak on God's behalf.

(2) His motive for speaking. His first motive is fear. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men." The second motive is love. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

(3) The content of his message. It is this. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. "He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin."

(4) The outcome of reconciliation.

(a) When we become reconciled with God we become workers together with God.

(b) Enlargement. Reconciliation does not make us smaller, it makes us larger. It enlarges our hope and enlarges our courage. It enlarges our work. It enlarges our love.

(c) Separation. Reconciliation means separation from the world. "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate."

PART II.

Chapters eight and nine concern themselves with giving. They are about the finest, I think, to be found in the Bible. Paul here sees the threefold motive for giving.

1. A noble example. He calls attention to the fact that the Church at Macedonia is giving in spite of its poverty. Not only are they giving but they are giving eagerly, and God loves a cheerful giver.

Then he gives the supreme example, he points to the supreme Giver, Jesus Christ. "Ye know the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that though He was rich yet for our sakes became poor that we thru His poverty might become rich."
II Corinthians.

2. The second motive is the personal. Giving is a means of receiving. Giving is like sowing seed. The more you sow the more you reap. The test, of course, of the amount of your giving is not physical but spiritual. It is not a thing of the head but of the heart. Therefore, Paul says if you have a willing mind it is accepted.

3. The third motive was that of service to God and humanity. This give that I am asking you to make is going to give real service.

- It is going to help these people physically. They are in poverty. It will be bread for the hungry and clothing for the naked.
- It will make them grateful. This gift will make them grateful to man and grateful to God. Gratitude is a wonderfully rich treasure. Therefore, to have increased the gratitude of the world is to have rendered a great service.
- It will increase their confidence. They will believe the stronger in the vitality and reality of your religion. Believing more in you they will believe more in God. To increase the faith of the world is to increase its wealth in a most needed fashion.
- This gift will led them to love you and pray for you. Their love and prayer will be a great benediction to themselves and will be a great benediction to yourselves. To have increased the love of the world and the prayers of the world is to have rendered a service that is of value unspeakable. Paul concludes, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

PART III.

The last four chapters are in a special sense Paul's defense of himself. It is pitiful as we think of it, that a man so unselfish
II Corinthians.

and so devoted to the service of God and humanity had thus to come to his own defense. To defend ourselves is not wise as a rule. If you are wronged it is usually better to let it pass but there are times when self-defense is necessary. Such was the case here.

If you read the book you will notice there is a sharp break at the tenth chapter. What probably happened was this. The second messenger came telling Paul that his old enemies were again busy stirring up trouble in the Church at Corinth. They were doing all in their power to discredit the great apostle and were having some degree of success. Therefore, Paul replied with hot earnestness not for the sake of himself but for the sake of those whom he was seeking to save.

1. Notice some of the charges made against him. He was charged with being physically unimpressive. He did not look like much. Then they said that as an orator he was beneath contempt. They accused him further of being a fickle coward. He had promised to come to Corinth and had not come. But Paul answers that his reason for not coming was not that he was fickle nor was it that he was afraid. He stayed away because he did not wish to embarrass those whom he had just rebuked thru a letter.

While Paul was preaching at Corinth he supported himself in large measure. Other Churches gave him some financial help. From the Church at Corinth he received not a penny. His enemies were using this against him. They said his reason for so doing was because he was conscious of the fact that he was not really an apostle and had no right to it. Paul answered that his real motive was to be the more helpful to them. He did not want to give any of them a chance to say he was
II Corinthians.

preaching for the money. He said, "I seek not yours but you.

Then they accused him of being crazy. "He was beside himself."

They said the same, as you remember, about Jesus. Paul's only answer to this is that if I am beside myself, if I am crazy it is for your sake. It is because of my hot enthusiasm to win you.

Then they accused him of preaching falsely and of really being no apostle at all. In reply to this Paul is forced to boast of his own spiritual attainments and of his peculiar services in the cause.

He tells them that that was never to be told, of the vision of God that had come to him. He tells them further that there is nothing that they have that he does not possess. They claimed to be especially strict Jews. So was he. They claimed to have seen the Lord Jesus.

So had he. They claimed to be working for Him. So was he. In fact, he has labored more sacrificially than any of them.

Then he proceeds to name over some of the difficulties that he has had to face in his work for God. Five times he has been beaten with forty stripes, save one: Three times he has undergone the Roman scourg. Three times he has suffered shipwreck. He has spent twenty-four hours in the sea clinging to a bit of wreckage. He has passed thru every peril that the ingenuity of man could compile. He regrets to have to remind them of these things. He apologizes but warns them that instead of having to boast they should have boasted for him. He has no written credentials but he has the credentials of a human heart that is willing to spend and be spent, though the more he loves the less he be loved.
Paul's letter to the Galatians is one of the most important documents ever written. The man who wrote it had to be a man not only of great ability but of great courage. Judaism at this time was at its very narrowest. Therefore, to take the course that Paul took, that it was no longer binding was to encounter bitterest hatred and persecution. But Paul dared to take that course and thus rendered a service of unspeakable service to humanity.

There is no doubt in my mind that Paul was divinely led and divinely commissioned for this particular work. But for him Christianity would have been put in chains. It would have possibly degenerated into a slightly amended form of Judaism. As such it would have been robbed of its power and could never have become a world force. This book was the favorite of Martin Luther. He said he was betrothed to it, that it was his own wife.

The book falls naturally into three parts. In the first two chapters Paul gives the defense of himself. He answers those who have condemned him as no true apostle, as a man without any real authority for the preaching of the gospel that he preached. The next two chapters are doctrinal. In these Paul declares what he elaborated more fully in his letter to the Romans, that salvation is by faith and faith only. Freedom or deliverance comes not thru conformity to the law but thru faith in Christ Jesus. The last two chapters are practical. That is, Paul gives special directions for their conduct in the light of the doctrine that he has just established.
PART I.

Paul's defense.

It was Paul's custom to write thru a secretary, but he seems to have written this letter with his own hand. We cannot read it without detecting the fact that it is the private product of a mind greatly disturbed, of a heart hot at once with a love and indignation. Paul recognized the fact that this Church was in great danger of being utterly lost to the cause of Christ. He utters no word of thanksgiving for them. In every other letter he thanks God for those to whom he writes. He does not ask for their prayers. He seems to consider them too back-slidden for their prayers to be of any value. He bursts right in to the heart of his message marveling that they have so soon turned from the gospel that he has preached to another gospel which is in reality no gospel at all.

By what authority has he dared to preach to them? His enemies say that he has no authority at all. He will answer that charge. He has no less authority, he declares, than Jesus Christ Himself. He claims this authority for three reasons.

1. Thru Jesus Christ He has been divinely born. It was thru no human agency that he was brought to give up his old life for the new. He calls attention to his former loyalty to the religion of his fathers. He excels others in his zeal for the religion of the Jews. In fact, no man was further from accepting the authority of Jesus than was he. It was while on a journey of persecution that he was struck to the earth and made a new creature in Christ Jesus.

It was Paul's conviction that he had come into the world for
this very purpose. It pleased God who had brought him to his physical birth to reveal Christ in him. This revelation that had meant his transformation was not simply an outward something. There had been the shining of a great light, but Christ had revealed Himself to his heart. In that hour he had fallen prostrate before Him and acknowledged Him as his Master, saying "Lord what wilt thou have me to do."

2. It was this Lord who had commissioned him to preach. It was He who had called him to be an apostle. His enemies said that he had no credentials. He does not deny so far as men are concerned. He did not need such credentials. Listen how he begins. "Paul an apostle,(not of men neither by man, but of Jesus Christ and of God the Father who raised Him from the dead.)" He was preaching not because he had been ordained by Peter or any of the apostles. He was preaching because he had been ordained by Jesus Christ Himself.

3. Just as Christ had given him his new birth and his commission to preach, just so he had given him his message. "I declare unto you," he says boldly, "that the message that I preach is not after men." He claimed that he was not taught it by men, but by God Himself. His gospel was the result of divine revelation. He did not find it in books. He did not learn it from the lips of men. It was the outgrowth of his own experience.

What Paul claims for himself is true, in a measure, of all who really have a gospel. That does not mean that my gospel will be essentially different from yours, but it does mean that my gospel will be a summary of my experience. It will be the story of the dealings of God with my own soul. Whoever has firsthand information of God's transfor-
mation of his own life and of God's keeping of his own heart, that man has a gospel.

The fact that Paul's gospel is his very own is proven by the following considerations.

(1) Immediately after his conversion he began to preach and preached without conferring with flesh and blood. That is, he preached without consulting any man or group of men as to what he was to preach. He had no guide except the Old Testament and his own experience. After giving his testimony in Damascus he went into retirement for some three years. It was during this time that he took stock of himself and the great change that had come into his life. It was during this time that in the light of the scriptures and the Holy Spirit he worked out that theology which has stood the test of all the subsequent centuries.

(2) The second proof that his gospel was divinely given is indicated by the fact that when he went up to Jerusalem fourteen years later he told the pillows of the Church, Peter, John and James the Lord's brother, what he had preached, they made no corrections of his message whatever, and agreed exactly with what they had learned from the lips of their Lord. Instead of rebuking him they glorified God in him. That is because of what God had done in and thru him. Further they gave him the right hand of fellowship.

(3) The genuineness of his divine revelation was proven by the fact that the apostle made no correction of his message, but that he found it necessary on one occasion to correct them and they accepted his corrections as right. It is a rather human scene. Peter had been
acustomed, as occasion demanded, to eat with Gentiles and live just as Gentiles lived. He had been doing so at Antioch but when certain distinguished men from Jerusalem came down he was He withdrew from the Gentiles and began again to live as a Jew. Paul dared to rebuke him to his face and those that were with him. He reminded them further of what they all taught and believed, that salvation was thru Jesus Christ and Him only. "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." He declared they were dead to the law since they were united to Christ. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me." Thus Paul declared and vindicated his authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

PART II.

The Paul proceeds to show that Christ and Christ only is essential to salvation. There is absolutely no form of ceremony that is essential. Christ has come to deliver us, Paul declares, from this present evil age. He and He alone is able to perform the task. He can perform it without any aid. He certainly did not need the help of any ceremonial law. In proof of the fact that liberty came thru Jesus only, Paul appeals to the following facts.

1. To the experience of the Galatians themselves. He says virtually you have been converted, you have received the Holy Spirit, you have come into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Remember your own experience. How were you converted? How were you reborn? Did you come about it thru some ceremony? Did you come about it thru obedience to the law? You know that you did not. You who are saved know that
Galatians.

you were saved thru faith and thru faith only.

I might make exactly the same appeal to your experience. To you who are saved I ask this question, How were you saved? It was not thru your own goodness. It was not thru confidence in self. You were saved by faith. There is no other way. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. If you so believe you have life here and now. If not you are abiding in death.

2. Having appealed to their own experience he appealed to the scriptures. He showed that Abraham was not justified by his conformity to the law, he was saved by faith. And the salvation of Abraham conforms to the teachings of the entire Old Testament and to the entire New Testament. "To him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted unto him for righteousness."

3. Then Paul appeals to them on the grounds of the reasonableness of his position. Why is it reasonable to suppose that we are saved by faith only. For the very good reason that if law could have saved us then Jesus Christ would have never come. Calvary. He says is something more than a blunder. It is something more than a mistake. It is a necessity. Jesus came to save because the law was utterly powerless to do so. All the law could do was to point out sin and to emphasize its hideousness. It cannot save it can only emphasize our need of a Saviour. Therefore, it is only a taskmaster to lead us to Christ. But in Christ we are truly made free. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," Paul declares in his letter to the Romans, "hath made us free." This is in harmony with what Jesus said, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Christianity, therefore, is
not a religion of restraint, it is a religion of freedom. It is not a religion of slaves, it is a religion of sons and daughters. It is not a religion that concerns itself with externals, it is a religion of the heart. "By faith we become sons and daughters of God. We are thus set free from bondage to the law.

PART III.

In the last two chapters Paul emphasizes certain particular duties and privileges that grow out of the fact that we are made free in Christ.

1. We are to cling to this -- "Stand fast," he says, "in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free." Your teachers have told you that in adopting certain forms that you are making progress. The truth is you are making no progress at all, you are going backward, you are simply putting on the chains that have once bound you. You are turning away from the gospel of grace to a gospel of works. In so doing you are falling away from grace. By this expression Paul does not mean that they had backslidden as we term it today, though it means the same thing. He means you have come to trust in your own works instead of in the grace of God, and the man who does that backslides. That was true then. It is true now.

2. But while urging them to stand fast in their freedom, to cling to their liberty, he warns them not to let that liberty degenerate into license. Liberty never means the right to do as you please without regard to any one else. We call this a free country but there are many respects in which we are not absolutely free. I cannot even keep...
my own children home from school. I cannot drive on any side of the street that I please. There are certain places that I cannot park my car. We are hemmed in by restrictions, yet we call ourselves free. I cannot even take a drink without violating the law. This is the case not because the law is trying to make a saint of me, it is trying to protect society.

How far then may a man be free. He is free in the state to do whatever he can do in conformity of the law. He is free in the Kingdom of God to do whatever he pleases, provided it is in conformity to the law of the Kingdom. What is that law? You say there are multitudes of them. No, Paul says they are all summed up in one law. It is so short and simple that anybody can remember it. All the law, he declares, is fulfilled in this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." If you obey that law then you may do absolutely as you please. For instance.

For instance, if you love your neighbor as you love yourself, you can cheat him whenever you get ready. If you love him as you love yourself you can slander him just as much as you please. If you love him as you love yourself you may disregard his needs as completely as you desire. If you love him as you love yourself you can destroy his happiness, break his home, take his life, do anything to him, in fact, that you can do in obedience to that supreme law, the law of love. But you haven't the right to mete out treatment to any human soul such as would be impossible to one who loves.

3. Then Paul tells them how they may avoid breaking the law. He tells that in a sentence, the one sure way of succeeding as a Christian.
Galatians.

There are so many things that we do that are wrong, how are we going to get rid of these varied evils? You cannot go out into the garden of your soul and pull up the weeds one by one. Even if you succeed you would only change the weed patch into a desert. How are you going to succeed. Here is the answer. "This I say, walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

The only way to drive out evil is by the bringing in of its opposite. The only foe to dark is light. The only foe of death is life. The only foe of sin is goodness. If you walk in the spirit those noxious evils to which Paul point, fornication, lust, envy, malice, etc. these would all be crowded out because the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, self-control. These will fill your heart so full that there will not be room for anything else.

4. The Paul urges them to keep up the fight. He proceeds to put his finger on one of the most persistent and deadly foes of the Christian life. The danger of fainting. It is often hard to get people started toward the land of promise, but it is even harder to keep them going. It is difficult to get them into the Church. It is even more difficult to make faithful, useful Christians out of them after they have come in. "Therefore," he says,"let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we will reap if we faint not."

5. He then closes with his final appeal. These men who are corrupting your faith, he says, are doing it only that they may glorify in your flesh, but God forbid that I should glorify save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified unto me
and I unto the world. And what Paul means is, I am glorifying in Christ crucified. He has set me free from bondage to the law. It is the Cross that reveals the love of God. It is the Cross that is the remedy of God for the world's bondage. Nothing else counts. "From henceforth," he concludes, "let no man trouble me." That is, do not worry me any more about these petty ceremonial laws. I bear branded in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." "I am His slave, therefore, I am free from all else." A great message, vital, pulsating with life. It is at once timely and timeless. At home in the first century, it is equally at home in your day and mine.
Paul's ministry at Ephesus was unusually successful. He brought about a veritable revolution in this great city. So powerful was his preaching that there was a great bonfire of the trashy literature such as ought to be set off in Memphis. If the people were to burn up everything that is hurting our religious lives today it would look like the whole city was going.

This city was famous for its great Stadium which seated fifty thousand people. There also was the temple of Diana which was one of the seven wonders of the world. The city enjoyed great prosperity. A large part of this was due to the sale of statues of Diana. But so great was the influence of Paul that even this trade was endangered and as is always the case there was as result a great cry against Paul. Doubtless they wanted him to preach the oldtime gospel and let idolatry alone.

This letter is on a very high spiritual plane. It is not concerned with controversy as are so many other of the apostles letters. It seems to be a circular letter rather than one addressed to the Ephesians only. This is indicated by the fact that no names of individuals are mentioned. The theme of the letter is the Church. This is the most profound discussion of the Church and Christ's relation to it to be found in the Bible.

PART I.

What is Paul's conception of the Church?

1. As to origin. According to Paul the Church is a divine institution. It is the oldest of all institutions. It has existed
Ephesians.

since the creation of man. It has existed in the mind of God from eternity. Back in the dim distance before the world was made, God planned the Church. It is not of human origin, it is born of the eternal purpose of God.

Not only is the Church divine in its origin but also in its construction. God is the builder of the Church. This is in harmony with the declaration of Jesus. "I will build my Church." The purpose of God in eternity was to build a church. The purpose of God in time thru Jesus Christ was to build a church. How transcendentally important must be this institution. It has had a place in the thought of God from eternity and was built of the Son of God in time.

Not only is God the builder of the Church, but the Church is the idol of His heart. When Paul speaks of the highest conception of love, he tells us to love as Christ loved the Church. He tells us that He purchased the Church with His own precious blood. He calls the Church the bride of Christ. No knightly husband was ever so devoted to his bride as Jesus Christ is to the Church.

2. Paul tells who constitute the membership of the Church. Of course, he is here talking about the Church universal, the holy catholic church. The Church, he said, is made up of the faithful in Christ Jesus. That is, all who thru faith are in Christ belong to the Church. It is by faith that we become members of the Church. "By grace are ye saved, thru faith and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast."

3. The purpose of the Church is both for time and eternity. In eternity it is to show forth the wisdom of God. In time it is to bring
Ephesians.

in the Kingdom of God. We are not to forget that it is the purpose of God to establish His Kingdom in the world. That is, He wants to reign in every department of life. That universal reign of God is to be brought about thru the Church.

PART II.

How is the Church to accomplish her task?

Of course, it is evidenced both from this epistle and from the whole New Testament that the Church is to be a growth. The conquest of the world is not to be by some sudden upheaval. It is a process. "I will build my church," said Christ. He has been building thru the centuries. He does nothing but build. Of course, he builds thru human instrumentality.

What is your business and mine in the world and in the Church? We are not here to criticize. We are not here to be spectators. We are here to build. And Paul names over a list of different kinds of workers. There were some apostles and some prophets and some pastors and teachers. And while they were laboring in different fashions, they were all working to the same end, the building up of the Church. No body has a right to do anything that will tear down. It is every man's duty to build.

But how, I repeat, are we to build?

1. We are to build by keeping the unity of the Spirit. That is, we are to keep that oneness which the Spirit of God supplies. This brings us face to face with one of the sadest tragedies of our own day and of every day. There is such a lack of unity among God's people.
The latest prayer that Jesus prayed was that we should be one. But this oneness has not yet been realized. Now I think it is safe to say that we are not so far apart as outward signs would indicate, but certainly we are too far apart.

It is everybody's duty to work to bring Christians close together. Paul conceived of the saints as being born together in the very closest bonds. In this epistle he says they are one family. God is their Father. All they are brothers and sisters in Christ. They are one temple. All of them constitute one great building, the Church, and this temple is inhabited by the Holy Spirit. They are one body, they are the body of Christ.

What a close union is that! We are a part of each other. We can't get on well without each other. We can't do our best work when arraigned against each other.

Then it is significant that the body is that thru which the soul gives expression to itself as the body of Christ. We are those thru whom He speaks, thru whom He goes on the errons of mercy, thru whom He is to realize His purpose in the world.

2. We are to build the Church by our confession for Christ, by our testimony for Him thru our lips and thru our lives.

(1) This must be done personally. So the apostle appeals to us to walk worthy of the vocation thru which we are called. We are to put off all that is sinful. We are to be kind one to the other, forgiving as Christ hath also forgiven us.

(2) We are to confess Christ in our domestic relationship. Husbands and wives are to live together as Christians. Paul says that the husband is the head of the wife. Here is where the modern woman quarels
with the great apostle. But if you will read all that he has to say your objection will not be so strenuous. If the husband is to be the head of the wife he is also to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. It is my opinion that the average wife would not be afraid to submit herself to so devoted a lover.

Then children are to be obedient to parents. Here is a forgotten command. Parents on their part are to be considerate to their children. They are not to nag. They are not to be perpetual fault finders. They are to help by the right sort of discipline, by right sort of example and by fine high encouragement.

3. The Church is to conquer in the midst of conflict. Paul realized that the conquest for the Church was going to be costly. He said, "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood." Of course, there is much opposition there, but that is not the supreme opposition. Christ was speaking to the same purpose when he said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." That is, they shall fight against the Church, but they shall not conquer.

PART III.

Then Paul indicates finally the source of our power in the carrying of this conflict to a successful issue. We are to put on the whole armour of God. Notice it does not have to be manufactured by ourselves. It is already available. What we have to do is to put it on. The resources of God are fully adequate. "My grace is sufficient." What we have to do is to appropriate it.
Ephesians.

1. There is equipment here for defense. There is the helmet, the breastplate, the shield.

2. There is equipment for offensive warfare. We are to have our feet shod with the gospel of peace. That is, we are to be equipped with a personal experience of the gospel.

3. We are to be equipped with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Finally there is to be an equipment which is good for defense and offense. The equipment of prayer. "Praying always," said the apostle, "with all prayer and supplication in the spirit."

Paul closes by requesting special prayer for himself. He is writing from a prison cell but he does not ask them to pray for his deliverance. He only asks that they pray that he might have boldness to make known the mysteries of the gospel of which he is an ambassador in bonds.
PHILLIPANS

PART I.

The Church at Philippi was possibly the most spiritual and
treasurably of all the churches that Paul founded. No other church seems
an appreciation of the great apostle. No other was so eager to share
his teachings. Possibly there was no other that was dearer to his
heart. He had come to this city thru an especial call from God. His
work here had been dramatic in a peculiar sense. It had also been beau-
tifully successful.

Paul was at Troas when the call came to cross over into Europe.
There appeared a man of Macedonia saying, come over and help us." To this
appeal the great evangelist made an immediate response, taking with him
Paul, Timothy and Luke. This army of invaders crossed into Europe. It
was here at Philippi that the first Europe convert was won. It was here
that the first Christian Church in Europe was founded.

We were three converts here that were so important as to
gain their names in the book of Acts. The first was Lydia. She was a
business woman; a woman seemingly of wealth and importance. The city
of Philippi had no synagogue. Paul found a little handful of women
worshipping out by the river side. There was not a hard headed business
man there. (All business men are supposed to have hard heads.) Neither
was there a red blooded man of any description, only a little handful
of women. But Paul preached and Lydia responded, and though a battle
was fought near there that changed the history of the world, it was not
so important as this little service that was so insignificant that not
a man thought it worthwhile to attend.

A second conspicuous convert was a certain slave girl that wa
Phillippians.

a fortune teller. She had spiritual insight enough to recognize at once that Paul and his friends were messengers from God. Therefore, she began to cry after them, "These men are messengers to show us the way to God." At last Paul turned and spoke to her. The unclean spirit was driven out of her. She became a Christian. In proof of the vitality of her Christianity she refused to continue her work of deception. This led to Paul and Silas receiving a severe beating. To what torture the slave girl was subjected, we are not told.

When Paul and his friend had received this disgraceful whipping in the market place they were taken to the prison and the jailer took them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. They seemed utterly defeated, but they were not. They seemed alone, but they were not alone. The prison door seemed to shut them in from their opportunity to serve, but as the door swung shut, another swung open. That was the door that led to the jailer's home and into the jailer's heart. There was an earth quake. Every man's bonds were loosened. What was far more important the jailer himself had his bonds loosened and was made a free man in Christ Jesus. These three became the nucleus of that beautiful and fascinating Church to which Paul writes this letter.

PART II.

It is interesting to note what occasioned the writing of this letter. It was not written to correct some error in doctrine. It was not written to rebuke some outbreaking sinner. It was not written in answer to Paul's oldtime enemies, the Judaizers who were
Phillipians:

ever seeking to undo his work. This letter was written to express Paul's gratitude for a love gift that he had just received from this faithful and loyal Church.

Here is the situation. Paul is in prison at Rome. He is no longer able to pursue the trade of a tent maker. He is in destitute circumstances. The news of his pathetic plight is carried to the little Church at Phillipi. They at once resolved to help. They raised an offering. The pastor of the Church himself, Epaphroditus, takes upon himself the task of conveying the offering to Paul.

This man Epaphroditus is well worth knowing. He must have been a most beautiful character. He reached Rome in the early autumn. Soon after his arrival he was taken down with a severe illness. The folks at home heard of it and joined Paul in earnest prayer for his recovery. God heard and he was restored to health.

As soon as he recovered he departed for home. Paul was eager for him to go. Notwithstanding the fact that he was lonely and needed his help, he wanted him to go in order to comfort the members of the Church at Phillipi. Paul says this about him. He was in great heaviness. What was the secret of his sorrow? It was not because he felt that he had been neglected. His sorrow grew out of the fact that the folks at home had heard of his illness and were grieving about it. His physical suffering was forgotten, in a measure, in the thought of the suffering of those who loved him. Again, I repeat, he must have been a beautiful character.

PART III.
Phillipians.

PART III.

Notice the content of the book. It is the least systematic of all Paul's books. It has no outline. It is just the spontaneous outpouring of a loving and grateful heart. It has in it some of the most profound and beautiful teachings to be found in the Bible. Personally it is my favorite of all Paul's epistles. In order to make it more easily understood I am going to divide this message into two parts,—what Paul says about himself personally, and the exhortation he gives to his friends.

1. What a beautiful insight Paul gives into his own life by the declaration he makes about himself. There are a number of these but there are five to which I wish to call attention.

(1) Paul's fine gratitude. He says, "I thank God upon every remembrance of you." "I can never think of you without a song of gratitude springing up in my heart." Why was Paul so grateful for these obscure saints at Philippi? He was thankful because of the offering they sent him. The offering was desperately needed. But the offering in itself counted for the least part of his gratitude. He was thankful far more for the love that prompted the gift. Most of all he was thankful for the Christ who had begotten this love. He was thankful for what they were by the grace of God.

(2) Paul declares that he is not failing thru his imprisonment, but that this seeming calamity has brought him the greater success.

"I want you to know, he writes, that the things that have happened unto me, the arrest in Jerusalem, the imprisonment at Cesarea, the journey to Rome, the confinement in Rome, all these things have resulted in the
furtherance of the gospel. In his letter to the Romans, Paul had declared his conviction that all things work together for good to them that love God. He declares that he has found it so in the prison case. He has found it so because Christ is being preached more widely than would have been the case had he not been put in prison. There were some who were preaching in order to vex Paul. There were others who were preaching because Paul's courage in the face of danger had begotten courage in themselves. Whatever the motive, he declares that he rejoices and will continue to rejoice because Christ is being preached.

His imprisonment has met with victory also because it has brought him not only into the city which was the capital and heart of the world, but into the very heart of that city, into Nero's court. There was Paul shut up at the very center of the world, but he was not idle. He was speaking to his guard, to the slaves that he chanced to meet. And what a testimony to his loyalty that he could close his letter by saying, "All the saints salute you, especially they of Caesar's household." At the very fountain source he was purifying the waters that were destined to help to cleanse the uttermost parts of the empire.

(3) Paul lets us into the secret of his life. He says, "For me to live is Christ." That is, there is not a question that you can ask Paul that cannot be answered in terms of Christ. Christ is the origin of his life. Christ is the sustainer of his life. Christ is the motive-power of his life. Christ is his final goal. "For me to live is Christ." No wonder he could add the remainder of the sentence, "and to die is gain."
(4) Then he tells us of his supreme purpose of life. His purpose is to lay hold of that for which he has been laid hold of by Jesus Christ. Nothing else is of importance. The things that he once counted gain he now counts as loss, as utter refuse. There is nothing worthwhile but to know Him and to enter into the fellowship of his suffering and to be made conformable even to his death.

His method for the realization of this purpose is stated in that magnificent sentence, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." That is; Paul threw away everything that would hinder his purpose and fixed his attention upon the prize that was to be won. That was the secret of his success.

(5) The outcome was a great joy and peace and contentment. Over and over he speaks of his joy. The whole letter seems to be, "I rejoice" "Your rejoicing with me." There is no restlessness or fretting, no worry, just a beautiful and holy restfulness. "I have learned," he says, "in whatsoever state I am therein to be content." What a blessing and how much needed today!

2. Then there are certain winsome and important exhortations that he brings to his friends.

(1) He urges them to be of one mind. Many of his other Churches were torn by internal strife. This church is comparatively free from that tragic calamity, but he sees the beginnings. There are two women who have fallen out in the Church. So he writes, "Let nothing be done thru strife or vain glory." I beseech Euodias and Syntyche that they
be of the same mind in the Lord.

(2) He desires that their mind be Christ's mind. Then he proceeds to give one of the best and fullest definitions of a Christian to be found anywhere. "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not a thing to be clung to to be equal with God, but emptied Himself and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was found in the fashion of a man; etc."

What is it to be a Christian? It is to have the mind of Christ to look on the world thru His eyes. It is to feel as He felt about your friends. It is to feel about your enemies as He felt about His. It is to have His attitude, His disposition, His heart.

(3) Paul enjoys here the duty of rejoicing. It is a privilege to be joyous, but it is more, it is a duty. No Christian has a right to be morose and bitter and disagreeable. Christ desires that our joy be full. The joy of the Lord is to be our strength.

(4) To help our joy, to make it possible, we are to look on the bright side. That is, we are to think right. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." If you constantly think of the impure you are impure. Paul tells us what we are to think about. "Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are holy -- if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

(5) Be peaceful, avoid worry, do not let anxiety wreck you. "In nothing be anxious but in everything in prayer and supplication and thanksgiving let your request be known to God, and the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Paul found this true. He found it true in the most trying and
bitter circumstances. You and I may find it true if we will. Jesus Christ has not lost His power. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.
COLOSSIANS

This is the third epistle that we have studied that was written by Paul during his imprisonment at Rome. But the occasion of the writing of this letter was somewhat different from that that we have heretofore met. The Phillipians was a love letter expressing appreciation for a gift received. The letter to the Ephesians was a letter of instruction. This letter was written to correct certain heresies that were beginning to manifest themselves in the Church at Colosse.

Paul had never visited this Church. However, it was founded in all probabilities by some one of his converts. Epaphras, its present pastor, has come to Rome possibly to consult Paul about certain false doctrines that are beginning to take hold in his church. Just what these doctrines were we are not explicitly told, but from Paul's letter they seem to be about as follows:

1. This false teacher was declaring that matter is essentially evil. Therefore, since it is evil in itself God is not the direct creator of matter. If he is the author of it at all he has created it thru subordinate agencies, thru angels or lower orders of beings. Now since matter is the source of evil and not a perverted will, in order to cure evil it is wise to withdraw from the world. It is also wise to keep certain petty ceremonies and observe certain rules such as "Taste not handle not, etc."

Now it was to meet this situation that Paul wrote this brief and concise letter. It lacked the spontaneity and beauty of some of his others. It possibly grows out of two facts.

(1) Paul was dealing here with new problems.
(2) He is writing to people whom he does not know personally. The letter has three divisions, doctrinal, practical, and personal.

PART I.

The simple teaching of this book is the unique supremacy of Jesus Christ. No other book places quite so strong emphasis on the deity of Jesus as does this letter to the Colossians. The climax of the teaching is in this word, "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." That is, God in all His fullness manifests Himself bodily in Jesus Christ. No declaration of the deity of Jesus can be found that is stronger than that.

Paul then gives us some proofs of the deity of Jesus.

(1) He was before all things. He was from the beginning. He was from everlasting. It is an expression that might be placed along side that of the apostle John when he says, "In the beginning was the Word." Jesus Christ has all the fullness of the eternity of God.

(2) Jesus Christ is the creator of the universe. By Him all things consist. Here again his statement is akin to that of John, "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made."

Since matter is the product of God's hand it is not in itself evil. It may be the source of highest good. It may become a preacher of righteousness. It was so with Mr. and Mrs. Browning, Wordsworth, Lowell, Addison and numerous others. Even the great German poet sang,

"Before the roaring loom of time I ply.
And wreath the garments thou seest me by."
(3) Jesus Christ is the sustainer of all. It is He that holds the stars in their orbits. It is He in the hollow of whose hands the seas rage and roar.

(4) He is the redeemer of all. He is the reconciler reconciling man to God and man to Himself and man to his brother.

2. The second great fact of this epistle growing out of the first is this. We are complete in Him, that is, in Jesus Christ. Since in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, if we have Christ we are made complete, we are full. "Of His fullness have we all received and grace for grace." The fullness of His life, the fullness of His love, the fullness of His power. There is, therefore, no more excuse for the empty life.

PART II.

Having established the supreme Lordship of Jesus and our fullness in Him, Paul proceeds to give certain general practical warnings.

1. Negative warnings. He tells us certain things that we as Christians are not to do.

(1) Do not let yourself be beguiled by philosophy that is after this world and that is not after Christ. That is, do not allow yourself to accept any atheistic theory of the universe. Paul believed that this universe came as a result of the creative activity of God. That is the Christian belief. To depart from that faith is dangerous. The man who does not see God behind this visible universe is not likely to see Him anywhere.

(2) Do not accept any other mediator than Jesus Christ, not even
COLOSSIANS

the mediation of angels. This error was then in its infancy. In later centuries it was destined to become full grown. There seems to be an inherent tendency in all of us to seek some mediation between God and man other than the only one provided, that is Jesus Christ Himself.

Some years ago I was called upon to conduct a funeral in a Catholic family. I did not know that they were of that faith so I called a few days later to try to give further comfort to the family. I spoke about the privilege of prayer and the mother asked me in wide-eyed amazement, "Is it possible for just anybody to pray directly to Jesus Himself?" To her it seemed too good to be true. She thought her petition had to be passed on from one saint to another with a possibility that it might be forgotten before it reached Him who is able to supply all our needs. There is no more blessed truth if we treat it rightly, than that each individual can go to the God of all the universe personally and for himself.

(3) Paul warns against the keeping of rules and the crucifixion of the flesh as a remedy for sin. This is another heresy that was destined to grow to enormous proportions in later years. It reached its climax in the monastic life of the middle ages. People thought then as some think still that in order to be saintly it is necessary to hide from the world. This is doubly strange in the face of the prayer that our Lord prayed for us when He said, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world."

2. Then Paul makes some very practical appeals that are just as needful now as they were when this letter was written.

(1) "If ye then be risen with Christ set your affections on things
COLOSSIANS

of above." That is, He says learn to love the things that are lovely. Give your time and effort to seeking the treasure that is of real value. What a tragedy it is that a large part of the world does not care for the things that are of supreme worth. What a tragedy that those who seem to care seek them with such lukewarm zeal.

(2) He gives some instructions as to dress. He is not dealing here, however, with mere outward clothing but he tells these early saints of a certain garment that will make them attractive that will make them useful, that will be in style in this world and the next and it is a garment that may be had by all of us for the mere taking. "Above all else," he says, "put on love." This is a garment that you and I need to wear every day. We need it especially during a political campaign, especially of the kind we are having just now.

(3) He has a word for the choir and not for the choir alone but for the whole congregation. Listen to this. "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord."

There are certain facts stated here that we as worshipers ought to take to heart far more than we do.

First, it is our duty to sing. Christianity was born in the burst of song.

Second, singing is a means of teaching and warning. It is a most effective way of preaching the gospel. It is a means of bringing comfort to breaking hearts. It is a means of wooing the wanderer back
COLOSSIANS

to God.

Third, we are told how we are to sing effectively. We are to sing with grace in our hearts. It is possible to sing very graciously with the lips and very ungraciously with the heart. I suppose all of us who allow ourselves to think at all have felt the sheer mockery at times of great and meaningful words being sung by flippant and thoughtless lips. What a tragedy to sing the great hymns of the Church and have no more appreciation of their real spiritual meaning than if we were singing in a foreign tongue.

Not only are we to sing with grace in our hearts but we are to sing to the Lord. He deals in music. What a lover of melody must He be who made the harp that the wind played upon, who tuned the voice of the skylark, of the canary and the mockingbird. But the music that sounds sweetest in His ears is the music that comes out of a loving heart. The cracked voice of a frail old saint is far more beautiful than that of the Caruso who is singing only to his own glory.

Fourth, then follows an admonition to those giving a prayer. "Be ye thankful." It is terribly easy to let all gratitude slip out of our hearts. So often we come to this by taking God's daily mercies as a matter of course. We can do it by constantly comparing ourselves with others that are getting on better than we are. We can do it best of all by refusing to give expression to our gratitude.

PART III.

Then follows the personal part of the letter in which Paul mentions beautifully and instructively some of his intimate friends.
There is Tychicus who is going to be the bearer of this letter. He is a faithful servant and a trusted friend. There is Onesimus who is also dear and trusted. There is Luke the beloved physician. There is Demas about whom nothing is said at all. Demas, you know, deserted Paul a little later. By this time I dare say Paul was beginning to fear that his love had grown cold.

The letter closes with a word of warning that seems a bit startling both because of what it says and because of what it leaves unsaid. Here it is, "Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry that thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it." There seems to be a fear on the part of Paul that his friend and son in the gospel is slipping. He is beginning to relax. There are tasks to which he has been definitely called that are being neglected. It is an awful thing to leave the work that you might have done unfinished. "Be on your guard" he seems to say, "lest you prove an unfaithful sentinel whose sure reward will be dishonor and death when his weary watch shall have come to an end."
I THESSALONIANS

In reading this book you are reading the oldest Christian document in existence. This was the first letter that Paul ever wrote, so far as the record goes. It was written before any of the gospels were written. This marks the beginning of Christian literature. Millions of pages have been written since them, but this is at once one of the most precious and one of the most beautiful and tender. The book falls naturally into two parts. The first part containing three chapters is retrospective. The second part containing two chapters looks forward. The occasion of the letter was the coming of Timothy with the report of the situation at Thessalonica. He reported that the Church was loyal and true but that it was passing thru great tribulations. He also reported that some of them who had lost loved ones were in great grief because they thought that those who had died would miss the glory that was to be revealed at the return of Jesus. It was to console and comfort them that Paul wrote this letter.

PART I

Paul reviews something of the record of his visit.

1. He tells how he found them at his coming in utter ignorance of God. They lived under the shaddow of Olympus that was thought to be the home of the gods. That they were worshipers of idols and the bondslaves of sin. They knew absolutely nothing of a God who is able to save.

2. Paul tells how he went about the work of rescue. He preached to them the good news. As he says in the 13th verse of the 2nd chapter, He preached the Word of God. His method of preaching is clearly set forth.
I THESSALONIANS

(1) He preached boldly. It took courage for Paul to preach in this heathen city. His back was still sore from the terrible beating that he had received at Phillipi. The fact that he tells us that he was bold to preach to them shows that he had some inclination to keep silent. The secret of his courage was not in himself, he tells us it was in his Lord. He was bold with the boldness that was born of a great assurance. He was sure of a great commission. He was also sure that the gospel that he preached was the power of God unto salvation.

(2) He preached faithfulness. He look upon the gospel not simply as a privilege to be enjoyed it was a trust fund to be administered according to the will of Him who had put it in his hands. He declares that he had been put in trust of the gospel and that therefore he preached not with an eye to pleasing man but with an eye to pleasing God.

(3) He preached powerfully. We have many eloquent preachers today. Many who are learned, many who are gifted, but too few who are powerful. We have mighty strong churches. They are large in numbers, they are large in material resources, but too few of them are powerful churches. Paul could write to these, "The gospel came not to you in word only but in power."

(4) He preached sacrificially. There was a famine at the time. The price of food was six times higher than in normal conditions. Yet Paul received no compensation from these at Thessalonica. He earned his meager living with his own hands while he preached the gospel to them in labor and in travail.
I THESSALONIANS

(5) He preached lovingly. He tells us that he felt toward them as a mother nurse toward her child. He had the tact and tenderness of a trained mother. So much was he in love with them that he declares that only he was not/willing to impart to them the gospel but his very life as well.

(6) He preached by his life. That is always the most effective method. That is the way every one of us is preaching constantly. Happy is the preacher, happy is the teacher, happy is the father and mother who can call those who know them best to witness how holyly and blamelessly they have lived. This Paul can do without fear of rebuke or blame.

3. What was the result of this preaching? Paul says, "the visit that I made to you did not fail of its purpose. The Jews did not accept the message in any large numbers, but many of the Gentiles believed. His mission here was a thorough success. Why?

(1) Paul says, "I thank God that you received the Word of God not as the word of man but as it is in truth the word of God." That is important. There is a great deal of difference between the word of man and the Word of God. The word of man is not always trustworthy. The Word of God is trustworthy. Relying on the word of man you may come to failure and to defeat. Relying on the Word of God no harm can possibly come to you. All things will work together for your good.

4. Then Paul tells why he sent Timothy to visit them. He had to leave hurriedly on account of opposition before they were adequately instructed. They were being persecuted. He was afraid that they would lose faith. He could not rest because he was so concerned about them.
I THESSALONIANS

Therefore, he sent Timothy.

Then with delight he tells them of the good report that Timothy brought back. What a strong expression is here. "Now we live since you are standing fast in the Lord." The implication being that their failure would have been such a heartache that life would have hardly been worth living. Then he bursts into thanksgiving. "What thanks can we render unto the Lord again for you for all joy wherewith we rejoice for you before God."

PART II.

Then Paul gives some exhortations that have to do with the future. It is evident that Paul on his mission to them had had considerable to say about the second coming of Christ. It is evident further from Paul's early letters that he expected the immediate return of Jesus. He expected that event to take place in his own day. Not that he ever claimed that it was certain. He knew that the time was not known, but he expected it with all his heart.

Now this expectation was shared by his converts. The event of this belief was no doubt very helpful in many respects. But their failure to fully understand led to certain false conceptions that needed to be corrected.

First, there were some who were so sure that the Lord would return immediately that they did not think it worth while to make a living. They quit working and sat down to wait for that event. Paul tells them to go to work.

Second, they were some who thought that because they had loved-
ones who had died they would not be privileged to share in the glory of the second coming. Paul then proceeds to tell them that those who are alive shall not proceed or go ahead of those that are asleep. Then he makes a declaration very much akin to one made by Jesus Himself. "The Lord Himself shall descend with a shout and with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain at His coming shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. So shall we be ever with the Lord."

Then follows some of the most beautiful and timely and snappy, if we might use the word, exhortations to be found in all the Bible. Let us mention a few of them because they are as fresh as the morning dew.

1. Support the weak. That is Christian! That is in harmony with what Paul says to the Romans, "We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves.

2. Comfort the timid. How many times they need comforting.

3. Be patient toward all. How short we are on patience. How abundantly patient was Jesus.

4. Render unto no man evil for evil. That is an admonition that Paul learned from the lips of Jesus. It is one that we are too prone to forget.

5. Rejoice evermore. Joy is not a privilege, it is a duty.

6. Pray without ceasing. That does not mean to be on your knees but it does mean to keep the windows of the soul open toward God.

7. In everything give thanks. It is not for everything but in every situation be thankful. That is a possibility. The fact of it has been demonstrated in Paul's own life.
I THESSALONIANS

(8) Quench not the spirit.
(9) Do not despise preaching.
(10) Shun evil of every appearance. The translation, "Shun the very appearance of evil" is unfortunate. The Bible does not concern itself in appearances. It is concerned with realities. There are things that in the eyes of some look evil that are not evil. The big thing to shun is evil itself.

Then the letter closes with a beautiful prayer that we may be preserved in our souls and minds and bodies to the coming of the Lord Jesus. How sweet and winsome the letter is. It is one that is worthy of being committed to memory.
II THESSALONIANS

Last week we had for our study the oldest book in the New Testament. This is possibly the next oldest. This second letter to the Thessalonians was written a short time after the first. While the primary purpose of the first was to comfort, the primary purpose of the second was to correct. There are, however, some very precious teachings in the book that did not have to do with correction. There are four divisions into which the book may be divided.

PART I.

Thanksgiving.

This church while tending toward certain errors had not gone so far wrong as to become a grief. In fact, Paul believed in it with such abounding confidence that he is constantly thanking God for it.

1. He thanks God for their salvation. He is convinced that they are truly saved. He is convinced that they have indeed passed out of death into life. They belong to the community of the twice born. Truly converted people may be mistaken people. Salvation does not make us infalable but it confers a blessing unspeakable. And there is no greater source of gratitude than the salvation of ourselves and the salvation of others.

2. Paul thanked God that these Christians at Thessalonica were growing Christians. That is fine! There is no greater tragedy that can overtake an individual or church than that of arrested development. When a tree ceases to grow it begins to die. It is the same with the church...No church is able to do nothing more than hold its own. No
individual is able to be at a standstill. We must grow or die. Not only were these Christians growing, but they were growing in a fashion that was most needful. The virtues in which they were growing are those that are fundamental to the Christian-life. There are those without which there can be no vital Christianity at all.

(1) They were growing in faith. Faith is that something without which we never find salvation. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Without faith nothing of any real value is possible. Without faith commerce goes upon the rocks. Without faith churches become impossible. Without faith homes become wrecks.

On the other hand if we have faith then everything becomes possible. "All things are possible to him that believeth." The outstanding hero of the Old Testament is Abraham. The big fact about Abraham is this, that he believed God. How many desperate situations have been saved because of one man who could look past the difficulties and believe God. That was what saved the effort of the Jews to enter the Promise Land from being a final failure. That was what saved the situation when Paul was shipwrecked. It is one of the biggest needs of this present hour.

(2) They were increasing in love. God is the supreme love. His nature and His name is love. To be increasing in love is to be increasing in likeness to Him. Their love was becoming more intense. It was also becoming broader. More and more they were looking on the world thru eyes that had seen the Cross.

Happy is the pastor who can write this great sentence about
II THESSALONIANS

his people. "Your faith growth exceedingly and the love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." The church with a growing faith and with a growing love is sure to be a conquering church.

3. Paul thanks God for their patience. There are those who do not have a great admiration for patience. They look upon it as a rather passive and negative virtue, but it is not so regarded in the New Testament. There it is a virtue of the highest type. It was Paul's longing that his converts be sound in patience. One of the outstanding characteristics of Jesus was his patience.

Now patience is a word with which we are all more or less familiar. We use it nearly every day. We say, "I lose my patience," but oftentimes in suffering such loss we have not lost much. Why we say, I have no patience with him, or I have no patience with such an idea. We get out of patience with each other. We get out of patience with ourselves. We even lose patience with God.

What is patience? It looks in two directions.

Patience is the wanting and expecting good. It is the capacity to endure delay. It is not always easy especially when that delay is your husband and the dinner is getting cold. Nor is it easy when the delay is your wife and you are already in the car and ready to drive off.

Then patience is the capacity to endure. It means the power to keep on fighting when the odds are against you, to keep on struggling when the goal is out of sight. It means that fine high hopefulness that enables us to endure opposition, misunderstanding, persecution, death itself in the defense of the right. And not only to do this but
but to do it without whining, without bitterness.

How patient was Jesus. He was good at waiting. He had only thirty-three years to live but he waited thirty years before beginning. When he did begin his ministry he was never hurried. Even in the performing of His first miracle he waited for directions from His Father and took orders from no human lips. He was patient with His disciples. They grew slowly but he never despaired. He was patient with His Church. He has been patient with it ever since.

Then how patient He was in the face of opposition. No seeming failure daunted Him. No foe ruffled Him. "When He was reviled, reviled not again." He was hated and persecuted by about the most diabolical set of human hounds that ever dogged a man. But he was always sound in his patience. He never lost heart, he never lost hope, he never became fretted for one moment or impatient.

Patience is a beautiful grace. When I was a boy the question was asked, who was the most patient man, and the answer was Job. To my mind that is a mistake. I do not think that Job was so very exceedingly sound in patience. I do not know that I have ever seen anybody suffer more than Job, but I have seen many sufferers who were far more patient. He did quite a bit of whining and he groaned most terribly and cursed the day he was born. These people were sound in patience. No wonder Paul thanked God for them.

PART II.

A second characteristic of this book is Paul's frequent burst into prayer. These people were so on his heart that he was constantly
praying for them. In this very short letter, the briefest that he ever wrote to any church, he prays four distinct prayers. Notice what Paul longed for in these saints that have been won by him.

1. He prayed that they might walk worthy of their calling. That is that they might show themselves worthy of having been called, of having been saved by Jesus Christ. He longed that they might do this in order that Christ might be magnified in them, for it is possible for the greatness of Christ to be shown by unworthy men and women like ourselves. He desired this also because he wanted them to be magnified in Christ. This also happens. The truly Christlike man is always honored if not openly, then in the inner heart of humanity.

2. He prayed that they might be comforted and made steadfast. We need comfort, all of us. If you have never wept, the time is yet ahead when your face will be wet with tears. If you have never been bitterly disappointed, the time is coming when you will be. The longer I live the more convinced I am that one of the greatest needs of these human hearts of ours is for comfort. Not only did Paul pray that they might be comforted but that they might be steadfast. The pressure against them was hard. The battle was bitter, But defeat was not necessary. There was one that was able to give them strength and courage to stand.

3. He prayed that their hearts might be directed in the love and patience of Christ. They already had love and patience, but he prayed that their love and patience might be so increased as to be like that of our Lord Jesus Himself.

4. His final prayer is this. "Now the Lord of peace Himself give
you peace always by all means." How impossible it seems for God to answer a prayer like that. These people were in a most trying situation but it was not so trying that the God of peace could not give them peace and give it to them always.

PART III.

Then Paul seeks to correct an error in their thinking. They had gone somewhat wrong on their doctrine of the advent. Evidently some forged letters had been sent among them which purported to be Paul's. That is the reason he added his salutation and signature to this letter, "The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a token in every epistle." Then there were those who claimed that they had had a special vision from the Lord thru the spirit. These people had upset the Church. They had become "shaken from their minds." Or we would say today, "They had been shaken out of their wits."

What did these false teachers say about them. They had said that the day of the Lord was already at hand. That the time of the return of Jesus had already come. This had not led to peace but rather to feverishness and fear. Many of the Church were upset. Therefore, Paul wrote them that while the Lord was coming the time of His coming was not yet. What the Bible emphasizes throughout is not the time of Jesus coming so much as the suddenness of His coming.

There were two things Paul said that would have to take place before the return of Jesus. First, there must be an apostasy. "For that day shall not come except there come a falling away first. Second, there must be also the coming of the man of sin, and that man
II THESSALONIANS

of sin be revealed the son of perdition who opposeth and exhausteth himself above all that is called God." Then Paul proceeds to say that the only reason the man of sin had not already been made manifest is because there is a hindering power. When that restraining power is taken away then that man will be revealed. When the man of sin is revealed then the Lord is going to come and destroy him with the breath of his mouth.

Who is the man of sin? I am sorry to tell you that I do not know. In this respect I have a feeling that I am like all my brethren. Volumes have been written on this question. The Catholic Church teaches that Martin Luther was the man of sin and the apostasy was the setting up of Protestantism. Many Protestants teach on the other hand that the Pope of Rome is the man of sin and that the apostasy is the falling away of the Catholic Church. As to who it is nobody knows.

This much is true, among the early Christians Nero was commonly accepted as the man of sin. The very reticence with which Paul mentions the matter in this particular paragraph seems to indicate that he was some living man that the people to whom he wrote might know. The resisting power that kept him from doing his wicked worst was some person who had a good influence over him, possibly Seneca. There did come a time when Nero shook off every good influence. The description here given of the man fits him with fair accuracy.

The position of most of those who are premilleniumist is this. There is more than one stage in the coming of Christ. The first stage will be the coming in the clouds and the rapturing away of the saints. Then shall follow the great apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin. That which prevents this sin having its way now is the presence
of the spirit in the Church of Jesus Christ. When the saints are withdrawn, the hindering power will be taken away. Then the Lord will come actually to earth. The man of sin will be destroyed and satan bound. Then the Kingdom will be set up in this world. From the evidence of this letter, I believe that Paul was writing about something, some one that he and his readers knew. Therefore, I am rather inclined to the former interpretation.

PART IV.

Finally Paul sets himself to correct the mistaken living that had grown out of belief in this mistaken teaching. What effect had this teaching that the return of Jesus had upon these people?

1. It had made them loafers. They had quit work. They had set down to wait. But it is impossible for anybody to be entirely idle. If you do not do something that is worthwhile then you will do something that is harmful. These people had not only become loafers but they had become disorderly in their lives.

2. Paul calls them busybodies. Having no work to do they were galavanting around thru the community getting their noses into everybody's business, gossiping, arguing, doing more of harm than anything else both to themselves and to others.

3. They had become parasites. They had quit working but there was one worldly pursuit that they had not given up. That was eating. It is perfectly all right for a man to quit working if he could quit eating. But these people still had to eat. But failing to earn a living for themselves they had to live off of the community. Paul re-
II THESALONIANS

bukes them sharply for this, reminding them that he had laid down this rule when he was among them. "They that do not work shall not eat."

The Bible throughout is hard on idlers. No book is so emphatic in its teaching of the necessity of consistent conscientious work. Work is a means of usefulness. It is a means of growth. It is a means of livelihood. It is a great preventative. The devil always finds some work for idle hands to do. Work is a great consolation to a broken heart.

How then does Paul tell these people to prepare for the coming of the Lord? They are not to do so by giving up their work. The best preparation for the coming of Jesus, whether that coming is at your death or at His second advent is to be found faithfully doing your job. The Lord sets a premium on everyday fidelity to our ordinary task. The Christian religion is not simply for those who have nothing to do but search the scriptures and pray. Our Lord knows the circumstances under which we must live. His religion is for people that have to work and work hard to earn their daily bread. And the finest preparation for his coming is to be found in the fear of God making an honest living for yourselves and for your family.

A fine thing was said about a sailor some years ago. It was a night of storm. One of his comrades slipped and fell over board. Without a moment's hesitation this sailor leaped after him and saved him. When they were both on deck again somebody asked the rescuer "Were you ready for death yourself?" He answered by saying, "I certainly should not have become more ready by neglecting my duty." We are not called to feverish waiting. We are not called to put down our tasks and wait. We are called to carry on leaving what is unknown to God. "Blessed is that servant who his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing."
I TIMOTNY

This is the first of three letters that Paul wrote to individuals. Two of them were written to Timothy and one to Titus. They are naturally somewhat different from the letters addressed to a church. The two to Timothy are especially intimate and personal but they are Pauline to the core. They are just such letters as you would expect to be written. Paul wrote the aged to a brother minister who was far younger than himself.

PART I.

It is interesting to know something of the character of the man to whom Paul was writing. Timothy's father was a Gentile. He doubtless lived and died a heathen. But what Timothy missed in his father, he seemed to have found in blessed abundance in his mother and his grandmother. Both of these were Christians. Not only were they Christians but it seem to have taken especial pains in the training of Timothy from his early childhood. Paul could say of him, "From a babe thou hast known the holy scriptures that are able to make thee wise unto salvation thru faith that is in Christ Jesus."

But while the seeds of the future Christian life were sown by the mother and grandmother, Timothy's real conversion took place under the teaching of Paul. Timothy was at that time a mere boy possibly fifteen years of age. He was evidently a fine character, devoted, earnest and faithful. Paul trusted him and loved him in a peculiar way. He addressed him as his own son in the faith.

When Paul wrote to Timothy it was natural that he should show the solicitude of a father. But Paul was deeply concerned about
I TIMOTHY

Timothy for other reasons.

1. Timothy was exceedingly shy. He seems never to have fully recovered from his natural timidity. In other days Paul had written on his behalf, "If Timothy come see that he be with you without fear." Because of his great timidity Paul thought he needed constant heartening and encouragement.

2. Then Timothy seems never to have succeeded in growing up. He entered the ministry while he was very young. He always remained youthful, especially to his father in the faith. It was hard for Paul to ever think of him as other than a very lovable, clinging child.

3. Timothy was not robust physically. His health seems to have been bad. This may have come about from hardships that he suffered after his entering the ministry. He was possibly rather delicate to begin with. Paul feared that he might let his sickness get the better of him so he wrote him instructions with regard to that.

But the big purpose of the letter is summed up in the 16th verse of the 3rd chapter. "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The better translation of that last verse is possibly this; "As a minister and bulwark of the truth." Paul is a preacher of large experience. Timothy has had far less experience. It was natural, therefore, that his father in the faith should write him this loving personal letter telling him how he might best serve as a pastor of the Church at Ephesus.
I TIMOTHY

PART II

What instructions does Paul give these young ministers of the Word? Here is a manual of sound teaching that ought to be read and re-read by every preacher both young and old. It ought to be read not only by the preachers but the laity as well, for while the Bible holds a high standing for the minister, it holds no higher standing for them morally than it does for the laity.

1. Paul gives instructions as to the selection of officers in the serving of the Church.

(1) These officers are to be chosen with care. "Lay hands," he says, "suddenly upon no man." Of course, this means the hands of ordination. Those who are to serve in an official capacity in the house of the Lord are to be carefully selected. They are to be men of proven worth of character. Not only are they to be men of character but they are to be men of good reputation.

Paul mentions three definite offices that had already come into being in this new Church. Bishops, elders, and deacons. The bishop was not a bishop in the sense that we have them today. He was an overseer or rather a senior pastor of a local church. The elder was a preacher or a teacher. A deacon was one who had charge of the material side of the Church. His office corresponds now to the office of steward that we have in our Church today.

Paul lays down certain moral requirements that these officers, whether they be ministers or laymen, were required to have. They must be men of blameless lives. They must be sober men. Drunkenness seems to have been a most common sin in that day. It was one that was not always left off even when men came into the Church. It was required of them
whether they be bishops or elders or deacons that they be able to control well their own household. Paul declares that if a man can't rule in his own home, if he is not able to lead his own children that he is not likely to be a successful leader in the Christian Church. Another characteristic that was required of both preachers and laymen in official capacity is that they be free from the love of money. Paul emphasizes this in the case of both. We recognize it as an evil in preachers. It is no less evil in those that are not.

2. Paul gives Timothy instructions as to his work.

(1) He tells him how he is to conduct worship in the house of the Lord. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." Paul urges upon Timothy the necessity of praying for all people, for kings and all that are in authority. He gave very definite reasons for such praying.

The first reason is this, that we may lead quiet and peaceful lives. Paul recognised the great importance of having the right kind of man in office. That need is recognized again and again in the Word of God. When the righteous rule the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule the people moan. If we picked our officers with greater care and then prayed for them with greater earnestness our nation would not be so lawless today.

(2) Paul instructs his son in the faith as to the matter of sermons. He does so in the following language. "Give attention to reading, to preaching to teaching." He puts reading first. "Reading," says Bacon, "Maketh a full man." The preacher who remains long with the congregation
must be a reader or he will soon be exhausted if the average listener realizes how thoroughly difficult it is for a preacher to come before the same congregation three times a week, year in and year out and always be fresh and instructive. "Give attention to reading." Paul did not tell him what to read. Had he done so I imagine he would have offered suggestions that were very wise and possibly very surprising. All the books that he would have told his son to read would not have been theological books. Paul was evidently a wide reader himself. When he was in jail suffering for the want of a coat, there was something else that he missed possibly more than his warm cloak and that was his books. Part of the secret of Paul's great preaching was the fact that he was a reader.

Not only does Paul say give attention to reading but to preaching and to teaching. There is a distinction between preaching and teaching, yet I think it save to say that all worth-while preaching is in a measure instructive. Teaching, however, has more to do with the declaration of the truth. Preaching not only declares the truth, the preacher makes application of it. He pleads and urges.

Paul realised also that the task of being the pastor of a church, of preaching to his people was big enough to enlist all the energies of any man. So he urges Timothy to be a man of one work. Mighty few men are big enough to succeed in two callings. Mighty few preachers can carry on a business and preach effectively at the same time. The men who have done most for the world have been men who loaded life with one purpose. Therefore, Paul's word is a word of wisdom.

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee -- Meditate upon these things;
give thyself holy to them."

To encourage Timothy and all ministers to be men of one work he gives this final great inducement. "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." Paul's strong words suggest that fearful possibility, in failing to do this the preacher is likely to destroy himself and to destroy many of those who hear him.

3. Not only does Paul urge the necessity of giving himself wholly to the task of preaching, but he tells him what to preach.

(1) He tells him the doctrine that he is to proclaim. The very center of that doctrine is this. "It is a true saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Paul tells us that he has been entrusted to that gospel. His motive for preaching that though himself was a persecutor of the Church, God had mercy on him and saved him.

There is a summary of the Christian doctrine found in the 16th verse of the 3rd chapter of this book. It seems to have been the first approach toward the Apostle's Creed as we know it today. Here is what they believed. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Notice these fundamental truths.

(1) God was manifest in the flesh. That was the incarnation.

(2) He was justified in the spirit. That is the resurrection.

"He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead."

(3) He was seen of angels. The word for angels in the New Testament is the same as the word for messenger. I think the far better trans-
I TIMOTHY

lation is, "He was seen of the messengers." That is, the risen Lord was seen by Peter and James and John and others who were to go out and proclaim Him.

(4) He was preached to the Gentiles or to the nations.
(5) He was believed on by those who heard Him.
(6) He was received up into glory. That is the ascension.

This was to be the simple teaching of Timothy. He was to confine himself to these simple truths. He was to shun fables and endless genealogies which minister questionings. These people at Ephesus were very much interested in mysterious teachings. There is always a type of minds that are concerned with such matters. They brood over the seals of revelations and the little horn of Daniel and forget the plain open truths by which we live. Believe me, the things that are fundamental are the simple things. If a truth is so hidden away that only one in a million will find it, you may put it down that it is not an essential. Then he gives the one essential to right living. He does not lay down a score of rules but says that which is sound in all gospel preaching is this. Love out of a pure heart and clear conscience, and faith unfeigned. Whatever doctrine is preached is to be preached to that end. Any doctrine that brings about that high consumation is certainly the gospel of Christ for only He can save us. "Love out of a pure heart and clear conscience and faith unfeigned."

4. Paul earnestly warns Timothy as to the necessity of living his own gospel. He urges him to be an example in word in behavior, in love and is to keep himself pure. He is to be the one supreme and
I TIMOTHY

unanswerable argument as to the truth of the gospel that he proclaims. That this may be the case he gives three intense telling exhortations. They are flee, follow, fight.

(1) Flee these things. He is talking about anything that would hinder his spiritual life and, therefore, hinder his ministry. He is speaking particularly about the love of money. It is in this letter that Paul tells us that the love of money is the root of every kind of evil. It is a disease that is deadly to the spiritual life of any man. It matters not how great and powerful one may be, if the love of money gets hold of him the metallic will creep into his voice and he will become a shorn Sampson.

(2) Follow after righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. You are not to be constantly on the run from one sin or another. We are to be running from the wrong but running toward the right. Whoever if following hard after righteousness and faith and Godliness and meekness, is making great speed away from things that mean the weakening of his character and the blasting of his usefulness.

(3) Fight the good fight. Paul had much dealings with soldiers. He did not feel any shame in them personally. Their service, their work might have been more spectacular than his, but it was not more exacting. It did not require anything like as much discipline. It did not require anything like as much courage. He too was a fighter.

If you and I are to win we must fight. We cannot slip our way into the Kingdom of heaven. We cannot drift into Christ-like characters. It is a ringing challenge to every heart. "Fight the good fight. If you do not bestir yourself and grasp this prize it will slip thru your fingers forever."
II TIMOTHY

When Paul wrote this letter he was nearing the sunset and evening star. The light of the eternal morning was beginning to break over his face. Tho he still stands upon our dusty world his citizenship is in the world unseen. It is natural, therefore, that this letter should be pervaded by a tone of peculiar sweetness and beauty and radiant spirituality. It seems to be the last word that we have from the pen of this man who has filled so large a place in the world's history.

The letter has no natural divisions. It is just the spontaneous outpouring of the eager and loving heart. It is just such a letter as you would expect from a man of Paul's bigness and tenderness to one of the temperament of Timothy. Paul realizes that soon he himself is going away and that Timothy would no longer have him at his side to hearten him. Therefore, he is sending him this parting message of exhortation before he takes his departure. For convenience I am dividing it into three parts:

1. Paul's instructions to Timothy.
2. His remarks about other characters, both friends and foes.
3. His reference to himself.

PART I.

Notice first Paul's instruction to his son in the gospel. Immediately after his greeting he hurries on to give his exhortations. He cannot mention all of them. I am going to group them under four heads.

1. Stir up the gift of God that is in thee. The word stir would really mean rekindle. Paul was afraid that Timothy was going to allow his fire to go out. Knowing Timothy to be timid and retiring, knowing also that he was lacking in physical robustness, knowing further that
II TIMOTHY

he was in a hard place he thought well to urge upon him that he stir up the gift of God that was in him. He was to be helped toward that end by the following considerations.

(1) God hath not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. By this Paul means to warn his timid, shrinking son that cowardice has no place in the Christians program. We christians, he says in another place are not cowards. We have not received the spirit of cowardice. The spirit that Christ gives us is a spirit of power. It is a spirit of love. Therefore, avoid giving away to fear.

(2) Gratitude demands that you stir up the gift of God that is in you. God has done wonderful things for you. He has saved you. Not only so but he has called you with a holy calling. He has honored you with a place in His ministry. To the mind of Paul no honor could be higher than that. He could never think of his privilege as a preacher without bursting into shouts of praise.

Not only has God saved you and honored you with a place in His ministry, but this has been done thru no merit of your own. You have not yourself to thank for it. You have Him to thank and Him only. All this has come, "Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light thru the gospel."

(3) He seeks further to hearten Timothy by his own example. He declares that he has been appointed a preacher of this gospel and for
II TIMOTHY

that reason he is suffering but his suffering causes him no shame. There is a kind of holy swagger in his declaration, "Nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

2. Paul's second exhortation is a call to strength. "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus." Just as Christianity is not the religion of cowards, neither is it the religion of weaklings. Be strong is a word that is on the lips of this great apostle again and again. Strength is sorely needed for the following reasons.

(1) To avoid entanglements. No man at war entangleth himself with the affairs of this life. There are many things that might be harmless in themselves but for the fact that they entangle us and therefore make us less effective in the carrying on of the work of God.

(2) We are to be strong enough to stay on the main line. We are not to turn aside to vain babblings. We are not to give our time to discussions of useless words that only breed strife. No preacher ever has a right to preach a sermon that is not essential.

(3) Strength was a necessity in the next place because there were perilous times ahead. There was to be opposition. There was to be persecution. What was even more dangerous, there was to be imitation. There was to be those who had a form of Godliness without the power. That is one of the most subtle dangers that we have to face today. "As Janes and Embres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." These men withstood Moses not by fighting him but by imitating him. A form of godliness is an imitation to Christianity but it has
no saving power and there are millions today that are content with
the imitation.

3. The third exortation that Paul gives is that Timothy be
loyal to the truth that he has received. The truth is that embodied
in the teachings of Paul and in the Old Testament scriptures. Paul
gives five considerations that urge Timothy to this loyalty.

(1) Paul gives his personal testimony to the truth of the message
that he preaches. He has tried it out in his own experience. "Con­tinue thou in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of,
knowing of whom thou hast learned them."

(2) There is the testimony of Timothy's mother and his grand­
mother.

(3) The scriptures are inspired of God. Paul does not mean to say
by this that all scriptures are equally inspired. I think it is a
false and hurtful defense of the Bible to say that one part is as much
inspired as the other. Jesus expresses the falsity of that when He
declares. "Ye have heard it was said of them of old time." Then He
states an Old Testament passage, "But I say unto you." Then He pro­
ceeds not to set the law aside but to fulfill it. The law was given
under the inspiration but not under the fullness of the inspiration
that was presented by Jesus.

(4) The scriptures are able to make you wise unto salvation.

(5) They are to fully equip you for the living of your life and
for the rendering of the service to which God called you.

4. Finally Paul urges Timothy to be dead in earnest. "Be
intensely in earnest in season and out of season."
II TIMOTHY

(1) He is to be earnest in his study. "Study to show thyself approved of God." That is absolutely essential. The man who studies most earnestly to meet God's approval may not always meet the approval of man, but he stands about as good chance as anybody that I know.

(2) He is to preach. Not simply from the pulpit but where ever opportunity offers.

(3) He is to continue his witnessing with all long-suffering and patience. No doubt this letter was an unfailing source of strength to this struggling and hard beset preacher. Certainly it has been an unfailing source of strength to countless millions since that day to both preachers and laymen.

PART II.

Paul's reference to men of his acquaintance are very instructive.

1. There were those who were antagonistic. Hymenaeus and Philetus these were men who had given themselves up to the study of the non-essentials in religion until they had lost their own faith and upset the faith of others. Alexander the coppersmith had felt that the preaching of Paul had hindered his business, therefore, he had become Paul's bitterest foe. Demus after having become a follower of Christ and a friend of Paul, was lured away by the love of the world.

2. Then there were Paul's friends. He urge Timothy to bring with him John Mark. Mark had himself been a deserter in other days but now he has come back and Paul has taken him into his confidence and into his heart. Then there was Luke, faithful, reliable, stedfast Luke. What a suggestive sentence is this, "Only Luke is with me."
II TIMOTHY

There is a sob in it because of those who had gone. There is a song in it because of the one loyal heart that remains.

Then there is Onesiphorus. This man is deserving of far more than a paragraph. Some of these days when the inspiration strikes me I hope to be able to preach a sermon on this man that is adequate to his deserts. Listen to what Paul says. "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain." He was a man with refreshing personality. There are a lot of famishing people in the world, people that sorely need refreshing. Happy the man who by the grace of God is able to be a source of refreshment to the tired famished scoul about him.

PART III.

Then Paul adds a few very rich and roomy words about himself.

1. He gives us a glimpse at his present situation. He is in jail. He is almost alone. He is suffering from the chill of the approaching winter. He needs a cloak but has not the money to buy one. Therefore, he must needs urge Timothy to bring the one that he left at Troas with his friend Corpus.

2. He gives us a glimpse of his past. If his present seems a bit mean he certainly has a grand past. He opens it before us in one glorious panorama. "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

3. Then he shows us his future. It is infinitely more wonderful than either his present or his past but it is a future that grows naturally out of these. "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown
II TIMOTHY

of righteousness, which the Lord of righteousness will give me at that day, and not unto me only but unto them also that love his appearing.
Titus was one of the best known and most effective men in the early Church. He was a man who was almost the exact opposite of Timothy. Timothy was timid. Titus was bold and courageous. Timothy seems to have been possessed of an almost feminine delicacy. Titus was thoroughly masculine. Both of these men were converts of the apostle Paul. He loved them both tenderly. If he seems partial to Timothy I think it grows out of Timothy's greater need. Titus was far more able to look out for himself. When there was an especially hard situation Paul called on Titus. One of the most difficult churches was that at Corinth. Paul sent Timothy to this church but it seems to have been too much for him. They were fighters. Paul had to write them, "If Timothy come see that he be with you without fear." Timid Timothy accomplished little by his mission to these war-like Corinthians.

For this reason Paul found it necessary to send Titus. He did not ask them not to frighten Titus. He knew that if there was any frightening done Titus would attend to that. He sent Titus three times to the Church at Corinth. In his second letter we find a record of the extreme joy with which he received the good report of Titus upon his return from one of these missions. He quelled the warring faction and brought the Church in obedience to the teachings of Paul.

We are not to understand by this, of course, that Titus was nothing more than a fighter. He was not a bully. Had he been so instead of being a peace-maker and a mender of churches that were torn by factions he would have done more harm than good. He was a thorough-going Christian. He was a lover of men. Paul thanks God that He has put the same tender love for them in the heart of Titus that He Himself
possessed. He was at once tender and strong. He was courageous and
tactful. When Paul writes to Timothy he urges him again and again to
be courageous, to be strong. He has no such exhortation to Titus. It
is not necessary.

Now since Titus was such a tower of strength in the early
Church it is rather amazing that his name is not once mentioned in the
book of Acts. Barnabas, Mark, Silas and Timothy, all these are mention-
ed. But two prominent workers are left out. One is Luke. The other
is Titus. Why Luke is not mentioned is easily understood. He was the
author of the book. But why the omission of Titus? The best guess
seems to be that Titus and Luke were brothers. In II Corinthians 8:18
Paul sends Titus and with him a brother whose praise in the gospel is
known throughout the Church. A brother may just as correctly be trans-
lated his brother. One of those who went with Titus was almost certain-
ly either Silas, Timothy or Luke. Most probably Luke. It is on this
and on one or two other passages that the guess of the relationship
between Titus and Luke is found.

This further we know about Titus for certain. He was Greek.
Paul tells us that in his letter to the Galatians. He was with Paul
when the apostle went to that famous conference at Jerusalem about which
we read in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. Not only was he present at
this conference but he was the storm center of it. There was a heated
discussion at this time as to whether a Gentile Christian should be
made to conform to the Jewish law. Paul said not. Barnabás stood with
Paul, as, of course, did Titus. They won Peter, James and John to
their side. Thus the gospel of Christ continued to be a gospel of grace
instead of being made a gospel of law.

This letter was written about the year A.D. ~. Paul and Titus had been together on a mission in Crete. Paul had passed on to other fields and had left this safe, sane and reliable preacher behind him to set in order the churches that they had recently founded. The situation, as you can readily see from the reading of the letter, was by no means an easy one. But Titus had already established a reputation for being able to handle a situation that required both tact and courage and consecration. The letter is divided in three parts.

1. What Titus is to do.
2. What he is to teach.
3. What he is to be.

PART I.

What he is to do.

After his introduction Paul said, "I leave thee behind in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting." He was to complete the organization of the churches by selecting elders. These elders or bishops were to be overseers or superintendents of the various local churches. A bishop in the New Testament sense is one in charge of one or more congregation. He is the same as an elder. He seems to have been any man in charge of the congregation. Then somewhat as in I Timothy, Paul gives the qualifications for those who are to be chosen as elders.

1. He describes them negatively. There are certain things that a man who is an elder must not do.

   (1) He must not be too fond of having his own way. This is impor-
tant. I have known church leaders that would rather wreck the Church than not to run it. Happy is the man who can have his plan set aside and work in perfect harmony with one that he did not prefer.

(2) An elder must not have a violent temper. It is hard to deal with anybody when you always feel as if you were in a powder magazine or handling gas. Temper and much temper is all right if it is controlled, but let lose it is conducive, as Drummond has said, to more real wretchedness than almost any other form of evil. It is a tragedy to see a man or woman who might be useful spoil themselves by an ungovernable temper.

(3) He is not to be a drinker. Paul had to warn these church members of his against the evil of drunkenness. It was very prevalent then both among men and women.

(4) He must not be a fighter. He must not engage in past-times of which liquor drinking is so fruitful. "Be strong," as it is translated here. That is, he must not be a man given to blows. God cannot use a man who is always wanting to start a row.

(5) He is to be a man who is free from the bondage of money. "Not greedy for filthy lucre." The money slave is about the most hopeless in all the world. When the lust of money gets a hold on a person, the metallic is sure to creep into his life. I think I could count more than one wreck in the ministry that was caused by the love of money.

2. Paul gives the positive requirements for an elder.

(1) He is to be a man of blameless life. Blameless, first of all in his domestic relationship. He is to be the husband of one wife. His children are to be Christians. He is to show himself worthy by being able to lead his own family.

(2) He must be given to hospitality. At that time Christians
could not stop at the ordinary stopping places where accommodations were
given to travelers without being insulted. They could not stop with
the heathens. Therefore, if the saints would not entertain each other,
those making journeys were likely to suffer.

(3) An elder was to be just. Saintly. In fact, he was to have
all the qualities that go to make up a true Christian.

(4) He was to be a man grounded sound in the faith of the Word.
That is, he was to have a firm grip on the truth of the gospel. This
was necessary in order that he might encourage others and that he might
convince or refute his opponents. There was a special need for such
men because of the presence of false teachers who were ruining whole
families by teaching what was false for the love of money.

Then these teachers were to be strong and positive teachers
because of the characteristics of the people of Crete themselves. Paul
quotes one of their own prophets who said, "The Cretians are always
liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." He here gives his own testimony.
This statement is true. That does not mean, of course, that every
Cretian was like that but it does mean that many were like that. There-
fore he tells Titus to rebuke them sharply. It is a strong work. He
is to go after them as a surgeon was to go after a festering limb with
his knife.

3. He tells Titus what to teach.

(1) He is to teach old men to be grave and temperate, sound.
And this word sound means robust or helpful. Sound in faith, in love,
in patience.

(2) The old women he is to instruct not to be slanderers or
drunken, but let live saintly lives that they may themselves be able to instruct the young women. The instruction to be given to the young women is that they are to be discreet, chaste, lovers of their husbands and their children. To be, not keepers at home as is translated, but workers at home. Industrious home makers.

(3) He is to teach the young men to be sober-minded. Sober-minded here does not have its usual meaning. The better translation would be pure-minded. A young man who is pure-minded will be pure every other way. He will be pure in thought and will be pure in act. "For as a man thinketh in his heart so is he." So we see the standard for the young woman is no higher than that for the young man.

(4) He is to teach slaves to be subject to their masters. Not to contradict, not to steal, but they are to adorn the doctrine of God.

What an amazing statement. These people were in one of the most trying situations in the world. They were in Crete where the people were notorious, purloiners. They occupied the most difficult position among the people of Crete. They were slaves. Yet they were to adorn the doctrine of Christ. They were to show its trust. They were to do so by giving a living contribution to it. Here is a piece of music. (This is Dr. Watkins' illustration.) There are a few lines and dots thickly or thinly scattered over the page. It means nothing to me but a master takes hold of it and so plays it as to lift the soul and set the heart to dreaming. Thus he adorns that piece of music.

How are these slaves to adorn the doctrine? This possibility has been brought to them thru Christ. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men has appeared." Since He has come we all of us
including the very slaves are instructed to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world.

(5) He is to teach all people to be obedient to law. To be considerate to one another. To be gentle in their judgments. As a help to that end, they are reminded that if there is any differences between themselves and the ones they condemn, it is by the grace of God. "But after the kindness of God our Saviour appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost which was poured on us abundantly thru Jesus Christ our Saviour."

PART III.

Finally he tells Titus what he is to be.

1. He is to be an example. He is to show the young men the kind of lives they are to live as Christians by living such a life himself

2. He is to command respect. "Let no man despise thee." That sounds like a pretty big order. Respect is an exceedingly necessary something for anybody who would lead. It is necessary for one who would be an effective Christian. Can we compel respect? There are many things that we should like to have that we cannot compel. We cannot compel anybody to agree with us. We cannot compel admiration. We cannot always compel love. But we can, says Paul, command respect. "See to it that you do." "Let no man despise thee."

Now as to qualities that command respect I do not intend to speak at this time. I trust that you will think them for yourself. Nothing is more essential than that you command a wholesome respect.
This letter was written to a group of Jewish Christians. It is not a general letter; it was addressed to some particular Church. The name of the Church, however, is not known. Nor do we know the author of this letter. For a long time Paul was accounted the author. This belief, however, has been thoroughly discredited. The style is quite different from that of Paul. The best guess as to the authorship is probably Apollos.

It is evident that the letter was written by a scholar. It was written by a man who was intimately acquainted with the Jewish law and ritual. It was written by one who appreciated these, and who was willing to accept anything that was good in them. The author's position is that the law was God's best till the gospel came. The style is that of an orator. Now it so happens that Apollos was about the leading orator of the early Church. He was a man of fine training. He seems, therefore, to have been the man most capable of writing this polished and beautiful letter.

The letter was written in order to encourage this Jewish Church. As former Jews they were finding the Christian life very difficult. They were sorely tempted to give over the fight for the following reasons. (1) Their old ritual had been beautiful and stately. That of the Christians was new and very meager. (2) The fact that Christ had been put to death in a shameful manner gave them great offense. (3) They were being bitterly persecuted. Now it was to strengthen these who were about to fall that the author wrote this letter.

PART I.

1. The first big fact he seeks to bring to their attention by
way of encouragement is the superiority of Jesus. The fact that He
was crucified shows that He was absolutely supreme. Then he proceeds
to tell wherein he was supreme.

2. He was superior to the angels. To no angel did God ever say,
"Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." But so did He speak
to Jesus Christ. First he was superior to the prophets. The first
word in this book is God. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners,
spoke in time past to the fathers thru the prophets, Hath in these last
days spoken unto us by his Son," That is Jesus is the final revelation
of God. The prophet was God's messenger. He heard the word at God's
lips and warned men from Him. Jesus was God's message. The prophet
brought a revelation from God. Jesus was Himself a revelation of God.
Therefore, He was superior to the prophets.

3. He was superior to Moses. To the Jews Moses stood at the very
summit of human greatness. He was the climax. To disobey the law of
Moses the author tells us was to die without mercy. But here was one
greater than Moses, for though Moses was faithful as a servant, Jesus
Christ was faithful as a Son.

4. He was greater than Joshua who led the Israelites into the land
of promise, for though Joshua succeeded in bringing his people into Canaan
he was not able to give them rest. This ability belonged to Jesus and to
Him only. You notice in the fourth chapter Joshua is called Jesus. "For
if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of
another day." There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." That rest is to come at the hands of one greater than Joshua, even Jesus.

5. Jesus is greater than Aaron. Aaron was the High Priest. He
was the one who offered the sacrifices for the people. He had a position of peculiar honor. But Jesus was greater as a priest than Aaron. The sacrifices that Aaron offered were but shadows. The sacrifice of Jesus was a reality. The sacrifice of Aaron had to be repeated. Jesus offered Himself once for all. Jesus the crucified Christ is supreme over all.

PART II.

It is this Jesus who is bringing in a new and better day. There were many earnest and thoughtful and pious Jews who were naturally greatly disturbed at the passing of their old ritual. There is a natural clinging to that which is old. There is a natural fear of that which is new. Of course, this clinging to the old and the fearing of the new is a characteristic of those who are old rather than the young. This author tells them not to be afraid of the new. Of course, as a matter of fact, whether we fear and fight the new or whether we give it welcome, it is coming anyway. But he tells them that the new day is better. He says it is better for the following reasons.

1. The new day has brought a better hope. This word better is a characteristic of the book. It is used here more than all the rest of the New Testament. The hope held out under the old dispensation was that of rest in a physical kingdom. The hope of the new is for a spiritual kingdom.

2. The new day has brought a better covenant. The old covenant was a law written upon parchment. It was coming externally to the individual. The new covenant is to be written upon the heart. It is to be a fact of experience. It is to bring a personal knowledge of
HEBREWS

God. Under the covenant when it is realized men will no longer say, "Know the Lord," for all shall know Him. They shall know Him thru the forgiveness of sin. For He will forgive their transgressions and remember them no more.

3. There is to be a better tabernacle. The old tabernacle was material. The new must be spiritual and heavenly.

4. The new day has brought a better sacrifice. The old sacrifice was a mere symbol. It had no saving power. The new is able to cleanse. The blood of Christ, the author tells us, speaketh better than the blood of Abel. The blood of Abel was a cry for punishment. The blood of Christ is a cry for pardon.

5. The new day has brought a better resurrection. The resurrection of the Old Testament was the mere bringing back to life, as is the case with the son of the Shunemite woman. The resurrection of the New Testament is something better. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. "Cling not to the old," he seems to say, "for the new is better. God is ever bringing His people to something better. He is not going toward an anti-climax but toward a climax.

PART III.

Christ brings this better day thru his work as High Priest. This author speaks of Jesus as at once the Priest and the sacrifice. His conception is thus unique. It is held by no other New Testament writer. Jesus was fitted for His task. first by His humanity. Why
HEBREWS

did Jesus become man? Why did He take the nature of Abraham, as the author states, instead of the nature of angels. He did so, according to this writer for the following reasons:

1) He became man in order that he might die for the sins of the people. He came into the world, according to Jesus Himself, to give his life a ransom for many. He became man that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man. His humanity was essential if he is to die for the people and His death is essential because, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."

2) He became man that by dying He might destroy him that hath the power of death, even the devil and that He might deliver us who thru the fear of death are subject to bondage. The power of the devil was broken in the death of Jesus. Death itself was destroyed. Since we know that Jesus passed thru death without hurt we are sure that it cannot destroy us.

3) Christ became man in order to be able to sympathize with us and to help us in our struggles and temptations. "We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." "But in that He Himself suffered being tempted He is able to succor them that are being tempted."

4) He became man that coming into sympathy with us He might open a way of approach to God. Since He understands us, since He knows exactly how to sympathize with us, "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

2. But if Jesus is to be the High Priest that we require, He
must not only be man but He must be far more. Such was Jesus. This is indicated by the fact,

(1) He was sinless. He was tempted like as we are yet without sin. Then the author says that He thru the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto God. The High Priest that was only human had to sacrifice for his own sin. To Christ this was not necessary. He knew no sin.

(2) Christ's sacrifice was absolutely sufficient for the sins of the whole world. He tasted death for every man.

(3) It was sufficient for all time. "By one offering of Himself He perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

PART IV.

Then there were certain definite duties that came as a result of this new day.

1. We are to take heed to the things that we have heard. This we are to do for the following reasons. Then the author names seven lest's. We are to take heed:

(1) Lest we drift away.

(2) Lest there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from God. That is to drift is to get separated from God.

(3) Lest ye be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. To get away from God is to become hardened.

(4) Lest there being left you a promise of entering into rest any of you should come short of it.

(5) Then in the 12th chapter, lest you fail of the grace of God. That is back-slide.
(6) Lest a root of bitterness spring up to trouble you.

(7) Lest there be any fornicator or any profane person as Esau.

2. We are to live our lives thru faith. This author quotes again that famous passage, "The just shall live by faith." He tells us what faith is. Above all else he illustrates that in the lives of the heroes of faith. Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Faith is daring to obey when appearances are against you. Those who dare to obey always win. For such there can be no real defeat.

3. We are to give ourselves to the task of Christian living. "Let us labor," he says in one place. Again, "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doeth so easily beset, and let us run with patience the race set before us."

4. Don't worry. Be content with such things as you have for the Lord hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Therefore, we may boldly say, "The Lord is my help I shall not fear what man shall do unto me."

5. Be willing to share reproach of Christ. That is what Moses did. That is what you must do. Do not blush because you worship a crucified Lord. Let us dare to go to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."
The book of James was written by James the Lord's brother. There are three James in the New Testament. James, the brother of John, James, the son of Alpheus and James, the brother of Jesus. James, the brother of John, seems to have been the leader of the Church in Jerusalem till the time of his martyrdom. At that time James, the author of this letter, took his place.

Just when James became a follower of Jesus Christ, we are not told. Of this we may be sure, that he was not a disciple at the time of James' death. He seems to have been convinced of the divinity of Jesus by the resurrection. "He appeared unto James, no doubt, when both the brothers were living. James was accounted for the more religious man of the two. James was a thoroughgoing fundamentalist, and Jesus was a modernist. At least that would have been the description given them at that day. But with his conversion, James at once came to a place of leadership. He was a man of real force and deep moral earnestness and of rugged commonsense.

Martin Luther had no patience with this letter. He called it an epistle of straw. The reason for his frank antagonism was that he thought that it taught a doctrine of salvation by works instead of salvation thru faith. And Luther, as you know, brought in the Reformation by preaching, the justification by faith only.

But when we come to understand James we find that he does not contradict Paul or Luther at all. Had St. Paul and James talked things over they would have been in perfect agreement. This is true in spite of the fact that Paul says, "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight." James on the other hand says,
James.

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (2:24) How can these two seemingly contrary statements be reconciled? The answer is very simple. Paul and James use the words faith and works in entirely different meanings.

What did Paul mean by saying that we are justified by faith only? What is faith? Faith is not merely an intellectual assent. It carries with it also an assent of the will. To believe in a bank, according to Paul, would not only mean that you thought the bank safe, but that you actually put your money into it. James, on the other hand, is speaking merely of an intellectual belief. For instance, he says, "The devils believe and tremble." Certainly they do not exercise saving faith, else they would be saved. They simply accept the fact of God or the fact of Jesus as true, but do not respond by personal surrender.

Then when Paul uses works, he does not mean what James means. When Paul says, "By the works of the law shall no man be justified," he means just this, that no man can be saved by conformity to the ritualistic law. He cannot be saved by anything that he does. However, having been saved, Paul bids us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. But by works James means those good deeds that are the natural outcome of real faith. He means simply that faith, when it is genuine leads to action. If it does not lead to action then it is not genuine.

The whole teaching of this letter then instead of putting a low estimate upon faith, makes it fundamental. Everything in the Christian life depends upon faith. The teaching of the epistle is
James.

is summed up very largely in the twenty-second verse of the first chapter. "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." Listen to the word and believe it and show that you believe it by your conduct. That is the message of this practical James. It was good for his day. It is equally good for ours.

Now if we have faith, saving faith, it will show itself, James tells us, in our conduct in at least four relations.

PART I.

1. It will show itself by our conduct in the midst of trial and temptation. "Count it all joy," James begins his epistle by saying, "when you fall into divers temptations." Temptation here means trial or testing. We are to be joyful in the midst of trials, because trials endured make for patience and perfection of character. But the measure of our capacity to endure trials cheerfully and joyfully is the measure of our faith. When we begin to grow bitter in the midst of trials it means that our faith is growing weak.

Then faith makes for steadfastness in times of temptation. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive the Crown of life." While James adds, "Let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." (Jas. 1:13) There are trials that are sent of God but temptations never are. Temptation is a call downward. The call of God is always upward. But the power to resist temptation depends upon our faith. It was so that Jesus won. It is so that we too must win.
We must show our faith by the right control and use of our tongue. James is above all others the apostle of the tongue. If you want to make a special study of the tongue then live with James. Because that is the case, every one of us ought to read James every day.

There are certain pertinent facts that he calls very impressively to our minds.

1. The tongue is one of the acid tests of religion. "If any man among you seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth how own heart, this man's religion is vain." That is, true Christianity and the unbridled tongue do not go together. To possess an unbridled and uncontrolled tongue, is a very positive indication, according to James, that the whole life is unbridled and uncontrolled.

2. Not only is the control of the tongue very vital, it is also very difficult. To that every one will agree who has ever undertaken the task. Every beast, he tells us, has been tamed but this is as nothing in comparison with the difficulty of taming the tongue. Therefore, we ought to pray morning, noon and night, that the Lord will keep the door of our lips.

3. Not only is the tongue difficult to control, but for that and other reasons, it is a source of endless struggle. It is a deadly poison. It poisons the talker and it poisons the one it talks about. It sets on fire the whole course of nature and is itself set on fire of hell. James evidently has in mind two kinds of tongues. The tongue fired by heavenly fire as on the day of Pentecost and the tongue fired by hell fire like that one used to abuse each other and
James.
to talk about our neighbors.

4. Then James gives us some practical directions for the use of our tongue.

(1) He says use them sparingly. Be slow to speak. How many times I have wished that I had obeyed that command when it was too late. Surely there is a time when silence is golden. Happy is he who knows how to keep his mouth shut at the right time.

(2) "Sware not." "Above all," he says, "sware not." James draws rather extensively from the sermon on the Mount. Jesus, you know, forgids swaring. "You have heard that it was said of them of old time, thou shalt not foresware thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord by oath, but I say unto you, sware not at all." The evil of swaring is that it leads to lying. There were certain oaths that the Jews had a right to break, others that were binding. Therefore, we consider that what is said under oath is more binding than what is said without oath, but there is absolutely no sanction for this either by scripture or common sense. Any man that will tell a lie will sware a lie. A man who will tell a lie is a liar and you cannot trust him anywhere.

(3) Speak not evil one of the other. There is little use to comment on that. It covers us all with shame and confusion.

(4) Out of the same mouth comes blessing and cursing. James would have the tongue put to the higher use and to that only.

PART III.

Then we are to practice our faith in the matter of prayer. James gives some strong and bracing teaching on prayer.

1. The lack of it means spiritual poverty. "Ye have not
James.

because ye ask not." Or to give Waymouth's translation, "You have not because you do not pray."

2. He tells us some of the advantages that result from prayer.

(1) It brings material advantages. Elijah brought rain to a drought-stricken country by prayer. Then it brings health to those who are sick. "The prayer of faith," says James, "shall save the sick." That does not mean that God promises unconditionally to cure all who are sick. It does mean, however, that there are times when He gives definite answer to definite prayer.

(2) Prayer brings comfort. "If any of you are in trouble, let him pray."

(3) Prayer brings wisdom. "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God."

3. Then he tells us how to pray successfully.

(1) "The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

(2) We must pray from right motives. God does not answer base and ignoble prayer. "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amis.that ye may consume it on your own lust."

(3) Except in praying for pardon we must be right in ourselves. It is the fervent prayer of the righteous that availeth. No sin unrepentent of makes prayer impossible. "If I regard iniquity in my heart God will not hear me." Therefore, the sinner who is praying the prayer, "God be merciful unto me," has no hope of the hearing if he is not willing to put away his sin and be right in his own heart.

(4) Prayer must be offered in faith. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."
PART IV.

Then we are to show our faith in our daily conduct toward others.

1. We must refuse to be respected of persons. If we are true Christians we will honor all men for who they are, but we shall not be bowing and cringing before the rich and treating the poor in contempt. James forbids us to give a preferred seat to the man whose only claim to it is that he is wealthy, while we force his brother in poverty to sit at our feet.

2. We must be just. We must be fair in our dealings for those who work for us. He tells the rich to weep and houl because the unpaid wages of those who have toiled for them are crying into the ears of God.

3. If any one wanders from the Fold, we must be eager to seek and to save. "Let him know that he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." That is certainly an arresting declaration. How eagerly you would undertake to save a friend of yours from physical death. How slow we are to seek to save from spiritual death. Then James gives us what to his mind is the very essence of religion inwardly and outwardly. "Pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world." That is, religion is personal purity, inner holiness and outward loving service.
I PETER

There is nothing more sure in the New Testament than that Peter wrote this book. It is literally saturated with expressions that have grown out of his own experience with Jesus Christ. For instance, he speaks of believers as living stones. Jesus at one time called him a rock. Christ Himself is the chief cornerstone. But to those who refuse to accept Him He becomes a rock of stumbling. So He was to Peter the very day on which Peter refused Him.

Again Peter urges that we be clothed with humility. We are to put on the savior's apron of humility. He is thinking of the day when Jesus girded Himself and washed the disciples' feet. He is thinking also with shame of his own pride and the pride of his friends on that occasion. He is no doubt thinking also of his boastfulness when he said, "Though all other shall offend, yet will I never be offended." He speaks of Christ as the chief shepherd and of himself and others as the under shepherds, bearing in mind that Jesus had told him to feed His lambs and to tend his sheep.

There is a tenderness and sympathy about this letter far surpassing the one we studied last week. The epistle of James would have given some offense possibly to the Gentiles. Paul's epistles would give some offense to the Jews. There is nothing in this to offend either. It is beautiful and tenderly Christian. It could only have been written by a man who had greatly repented and who had greatly experienced the forgiving grace of Christ. The purpose of the book is to strengthen the character and faith of the Christians scattered throughout the Roman empire. Nero was on the throne. Per-
secution is abroad. Many of them are having to suffer. Greater suffering still is yet ahead. They need steadfastness. That they may have this they needed deep and keen appreciation of the salvation that has been brought to them thru the gospel. It is a salvation so wonderful that it was the theme of the prophets' prophesies and even the angels desire to look into it.

PART I.

Peter reminds them of the source of their salvation. It was born of the grace of God. In the last chapter he says that he has written briefly to exhort and testify that this is the true grace of God. The grace of God that issues in salvation seems to be the real theme of the book. It is in a sense Peter's text.

This salvation that has come thru the grace of God has come at the price of suffering. James does not mention the Cross. Peter fairly haunts us with it. He reminds us that we were redeemed not with corruptable things such as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot. Again, "Who Himself bear our sins in His own body upon the tree, that we being dead to sin might live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed." Then he reminds us again that Christ suffered for us, "The just for the unjust that He might bring us to God." Peter cannot remind his hearers too often that they have been redeemed by the blood of the Christ.
I Peter.

PART II.

Then Peter emphasizes the three tenses of our salvation.

1. There is the past tense. If you are a Christian your conversation is a historic fact. This is true whether it was sudden or whether it was gradual. There was a time in some yesterday when you came into the knowledge of Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. There came a time when you could say, "My Lord and my God." Peter speaks of our salvation as a thing already accomplished in the past. "Seeing ye have perfected your hearts thru obedience to the truth." For this reason the Christian has a right to say I have been saved.

2. There is the present tense of salvation. Nobody can afford to rest upon experience that is only a memory. There are those who could say, "I was saved," who cannot say,"I am saved." Peter emphasizes the present tense of salvation. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see/not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith through the salvation of your souls."

"Receiving," That is an arresting word. The salvation of these saints is more than a memory. It is more than a hope. It is a present possession. It is a possession that is going on in the here and now. They are in the receiving line. They can not only sing, "At the Cross where I first saw the light," they can do even better. They can sing, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine."

The present tense of salvation is further brought out by the word kept. "Who are kept by the power of God thru faith." No doubt they were kept yesterday. They are expecting to be kept tomorrow but they are actually being kept now. This keeping is inclusive. It
I Peter.

takes in all departments of life. They are being kept in joy and in
sorrow, in youth and in old age, in times of persecution and in times
of applause. Salvation is within the present vivid vital experience.

3. Then there is the future tense of salvation. The Christian
can say, "I have been saved. I am being saved. I shall be saved."
It is a beautiful memory, it is a present experience, it is a blessed
hope. This present salvation then includes a present keeping. "Who
are kept by the power of God thru faith unto salvation, ready to be
revealed at the last day." While we are saved now our salvation is
not complete. We are not perfect in character. We have not reached
a perfect environment. One day in a perfect heaven we shall be like
Him for we shall see Him as he is. That is the salvation to which we
look forward in the great tomorrow.

PART III.

Then Peter emphasizes the privileges and the obligations
that are the outcome of this present salvation. Being saved, according
to this apostle is a marvelous privilege. It is not to be wondered at
that the prophets should foretell it or that the angels should desire
to stoop and look into it. What are some of these privileges and
obligations?

1. Salvation means a new character and a new standing before
God. To be a Christian is to be born anew. "Being born again, not of
corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth
and abideth forever." It means also that we stand in a new relation
to God. We are a Christian race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a
people belonging peculiarly to God.
I Peter.

2. This new life is a life of joy. It is a wonderful emphasis that Peter puts on the joy of salvation. This is especially true when we consider how much he has to say also about suffering. Then no amount of suffering can kill his abundant joy. "When ye have greatly rejoiced .... when having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." That is a note that is entirely too lacking in the religion of our modern day. Yet our circumstances are almost infinitely better than theirs.

3. The new life is to be a life of love. "Seeing ye have purified your hearts in obeying the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren." I suppose you have been conscious many a time that we are tragically lacking in love. What is the remedy? It is not making up our minds that we are going to love. Love cannot be commanded, it is an effect. It grows out of an obedient surrender to Jesus Christ. To share His nature is to share His love.

4. We are to cultivate an appetite for the best things. Now an appetite can be cultivated. There are some things I can eat with considerable relish now that I used to abhor. I decided they were good for me and so I cultivated an appetite for them. "Cultivate an appetite for the sincere milk of the word," says Peter. Learn to love God's word more, for if you do not love it you are not likely to feed upon it. And if you fail to feed upon it you will surely fail to grow. You cannot grow by wishing to. In order to have growth you must feed. In order to eat you must have an appetite. An appetite can be cultivated. Learn to love the best instead of the second best or the worst.
I Peter

5. Obey the law. Peter is not giving his endorsement to the character of Nero. He does believe that government is of divine origin. We are to obey for the Lord's sake. Then we are to obey the laws of family life. Wives are not to govern their husbands. Husbands are to reverence their wives, remembering that, as Peter says, "they are the weaker vessel." Now I hope you wont get angry with Peter. He has the masculine viewpoint. I do not know how far he meant that weakness to extend. He may have meant that they were the weaker only. That being the case we all say amen.

That is a rather unique term and gives to the argument in his appeal to husbands for their right treatment of their wives. You are to give honor to your wife that your prayers be not hindered. Now I do not think that Peter means by this that if we are too busy with them that they will break in on our private devotion. He does mean that the sin against your wife will hinder your prayers just as it always does regardless of who the victim is.

6. If we are Christians we are to practice stewardship. "Whatever you have," says Peter, "administer it as a steward of the manifold grace of God." That is, nothing you have is your own, it all belongs to God. Use your life, your influence, your property as His trustee, as His steward.

7. Refuse to worry. "Cashing all your care upon Him for He careth for you." If He is carrying your burden then there is no use for you to carry it too. "Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there."

8. We are to show forth the perfection of Him who has called us
I Peter

out of darkness into His marvelous light. That is the very sum of all our Christian duty. And what a high standard it is. By what we are, but what we do, we are to show the world how winsome and gracious and loveable Jesus Christ is. If we do not show them, most of them will never know.

PART IV.

How is this wonderful salvation to be ours? Here Peter and Paul and James all agree. It is in response to that faith that leads to obedience. "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." It is by faith that we accept Jesus Christ. It is by faith that we are kept. "The just shall live by faith." It is by faith that we are to render our service to God and man and it is thru faith that we are to enter upon our eternal reward. May we all be kept by the power of God thru faith unto that salvation that is ready to be revealed at the last day.
II PETER

The author of II Peter may or may not have been the Simon Peter that we know. The spelling of the name is a little different from Simon the Apostle. However, this letter has been credited to the Apostle Peter by a vast number of the saints through a long period of years. There is no positive saying whether he wrote it or did not. There is nothing in the letter itself that claims him as the author. Therefore, if you decide that he did not write it, remember that you are not discrediting the scripture in the least. The Bible does not say he did.

The purpose of the letter is obvious. The author is not undertaking to state any new truth. He is simply reminding them of what they already knew. He tells them that he thinks it wise as long as he lives in this tent to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance. He knows that soon he is to put away his tent. (This is a wonderfully expressive way of speaking of his death.) Therefore, he desires to leave them something that will help them to remember after he himself is gone.

PART I

The first fact that he wants them to bear in mind is the absolute reliability of the gospel message that they have received. He wants them to know for a certainty that he and his fellow ministers have not followed cunningly devised fables. The gospel message is thoroughly dependable. It is authenticated by the following facts.

1. He himself claims to have been an eye and an ear witness to its truth. He is not speaking here simply of the fact that he knew Jesus personally. Of course, that is implied. But in addition
to this personal knowledge he was with Jesus in the Holy Mount.
Then he heard the voice of God saying, "This is my beloved son in whom
I am well pleased." He is sure of Christ, therefore, for the double
reason that he was personally acquainted with him and that God Himself
bore witness to Him.

2. The truth proclaimed is authenticated by the Old Testament.
Peter speaks of it as a more sure word of prophesy. Possibly it means
a more permanent word, because the Old Testament is not more sure
certainly than the very testimony of God Himself. But Peter does set
his seal upon the fact that the Old Testament bears witness to the
truth of the gospel. Of course, this truth is yet more clearly seen

The reliability of the scriptures is emphasized by Peter.
He believes that the scriptures are trust-worthy because they did not
come simply by the will of man, but that holy men of old spake as
they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Since the Bible is an inspired
book, the author urges that we give heed to it as to a light shining
in a dark place.

3. By giving heed we shall discover the supreme and final proof
of the truthfulness of the gospel. We shall come into a personal
saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. That is the proof without which
all other proofs are vain. We are to give heed to the scriptures till
the day dawn and the Day Star arises in our hearts. A man may be sure
of the truthfulness of the Bible and yet be in his sin. But no man
can have the Day Star arise in his heart without being made absolutely
sure of the truth of the gospel. To have this experience is to
escape the corruptions that are in the world thru lust. It is not only
II Peter

to escape but it is to come to be a partaker of the divine nature.

PART II.

Next the Apostle would have us remember some of the duties that result from our possessing this great certainty. Since we are so sure of the truth of our gospel, since we are so sure of Him who is the gospel, even Jesus Christ, what is to be the outcome?

1. We are to be diligent to make our calling and election sure. Peter did not believe in the final perseverance of the saints. He believed that anybody might be elected to salvation who would repent of his sins. He believed that anybody might be called into service who would volunteer, but he also believed that if we are to finally reach our heavenly home, we have got to be diligent in our living of the Christian life.

2. This diligence must express itself in growth. We are to grow in grace. Peter emphasizes the arithmetic of Christianity. We escape the corruptions in the world. That is by subtraction. But subtraction is not enough there must be addition. So to faith we must add virtue. The better translation is in your faith or thru your faith supply virtue or moral courage. To courage your knowledge. Both the knowledge born of experience and the knowledge born of study. To knowledge we are to add self-control. To self-control patience. To patience piety. To piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness love.

The outcome of this growth in grace tells both upon ourselves and upon the work. It has four beautiful results.
II Peter.

(1) It makes is active. The word barren means idle. The growing Christian cannot be an idle Christian. He must have exercise. The reason many in the Church are such utter moral invalids is because they do not get enough exercise to live.

(2) Being active they are also fruitful. A fruitless Church member is a common experience, but a fruitless Christian is an impossibility. In proof of this we have the emphatic word of Jesus. "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

(3) A growing Christian is a steadfast Christian. Peter said, if you do these things, that is, if you grow and if you work and if you are fruitful you will never fail. How true that is and how practical. It is the idle, useless saint that ceases to be a saint. An active growing Christian becomes stronger and more steadfast with every step of the way.

(4) The growing, active, fruitful, steadfast Christian is the one who is going to receive the final reward. To such, declares the apostle, an abundant entrance shall be administered into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

But suppose we fail to grow. Suppose we become idle and fruitless. Then what follows. Two very tragic results. First, we forget that we were purged from our old sins. It is easy to forget a spiritual blessing. Bunyan was right in saying that Forgetful Green is the most dangerous place on the road from the City of Destruction to Mount Zion. Second, if we forget we become near-sighted. We are
II Peter.

blind and cannot see afar off. That is we see only what is near. One of the tragedies of the world today is near-sightedness. That was what ruined the rich fool. He got his barns so close up before his eyes that he could not see the things of eternity. That was the tragedy of the man with the muckrake. He was so busy with the straw of the barnyard that he could not see the angel that was poised above his head that was waiting to crown him.

PART III.

The third fact that the apostle would have us remember is that false prophets were coming. They have come in the past, he declares, and will come in the future.

1. He tells us something of the character of these prophets. (1) They are springs without water. They promise refreshment but do not give any. (2) They are men given over to the lusts of the flesh. (3) They are men dominated by a passion for gain. They are men like Balaam in character. He sold his soul for worldly gain.

2. The work of these prophets is a work of destruction. They do nothing but harm. They cause the way by which Peter means the Way of Life, the gospel of Christ, to be evil spoken of. They bring Christianity into disrepute.

Not only do they hurt the faith of those who do not profess it but they cause others to fall. Peter speaking out of his own experience believed in the possibility of back-sliding. There is no more ringing warning in the Bible than that which is found in this book. "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world
through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Nothing could be more emphatic than this. Peter would have them remember that Jesus Christ is coming again in judgment. He reminds us of the fact that there were those then as there would be later who said, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were." Their reasoning was this, Jesus has not come yet, therefore, he will never come.

But Peter reminds them that because an event is delayed does not mean that it will never take place. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "A thousand years with Him is as a day and a day is as a thousand years." But when the time comes for action, he always adds the reason for His delay is that He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

The coming of the Lord is to be a time of judgment for the individual and destruction of the world. But this destruction does not mean annihilation. The world was destroyed by a flood but its destruction was only a cleansing. The second destruction is to be by fire. But this too is to be a cleansing. For we look for a new heaven and
II Peter.

a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The letter closes with a practical appeal. Since we are facing a coming judgment, what manner of lives ought we to live? "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found in him in peace, without spot, and blameless. What might happen any day we should be prepared for every day.
II JOHN

This letter is exceedingly brief. It has only thirteen verses. Eight of them are in large measure repetitions of verses to be found in the first epistle. This leaves room for little that is original in this brief epistle.

It has long been a matter of controversy as to the one or ones to whom this letter is addressed. Some have thought that it was written to a church who is spoken of as an elect lady. This is claimed because John states that this lady is loved by all who know the truth. But the best of modern scholarship is against this. It is now commonly believed that this letter was written to a single individual. Some Christian woman of the early Church. As such it affords the beautiful example of the private correspondence of the Christians of that day. The outline of the letter is very simple.

PART I.

The first three verses are taken up with the greetings. John introduces himself, not as an apostle, that was always necessary in the case of Paul for often the fact of his apostleship was not known. It was not necessary in the case of John. All Christians knew him or knew about him. He simply introduces himself as the Elder. That means that he was a presbyter, that he was an old man. In fact, that he was now the oldest and possibly the only one of the Lord's apostles.

The motive of the letter, as of all that this great saint did, was love. The letter is addressed to the elect lady and her children whom I love in the truth. Truth is written with small letters in our revised version. It would possibly be better were it in capitols.
II JOHN

John means by loving this woman and her children in the truth, that the love that he has for them is inspired by the truth as it is in Jesus. That is, he loves them as a Christian. His love is born of the love of Christ. Then he adds the usual salutation which is stated in language a bit different from that in which we usually find it. "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."

1. Grace. Grace is love's stooping to lift. The grace of God is the fountain source from which all streams of blessings flow. Grace is the love of God to those who have nothing good to say for themselves. We love folks because of our relation to them or because there is something loveable in them. God loves folks not simply for what they are but because of what He is. His nature and His name is love. Therefore, He cannot help loving us whether we are loveable or not.

2. Mercy. Mercy is the stream that flows out from this fountain of grace. Since God is gracious He delights in mercy. We do not have to beg for mercy, we only have to accept it. Whenever one is willing to accept he meets with abundant pardon. "The quality of mercy is not strained." Mercy is God's free gift. It is man's deepest need. "Have mercy upon me, O God." That is the universal prayer. It is stated in the New Testament in a little different language. "God be merciful to me the sinner."

3. Peace. Peace is the result of this mercy that is born of the grace of God. When mercy flows into the heart that heart finds peace. There is peace between man and God. There is peace between man and his brother. There is peace between man and his environment. There is then the possibility of the realization of St. Paul's great exhortation.
II JOHN

"In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

PART II

Then follows a word of commendation. That is found in the fourth verse. "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth." He does not congratulate this mother upon the fact that all her children are Christians. He congratulates her rather that some of them are living true Christian lives. It is hard to know just how to interpret this. It may be that this mother had not herself been converted till her children had grown up. Therefore, it was hardly to be expected that all of them should become Christians. It may be that like many another good woman she was married to a heathen who counteracted to some degree the wholesome influence that she had in the home. Any way, instead of bewailing the fact that some of her children had not yet come into the light, he rejoices greatly that some of them have. Those who had done so possibly had many difficulties to overcome.

PART III.

The next section of the letter is given up to warnings and exhortations.

1. He urges upon this elect lady the necessity of Christian love.
II JOHN

John can never get away from that. He must always come back to it again and again. Of course, love is the one essential of Christianity. Without it Christianity is just an improved form of legalism. Nothing is of worth without love. "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned and have not love it profiteth me nothing." On the other hand, if I have love and love only, I have enough.

2. John warns against heretics and tells how to treat them.
The heresy against which he is having to fight at this time centers, as usually around the person of Jesus. But this heresy does not consist of the denial of the deity of Jesus but in the denial of his humanity. It has been well said that the gospel of John is written to show that Jesus is the Christ. His epistles were written to show that Christ is Jesus.

Now he says of this heretic, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed, for he that bideth him Godspeed is partaker of his deeds. That is a sane and wise warning that has been misconstrued millions of times much to the hurt of the Church. Traveling preachers of that day had almost of necessity to be entertained in the homes of Christians. John knew that to take a false teacher in his home and set at his feet might be dangerous. Therefore, he warns against it.

But since that day this passage has been taken to give professing Christians a right to assume an altogether unbrotherly attitude toward those upon whom they looked as heretics. We are not to listen to what we believe to be false teaching. We are to hate heresy but we are certainly not to hate the heretic. We are to hate sin but
II JOHN

never the sinner. The sadest crimes of all human history have been committed in defense of what somebody thought to be the truth. No man has a right to assume an unchristian attitude toward his brother whatever may be the faith or non faith of that brother.

Then there is a final warning that to me is the most impressive in the letter. It is found in the eighth verse. "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." John is warning against a tragedy that happens over and over again both in national and individual life. A mission often loses its past. So does the individual. When Jericho was captured it was never to be rebuilt. There was a curse against its rebuilding. Its ruins were to stand as a monument to the faith that had overcome. The first step was taken to the conquest of Jerusalem. Its rebuilding showed that its religion had begun to decay. It showed as another has pointed out that a nation was losing its past.

We are in danger in the United States of losing those things which we have wrought. Thru conflict and tragedy we have brought a dry nation into being. But thru lack of wholesome public sentiment, thru lack of loyalty to our own past we are in danger of throwing away the victory that we have won.

What was the matter with Demas? He lost the things that he had wrought. He threw away the beautiful experience of his yesterday. Paul took the opposite direction. He was loyal to his past. After he had been a Christian for a quarter of a century he said with a kind of holy triumph, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."

"Look to yourselves." It is a solemn warning. Many a man as
he grows old grows in hopelessness, in faithlessness and cynicism and despair. Others grow in sweetness and in light. There are some that grow more mellow and more tender with the passing of the years. The same sorrows and disappointments that sour others sweeten them. They look to themselves and refuse to lose the things that they have wrought. It is a wise and wholesome word for every one of us.

PART IV.

Then follows a brief conclusion. "Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full."

The beautiful purpose of the letter is the significant point. Why is he seeking to visit this home or this Church. Not for any selfish reason, only for this that their joy may be full. What a beautiful old saint. He has been tried under the Cross of the Christ. He has leisure to think only of how he may enrich the lives of others. Happy is he whose presence helps others to fullness of joy.
III JOHN

This is a very short personal letter. It is in all probability the last word we have from a man who knew Jesus personally. It was written near the end of the first century when the apostle was a very old man. He was probably a resident of Ephesus at the time of the writing of this letter.

The letter concerns itself mainly with two personalities. One of them represents the best type of church official; the other one of the worst. Gaius is about all that we could desire in the way of a church official. But from a man of the type of Diotrephes we cannot but pray to be delivered. The Gaius was first in the letter we will look at Diotrephes first. We do not wish to close the message with him. He would leave too bad a taste in our mouths.

I

Diotrephes is the type of church official that did not become extinct in the first century. He is with us still. That fact will not be so surprising to some as that he found a place in the church in the days of his youth. But we must face the fact that as far away as that church is from ourselves, it was by no means perfect. It had Diotrephes in it who was a thorough-going troublemaker.

1. He was a troublemaker because of his selfish ambition. Now ambition in itself is not bad. We ought to be ambitious to be useful. We ought to be ambitions to serve. But to be ambitious simply to get honor for ourselves is wrong, altogether wrong. The Bible seems to hint that it was ambition that changed Lucifer, God of the morning, into the devil. It was ambition that made Napoleon the curse of his day.
Ambition played its bloody part in the late war. It has wrought moral ruin of many a choice soul.

"O Cromwell fling ambition, etc.

He desires to have preeminence, John tells us. If he is not chairman of the committee he will not serve. If he is not consulted about an enterprise he will oppose it. He must be the leader or the thing is not worth the doing. Such a man is a menace to himself and to others. Such a man is always headed for a fall. He usually drops like the frog who was being carried to a warm climate by the wild geese. You remember the frog asked the geese to take him. They consented if he would invent a way. The frog came forward with a strong. A goose took each end of the string in its mouth. The frog with his mouth laid hold of the middle. Thus they set out. As they passed over a farmer he looked up in admiration and said, "Who invented that?" The frog could not keep back the news. "I invented that," he answered and the string slipped and the frog piled at the farmers feet.

Now in order to achieve his personal ambition Diotrephes became genuinely antichristian in his conduct. John makes at least four different charges against him.

(1) He refuses to receive the apostle himself. That is, this trouble-maker will not accept the authority of John the apostle. Authority here is not used in the ecclesiastical sense. He will not recognize the right of John to speak for his Lord. He does not concede that he is a real apostle of Jesus. He pretends that he is not genuine.

(2) Not only does he refuse to receive John, not only does he discredit him in his own mind, but he does his best to injure his reputation.
III JOHN

John says that he is "prating against us with malicious words." Diotrephes is a tattler; he is a gossiper, he is a slanderer, he is a reputation thief. He looks on John as a rival. He will lie about him in the hope of so besmirching his reputation as to spoil his influence with the local church.

(3) He will not receive the missionaries that have come from John. He will not welcome them into his home. He neglects the solemn duty of hospitality.

(4) He not only refuses to do his duty he does his best to keep others from doing theirs. He is so bent on this that he leads a movement to turn out of the church all who open their homes to these missionaries. All and all a selfish, ambitious festiferous church officer is Diotrephes. And though John is the apostle of love; he does not shrink from the rebuke of this man. He warns that when he comes he is going to deal with him face to face. John has grown wonderfully mellow in the fellowship of Jesus as the years have come and gone, but he is still a Son of Thunder. The fire of battle is still in him. For love's sake he cannot let the conduct of this man who is working great injury to the church go unchallenged. He is the same man that wanted to call down fire from heaven years ago though now he speaks out of a heart grown tender and wonderfully loving.

II

It is refreshing to turn from this man to Gaius. Who Gaius was we do not know. He was one of John's personal friends. He was a very dear to the heart of this apostle. He was evidently a man very lovable and, therefore, much loved.
III JOHN

After his introduction, John proceeds with a wish for his friend and then a commendation. In a genuine sense the wish is also a commendation and that of the highest order. Listen to it. "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health; even as thy soul prospereth." Now the wish that the average man prosper as his soul prosper would certainly put him in the hospital. If John's wish were to become a reality for all of us there certainly would not be enough well to wait on the sick.

This is true because we are so much more sensitive to the physical needs than the spiritual. There was never a day when we responded so quickly to physical needs. How much more in earnest we are about our children when they are physically sick than we are when they are sick spiritually. How much more we concern ourselves about material wealth than we do about spiritual. The greatest danger that threatens our nation today is that our spiritual prosperity lags so far behind our material prosperity.

Gaius was a prosperous man. That does not mean that he was rich. He was prosperous in the wealth that satisfieth. He was prosperous in the wealth that abides. He was prosperous as Joseph was prosperous. "The Lord was with Joseph and he prospered." He was prosperous as Daniel prospered. Daniel was rich in that fine capital called character. If we give as little time to our material prosperity as we do our spiritual we would go bankrupt. Happy is the man who is prosperous in the wealth that passes legal tender in both worlds.

Since Gaius was rich, since he was so prosperous, his prosperity gave some expression of itself. You cannot hide springtime in the clods
of the earth without their telling the story. Nor can you hide spiritual prosperity in the soul of a man without that prosperity giving expression to itself in the enrichment of others. How did the prosperity of Gaius express itself?

(1) It expressed itself in his walking in the truth. This was both a cause and an effect. The richness of this man's inner life expressed itself in an outward walk that was in conformity to the truth. That is, to the gospel, to the will of Christ.

(2) It expressed itself in faithfulness. Gaius was loyal. He was dependable. You could count on him. Faithfulness is the fruit of the spirit. It seems to be one of the necessities for our receiving the well-done of Jesus. He will not say to us, "you have been clever," you have been effective; you have been successful." He will say, "You have been faithful."

(3) Gaius was charitable. He was a lover. Being a lover he was given to hospitality. He entertained those Christian missionaries that Diotrephes turned away. He entertained them in spite of Diotrephes. He entertained them for the following reasons.

(a) They had gone out for the Name. They had gone out for Christ's sake. And as a lover of Christ he received them.

(b) He entertained them because of their need. They were like Paul in that they accepted nothing from the heathen. They would not endanger the success of their gospel by charging for it. Therefore, it was necessary that they receive help and entertainment from their fellow Christians.

(c) He helped them because it was his way of sharing in the labors of his Lord. He had a part if every good deed that the missionaries did whom
he entertained. Every helpful thing that Miss Ervin is doing in Korea you have a part in it if you are helping her with your gifts and with your prayers. When we give, we share with God and others. Sharing in the gifts we also share in the service and in the reward. Gaius is the type of church official that we can thank God for. Happy is the church and happy the pastor and happy the congregation that can boast of a few such among its membership.
CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH -- Jude.

Jude, the brother of James is writing a letter. Being the brother of James, he is also the brother of Jesus, but he is not willing to state that fact. It sounds too presumptuous and he is too reverent. He is a bond-slave of Jesus Christ and he is writing to those who are beloved of God, who are called and who are kept by Jesus Christ.

The letter that he writes takes a definite turn from that which he had originally intended. His first purpose was to discuss our common salvation. That is, he was to write them regarding the salvation that is the common possession of all who are willing to claim it. But something happened that turned him aside. Something happened that caused him to write a letter of a different character. It is a vehement, fiery letter in which he urges them with hot earnestness to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

I

What is this faith about which Jude, Christian and brother of our Lord, was so exercised? It was something that seemed to him very vital and very important. In fact, he is all excited and wrought up about it. He is not exercising himself over a mere trifle. By the faith he means the whole body of revealed truth, he means the gospel, that gospel that centers in Jesus Christ, he means the gospel of the incarnation, the gospel of the atonement, the gospel of the risen and remaining Lord. This is the faith for which he urges the saints to contend.

In so urging them he was calling to a high task. This is the faith that found a soul that had become a desert and changed it in some measure into a garden. It is a faith that has broken the shackles from
countless millions of hearts. It is a faith that has brought transformation in enumerable lives. It is a faith that is the one hope of the day in which we live. It is the faith that guarantees our only expectation for better and greater tomorrow. Surely we can do nothing better in our day than to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

PART II

Why was it necessary for these ancient saints to contend? What reasons does he give for their throwing themselves into the conflict?

1. They are to contend because they are confronted by dangerous foes. There are foes without the church, of course, but these are not mentioned. He speaks of a more serious and deadly danger. There are foes within the church. There are certain individuals, he tells them, that have slunk in to the fold. These have made the very liberties of the gospel an occasion for sin. They have used the larger freedom of the faith as an occasion for the satisfying of their lusts. Dangerous they would be anywhere, but they are doubly dangerous because they are within the church. Troy could never be taken so long as the foe was within without the walls. It was when they were brought in that the city was doomed.

These sinners are a menace to themselves, they are headed for destruction. This is true because all sin brings a sure penalty in its wake. That fact is written boldly upon the face of the history of God's dealings with His people. The author gives three instances of God's punishment of groups, and three instances of His punishment of individuals.
First; look at the groups. God led the people of Israel out of Egypt. He brought them to the border-land of Canaan, to Kadesh-barnea. There they failed with the result that they died in the wilderness. Then the angels that kept not their first estate are held in chains of darkness. Finally Sodom and Gomorrha when they had become too rotten to be endured, were destroyed by fire. Second; sin exacts its penalty from the individual. Cain gave way to jealousy and hate and murdered his brother. He suffered. He declared himself that his penalty was heavier than he could bear. Balaam sold himself for money, and though he prayed that he might die the death of the righteous, he really died the death of the wicked with the sword of Israel in his heart. Korah presumed to take upon himself the office of the priesthood, with the result that the earth swallowed him up. "Contend for the faith," says Jude, "because departing from God exacts a terrible penalty."

Then we are to contend for the faith because the sinner is a menace not only to himself but to others. These men who had slunk into the Church, these who had back-slidden, had become deadly foes of their fellows. They would not but be so because of what they were. Jude cannot find words strong enough to describe their fearful characteristics. He calls them hidden reefs, rocks buried in the sea that looked innocent enough but that makes wrecks of any ships that happen to come that way.

Then he calls them clouds without water. A cloud is a promise, a prophesy of rain. If it is dry, as is so often the case in that country, it excited hope, it awakened expectation, but it excited hopes that it did not satisfy. It was a sham, a false alarm, a promise made and not kept. Such is the man unfaithful to his Church vows.
Then he calls them wandering stars. They are mere drift-wood, they are play-things of the tides, they go in one direction today and another tomorrow. They are unreliable as guides, like derelict ships they only do harm.

Next they are complainers. They wail against their Lord. They whine, they are pessimistic, they make religion disgusting.

Finally they fawn upon the great. They are mere lying hypocrites.

Of course, people of such character make shipwreck of their own lives and become a menace to all who touch them.

III.

How to contend.

It is rather striking that there is not one single hint that would indicate that we are to contend by debating. I doubt seriously if the faith has ever been helped by a debate in all the Christian era. I feel confident that it has been injured times without number. Usually those who contend in debate are not contending for the faith they are contending for their particular interpretation of the faith, which is usually an entirely different matter.

Nor are we to contend for the faith by demolishing all error. Knocking down the other man's house is an exceedingly poor way to build your own. If it were possible, even the destruction of all error would in no sense establish a truth. Contending for the faith is not a matter of pulling up the tares. It is not a matter of showing the falsity or the foolishness of the other man's views.

Nor is there any hint here that we are to contend for the faith
Contending for the Faith -- Jude

by preaching on Christian evidences. I suppose such preaching has its place. At times it may be helpful provided you can get folks who are willing to listen and who can stay awake long enough to hear the discussion thru. However, I have serious doubts as to whether the faith has been very greatly helped by the discussion of Christian evidences. The contending for which Jude stands looks in another direction. How does he urge his hearers to contend?

1. They are to contend by seeing that faith triumphs in their own personal lives. They are to keep themselves in the love of God. They are to obey the exhortation of Jesus given in His parting words to His disciples, "Continue ye in my love." That is, they are to live constantly in the realization of the love of God, realizing the love of God that will love him in return. And loving Him they will love one another for a man who does love God will love his brother also. This is the first step in continuing successfully in the faith. It is to incarnate it. It is to walk among men seeing them thru eyes that have seen the Cross.

This life of love is to be a growing life. The author bids us to build ourselves up upon the faith that is delivered to the saints. We are to build our lives. He uses the participle building, indicating that it is a continuous process, beginning in the love of Christ we are to keep ourselves there ever more and more. That is, we are to be growing Christians. We are to contend for the faith by becoming day by day more like our blessed Master.

To help us in this process of building, to help us to grow, we are to pray in the spirit. Prayer is communion. Prayer is a means
Contending for the Faith — Jude

of growth in likeness to Him. If we are to build up this foundation of faith we are to more and more make a business of prayer.

Not only are we to grow thru our prayer life, but we are to grow thru our expectation, thru our high hopes. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." That is, we are to build by looking in expectation toward Him. Such looking brings eternal life. Therefore, our first step in contending for the faith is by making the faith triumph in our own lives.

2. We are to contend for the faith by seeking to make it triumph in the lives of others. We are to have compassion on them. We are to feel toward them as the Samaritan felt toward the man who fell among thieves. We are to deal with them tactfully and according to his needs. The author seems to speak of three classes: First, we are to have compassion on those who are in doubt. That is, the best translation for the expression making a difference the word we find in the authorized version. Second, we are to save some by snatching them out of the fire. That is, we are in a sense to save them by very force. We are to bring them in by the compulsion of a tremendous earnestness. We are to compel them to come in, as the king told his servants to compel the guests to come in to his feast. The others we are to save with fear, leaving even the garments spotted with the flesh. The meaning seems to be that we are to seek to save the most loathsome and disgusting of sinners with deadly hate for their sin. With fear we in the realization of our own weakness, and yet with love to the sinner in the realization of his need
Contending for the Faith — Jude

and of his capacity to be saved. It is thus by a life of personal holiness and a life of sacrificial service that we are to contend for the faith. It is thus and only thus that we can expect to make our faith triumph. All other methods mean certain failure.

IV

The inspiration for this high service is found in the last two verses. "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." We are to go about our task of establishing the faith in the realization that we have a Master that is able to keep us from falling and not only that but able to keep us from stumbling, which is the better translation; and present us faultless before the throne with exceeding joy. Upheld by such a Master, sustained by such a friend, braced by such a fellowship, we can go forward boldly and without fear. For a faith that we have that is so priceless, we shall be eager to, glad to contend.
Contending for the Faith

I. What Is the Faith
   1. The Gospel - Related in H. Testament
   2. Gospel of a Person
   3. Gospel of Incarnation, Death, Resurrection

II. Why Faith Works Depends Upon
   1. They are foes
   2. Nature of foes - on inside
   3. Their character -
      They are rebellious - disown Jesus Christ
      They are sons - men of the world
      They are peacocks, henpecked, like Cain
      They are greedy - Balaam
      They are proud - Pharaoh
   4. Their influence upon others -
      (1) Hidden hearts (2) Clouds without rain (3) Trees without fruit
      (4) Wandering stars - prince of darkness
   5. Their pict. - pooned - three examples

III. How we are to Contend
   1. Not by debating
   2. Not by abusing
   3. Not by arguing
      By keeping in love of God
      By building - God's work
      By penance
   2. By attitude to others
      Compassion and patience
      Comfort effort
      Effort in spite of opposition

IV. One Desperation
REVELATION

The Book of Revelation is the only one that begins with a blessing upon the reader. It pronounces a threefold blessing upon him who reads, upon him who hears, upon him who takes the message to heart. But in spite of this fact this is a sadly neglected book by a large part of the church. It is a book that we have turned over in a great measure to the chronics and the fanatics and to those spotted birds who have some pet theory to bolster up.

This book belongs to a type of literature that makes it an easy prey to fanciful interpretation. One can say almost all kinds of foolish things about it without any great danger of detection. There are some things that are so absurd that it is impossible to disprove them. Where Mrs. Eddy says, for instance, that Adams refers to mortal mind in solution it is impossible to argue with her. It is impossible to argue with some interpretations of Revelation.

There are four schools of interpretations with regard to this book.

1. There is the poetic. This treats the book as a bit of poetry told in symbols.

2. There is the progressive historic. It declares that the book treats of certain historic events, some of which have already happened, some of which are happening and some of which are in the future.

3. The third is the futurist. Those holding this view look upon the book as treating the future only. It relates to the second coming of Christ that is yet ahead.

4. The fourth is the preterist. These believe the book to have been written for the generation in which it was produced. There is possibly a bit of truth in all these interpretations, but the last is doubtless
This book grew out of one of the most stormy and tempestuous periods of all the world's history. It was a time of earthquakes, of inundations, of plagues and pestilences. It was the period that marked the uprising of the Jews and the capture of Jerusalem under the Vespasian, Titus. It saw, therefore, the final passing of the old order. For the temple, that marvelous work of marble and gold, was utterly destroyed and Jewish worship as the centuries had known it passed away forever.

It was a period that witnessed the coming to the throne of Nero. Nero represents all that is worst in despotic power. In his jealousy and rage he destroyed everyone that exercised any restraining influence upon him. Among these were Seneca, his teacher; Burrus, his faithful soldier; Agrippina his mother and Octavia his wife. At last to inspire him to poetry, he burned Rome. This in itself was a great disaster, but it was followed by yet a greater, for in order to divert indignation from himself, the blame was laid upon the Christians.

In consequence of this there followed a period of terrible and bloody persecution. Numerous Christians were fed to lions. They were hung upon forrests of crosses. They were made living torches to illuminate the royal gardens. Throughout the Empire there was no form of brutality and murder to which they were not subjected. In this persecution John lost his intimate friend, Peter. In this persecution Paul perished. In this persecution John no doubt saw many who were very dear to him go to their death. It seemed that the whole Church was destined to perish utterly under the bloody heel of Nero. It was, therefore, to comfort those who were passing thru great tribulations that John wrote this book. It was
This book is an unveiling. It is an unveiling first of Jesus Christ Himself. In this period of terrible tragedy the struggling Church needed to realize her resources. So the veil was taken from the eyes of John as he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day so that he might be able to see. His vision did not make the realities that he beheld, they were already there. It only enabled him to see the facts as they were. The first unveiling showed him the risen Lord who had been dead and who was alive forever more.

The author gives us a description of the risen Christ as he saw Him. It is a description that if taken literally seems almost grotesque. If we understand its symbols it is one to inspire confidence and hope. This risen Lord had hair white as snow. That indicates His purity and His eternity. He is eternal because pure. All that is impure is destined to death. His eyes were like flames of fire. That is, they were penetrating, they saw everything. He is the one to whom all hearts are open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hid. He saw the righteousness of the righteous and the wickedness of the wicked. His feet were like burnished brass. Feet are the symbol of procedure. They mark the progress of Christ on his purpose. The fact that they are brass indicates strength, irresistible power. In spite of the persecution of men and devils, Christ was marching on. His voice was like the sound of many waters. There was majesty and music in it. Yet out of His mouth went a sharp two edge sword. That is, His words were searching. "The word of God is living and powerful, sharper
REVELATION

than a two-edged sword." In His right hand was seven stars, and His face was as the sun shining in His strength.

The position of this mighty Christ was one to encourage. He was walking among the seven golden lamp stands. Now the lamp stands are the churches. The church has no light in itself. It only has light as it receives it from Him. But Christ, the Light of the world, had not forsaken His church in the days of its affliction. He was still in the midst of it. He was holding His messengers in His right hand. Nobody could pluck them out. Though Paul had been beheaded and Peter had been crucified, it did not mean defeat, it did not mean that they were lost. The dead as well as the living were held in the right hand of the risen Christ.

II

There is the unveiling of the Church. This book gives us a picture of seven types of churches. They are churches that were in existence at that time. They are typical of the first century churches. They are also typical of twentieth century churches. They belong to all the centuries.

1. There is the cold church. The church at Ephesus was active and energetic. It was zealously orthodox. It hated the teachings of the Nicolaitanes but did not love the Nicolaitanes themselves. How few churches there are that can contend for certain types of orthodoxy and keep within the love of God at the same time. Contentious churches and contentious people are usually more pharisaically than Christian.

2. The second is the poor rich church. This is the church at Smyrna. It was the church that was being bitterly persecuted. It had been robbed and plundered till it was reduced to utter poverty. Yet He whose eyes are
as a flame of fire saw that it was still possessed of wealth untold. Poverty stricken in things, it was rich in faith, rich in love, rich in likeness to Christ, rich in the wealth that outlasts the ages.

3. The church at Pergamos represents the compromising church. There was much that was positively good in this church, also much that was positively bad. There were some few loyal enough to the truth to die for it, but the church as a whole was tinted with worldliness. They were on extremely good terms with those who followed the teaching of Balaam. The congregation, taken as a whole was so much like the world that it was not winning the victory as Christ purposed that it should do.

4. The New Thought church. The leading influence in this church was a woman. The author calls her Jezebel. This was probably not her name. He called her that because her influence was as vicious as that of Jezebel in the days of Ahab. She was familiar with the deep things, but by her influence she was corrupting the church and causing the saints to go astray. We have had three advance movements in recent years akin to this led by Jezebel, Spiritualism, Theosophy and Christian Science. They were all led by women.

5. The fifth is the dead church. This was the church at Sardis. It was a church with a big reputation. There was much activity about it. It made a big noise in the city. Doubtless it had more oyster fries and ice cream suppers and bazaars and chicken dinners than any other church in the city. But its movements were the motions of a galvanized corpse. It had no spiritual life. It was nothing more than a club. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name to live and art dead."
6. The sixth is a faithful church. This is the church at Philadelphia. It is the church that Jesus declares gladly, "thou hast not denied my name." He has placed before this church an open door. It has entered the door that has been opened. This it has done because it has a little strength. That is, it entered thru its very weakness. Conscious of its powerlessness, it had entered thru reliance upon the power of Him that walks in the midst of the seven golden lamp stands.

7. The seventh is the one with which Jesus is most severe. It is the luke-warm church. It is the church that is neither cold nor hot. There is no church, there is no type of individual that He finds so difficult. "I would that you were either cold or hot. I would that you were either out and out for me or out and out against me. As you are, you are simply nauseating." Then he tells the secret of their lack of enthusiasm. He tells why they have lost their interest. They have become separated from Christ. They have shut the door in His face. "Behold I stand at the door and knock." He was standing not before the door of a dance hall, but before the door of a church. Such were the churches as Jesus saw them. Such churches are among us still.

III

This book is an unveiling of the conflict between right and wrong. It is the unveiling of the battle that was being waged then between Christ and His church on one side and all the forces of evil on the other side. Of course, it is in some measure a picture of that ceaseless conflict that goes on thru the centuries. The Jewish part of the conflict is pictured to us in chapters four to eleven inclusive. The conflict
between the Church and paganism as represented by Rome fills the remaining section of the book.

Now this conflict is pictured to us in strange symbols that are very difficult for us to understand. The author did not expect to be understood except by the initiated. He had to use terms and symbols that concealed his meaning from the heathen world about him. Had he not done so he would have hurt the situation rather than helped it. Therefore, when he speaks of Rome he usually does so by calling it Babylon. Sometimes it is spoken of as the harlot. When he speaks of Nero he is designated as the beast. He is six-sixty-six, which is the value of Caesar Nero in Hebrew spelling. The beast has been made to refer to the Pope of Rome and to numerous others, but it is safe to say that it refers to Nero. There are other symbols at which we can only guess and whose meaning, in my opinion, we can not speak with certainty.

IV

The book is an unveiling of the outcome of this terribly conflict between right and wrong, between Christ and His church and the powers of darkness. As the men of that day found it, there could not possibly be but one outcome, that, the utter defeat and overthrow of the church. Nero was supreme. He was demanding that he be worshiped as God. Christians were being destroyed everywhere. Of course, the weak church must inevitably be wiped from the face of the earth.

But John saw a definite issue to the contrary. He had a vision of ultimate victory. The powers of darkness, in spite of the fact that they seemed sure of victory, were doomed to defeat. The world was not to be con-
quered by the devil but by Jesus Christ. He was to reign from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The kingdoms of the world, in spite of all opposition were finally to become the kingdoms of His Lord and Christ. It was with that great conviction he encouraged his heart and sought to encourage the hearts of his fellow sufferers during those terrible days.

The triumph that John saw was the triumph that is to take place in this world. He saw the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. It stands for a new order of things. It represents the doing of the will of God on earth as it is in heaven. But while there is to be a triumph in the world that now is, it is not confined to this world. The author gives us a glimpse of that ultimate and final victory that we are to expect when we have finished with the things of earth and time.

It is interesting to know something of John's conception of heaven. He does not give us any clear view of our future home. He does, however, give certain hints, and it is noteworthy that he gives chief emphasis to the negative rather than to the positive. That is, he tells us some of the things that we shall not find in heaven. It is interesting to study John's "no mores."

1. He tells us that there shall be no more sea. The sea surrounded him on his penal island. It was a symbol of separation. That should be done away by and by.

2. There should be no more death. John had had much dealing with death. He had met it in its most horrible forms. Death is not so terrible when one falls like ripened fruit, but to be cut down in the full strength of youth, cut down by the powers of sin, that John had had to witness over and over again. His brother James had been slain by the sword. Friend
after friend among his intimates had been murdered till he alone was left. No wonder he looked for a good world where there should be no more death.

3. There was to be no more of those things that are so often associated with death. No more pain, no more sorrow, no more tears. God is to take us upon His mother lap and wipe away all tears from our eyes. There was to be no more night there. No more were the horrors of darkness to settle down on them in that world of eternal day.

Then there are a few positive touches. "Who are these arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? --- These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. --- They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." That shall be the face to face view of Jesus Christ. There shall be a feasting on the heavenly manna and the continuous leading unto living fountains of water. Surely this was intended to encourage the church that was living under the shadow of the Cross. It is intended to encourage us in every age.

V

Finally this is an unveiling of the method by which this blessed consumation is to be realized. How is the kingdom to come in? How is the world to be finally conquered by Jesus Christ. It is not going to be by force. It is not going to be thru cleverness. It is not going to be thru mere human ability. It is going to be won thru the winsome power of Life.
In other words we are not going to win by driving, we are going to win by inviting. The word is not go, it is come. The Spirit says come. That is what the Spirit has been saying thru all the centuries. "It is such a word as a mother would say to her child as she stretches her arms to him. The Bride, which is the church is saying come. Everyone who hears is to say come. That is what we are just so sadly failing to do today. We are to be invited by our burning thirst. "Let him that is athirst come." There the door is flung open for everybody. "Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely."

Such is the teaching of this great book that is properly called The Unveiling. It unveils our risen Lord. It unveils the church. It unveils a ceaseless conflict between good and evil. It unveils a certain triumph of good over evil both here and now and by and by. It unveils the process by which that triumph is to be win, thru the wooing power of the Bride of Christ, working in fellowship with Himself thru the Spirit.