

The
SUPREME
NEED

Of The World Today

R. D. KING



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The
SUPREME NEED
of
The World Today

By the Same Author

WEDNESDAY NIGHT
TRANSFORMED

The
SUPREME NEED
of
The World Today

airley
1932
F. D. KING

Introduction by
BISHOP WARREN A. CANDLER

FOOTE & DAVIES COMPANY

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TO

FLORA HARTIS KING

*whose loyalty to the things of
abiding importance has been an
unfailing inspiration*

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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INTRODUCTION

THIS timely volume, composed of fifteen clear and cogent chapters, cannot fail to command the intense attention of all spiritual-minded men and women who may read it.

The subject is one of supreme importance, and its treatment is most admirable. The thought is clear and elevated, and the style in which it is presented becomes the subject which it treats.

During the prevalent period of depression most people have considered that the supreme need of the hour was deliverance from financial distress into material prosperity, but our country's chief lack is not in any material good whatsoever. Its main want is abundant spiritual life. It needs Christ more than it needs any earthly good of whatsoever sort.

For the new era of spiritual prosperity, as the author truly contends, there is an urgent need for mighty men, and he tells us how they may be made.

The leaders of the great spiritual eras always, or generally, have not been men of the highest

learning, but they have been men of the greatest devotion to God and the kingdom of heaven. The majority of the Apostles of our Lord were fishermen, and the only learned man among them was St. Paul. Yet, these men turned the world upside down by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ with power from on high. They were delivered from fear into fearlessness, and out of weakness into might. So it has been with every conspicuous chapter in the history of Christianity.

Luther, John Knox, John Wesley were men made powerful by power from on high, and through this heavenly potency they triumphed over obstacles of godlessness in their day. Comparatively few men of their type will be able to bring back a new era of faith and victory. This thoughtful volume from the pen of F. D. King is admirably adapted to inspire the coming of another generation of such servants of the Kingdom of God. Christ will come to stand by them, and where Christ and faithful men unite in establishing the kingdom, their efforts never fail.

That this book may have a wide circulation and general reading is my sincere hope and prayer.

—WARREN A. CANDLER,
Bishop Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

FOREWORD

A MAN who is outstanding in his field of Christian activity recently received an invitation to deliver a message before a convention of Christian young men and young women from more than a dozen states. The invitation requested that his message be characterized by "pep." This request indicates a swing of recent years.

A young man with almost unmatched zeal for the cause in which he was supremely concerned was pressing forward in the spirit of a conqueror. On one of his determined drives, he met the Leader of the forces that he was crushing to death.

Apparently this meeting was in the open. There was no program preceded by a series of "pep" meetings. But there was a Presence, and the Presence that day completely changed the young man's life. The power of the presence of the Stranger permeated the young man's personality, completely changed his plans, and made of him the mightiest man of nineteen hundred years.

I believe in a program. I follow a program constantly. A program may be made valuable but a Presence is imperative for him who puts his hands to the kingdom task. During the last twenty-five years the average church, and quite

probably many ministers, have given many times more emphasis to buildings, to equipment, and to a program than to the presence of Jesus Christ. The results of this lamentable mistake are appallingly evident to any thoughtful observer. Defeat, devastation, and, in many instances, death are the sequel.

These lines are being written in a mountain retreat where are assembled in an inspirational gathering Christian workers from many states and from other lands. The speaker at this session is as favorably known as any Christian in all the world. In his message last night, referring to one of the largest Christian bodies of earth, he said, "I wonder if the candlesticks have not already been removed from . . . churches." There are conditions in the churches which are appallingly arresting.

The compassion of the average church member is too colorless to be impressive.

The teaching of those who present the Word of Life has very acceptable form but is usually lacking in power to transform.

The testimony of the vast majority is wanting in zeal sufficiently serious to arrest attention.

The churches have more members than at any time in their history but they have only a very, very few who will dare to follow the Founder of the churches.

The zeal of the average Christian is too weak to send him into worthy sacrifices.

The concern of the majority of disciples is not

sufficient to reach the depths of humanity's sorest needs.

For years God was besought to open the doors of the nations where Christ was unknown that the good news of redemption and peace might be carried to those who were in direst need. The doors were opened. Now not only are some of the most appalling conditions going untouched but messengers of light and life are being withdrawn from tasks which urgently demand evangelists of grace. The churches are seriously suffering, lamentably suffering, for want of concern and compassion.

Denominational programs are usually well planned and the organizations are often ornate and members are multitudinous, but only a small percent, an alarmingly small percent, are ready to advance with their peerless Leader into the death grapple with the forces of sin.

There are ministers who go for weeks without being driven by a divine compassion to seek out a man who has been shackled by the forces of Satan and hurried on his way to hell. There are office bearers who have gone through years without searching out a Matthew or a Zacchaeus and presenting to him with captivating earnestness the Lord of freedom and life.

I know what will make any minister a convincing evangel both in the pulpit and in personal effort. I know what will make the office bearer a messenger of the greatest news earth has heard. I know what will awaken and marshal

the churches of Christ around the world. Perhaps the centuries have never brought a greater opportunity for presenting Christ than these days are bringing, and I know quite well what will make the churches ready for these great opportunities and hours. And this secret is not to be found in abandoning their programs but in entering into their incomparable inheritance.

The presence of Jesus will transform many ministers.

The presence of Jesus will make mighty evangelists of many office bearers.

The presence of Jesus will fire the churches with a holy passion and fill their members, those who know the Lord, with a resistless zeal—a zeal which will never be turned back.

The presence of Jesus will girdle multitudes with the grace of humility and endow their hearts with endurance.

The presence of Jesus will send the returning heralds back to their Christ-assigned tasks in the lands of deep and fearful darkness.

The presence of Jesus will make the churches just what their Founder intended them to be. His presence will make them centers of light and life for the lost millions of earth.

The following chapters attempt to show how this urgently and imperatively needed Presence may be realized in every church and also in every life that bears the name which stands infinitely above every name of earth—the name of Jesus.

CHAPTER I

A MAN CALLS WITH A MESSAGE FROM GOD

THERE shall not be dew nor rain these years," and this is the very unexpected statement of a man who suddenly appears before King Ahab. Some questions at once arise.

Where does the man get his authority for the statement? What is the purpose of such an apparent calamity? What is the secret of this man's daring courage?

The man who made the statement is Elijah whose ancestry is almost or entirely unknown. However, there is something far more important than one's ancestry. Out of the unknown to modern historians comes this man. He makes his appearance with a message of serious moment. He goes direct to the king and, without apology but certainly with arresting earnestness, declares, "There shall not be dew nor rain these years." Why does he go to King Ahab?

Here is a weak, wicked ruler on the throne of Israel, and he is leading the people away from help and hope and into the ways of national defeat, decay, and death. Influenced by his wife, Jezebel, energetic, enthusiastic, earnest Jezebel, who is earnest even in driving in the wrong di-

rection, Ahab is putting his influence on the side of national danger and disaster.

Nations must have lifting power if they are to be saved from the downward pull of wickedness. Cities, states, and nations whose leaders are being lured in the wrong direction are confronted with grave problems. A serious and threatening day came in Israel's history. Far better for the nation to perish than for her people to be thoroughly contaminated with idolatry, and then to spread that debasing contamination to other nations. The gravity of Israel's condition is reflected in one sentence:

"Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him."

Then suddenly one day a man appears before the king with this surprising statement:

"As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."

Elijah comes before King Ahab with some strikingly timely information if the king is wise enough to profit by it. A drought for three months is severe; a drought for twelve months is severely grave; but a drought for three years and more is filled with devastation and destruction. The history of this far-off experience has a message of timely and great moment for the

churches and the church people around the world today.

God's eyes are on world conditions and He cares with a concern beyond the understanding of men. He will employ such methods as He knows to be best to get the attention of those who are being lured into the ways which lead downward.

Men and women may stand before God today and hear His message, receive His counsel, and be endowed with His matchless gifts of fortitude and courage. And to the endowments which God's presence gives the discussion now turns.

Meet Elijah. He has a message of tremendous importance for the men and the women and the young people who are deeply in earnest about the reign of righteousness in the world. He will tell you frankly that the privilege, the wonderful privilege, of standing before God is not denied to the upright of heart. Those whose supreme ambition is to do well their part in making the peace of Christ known to human hearts everywhere are welcomed into the presence of God. Meet Elijah. Listen to his message. He will tell you that living in God's presence gives to men and women a true perspective of life and of life's issues.

Those who thus live will discover that their interest is in matters of greatest importance. Interest in matters which were once considered

important will disappear and interest in matters of supreme importance will grow with the passing hours. Doubtless Ahab thought his position one of surpassing significance but how small it must have appeared to the man who had been welcomed into the presence of the King of Glory! How big must have been the work of Queen Jezebel, in her own eyes, as she urged forward her husband in establishing idol worship in his kingdom! How small was such a motive in the eyes of the man who was welcomed into the presence of the Lord!

The farmer may be led to feel that his crop is a matter of supreme importance. The merchant may be led to feel that his business is the matter for him of first consideration. The laborer may look upon his job as the thing of highest concern both for himself and his family. The professional woman may be made to believe that her profession and her clientele are matters of greatest import. In God's presence, however, things which are thought to be matters of first importance often seriously decrease in their showing and other matters loom large and commanding. In the eyes of the man who stood in the presence of God the turning of the attention of the people to Jehovah, the turning of the people away from the practice which would lead to certain national decay, and the bringing of their thoughts back to God who had called the nation

into existence for a holy purpose, this was a matter of supreme concern. When men and women stand in the presence of the Lord, they see matters in their correct relations and in their true importance.

Multitudes who are holding membership in Christ's churches need to stand in God's presence, and walk in God's presence, and work in God's presence so that they may see clearly things in their relative importance.

Which is the more important, a living or a life? Which is more important, the finding of markets for goods or the sending of Christly men and women to the needy places of earth? Which is more important for a church member, the winning of a game of golf on Sunday afternoon or the bringing of a lost man into the Sunday night service? Which is the more important, an hour or two spent at night in a card game or an hour or two spent searching out the lost of the city and speaking to them about the matchless worth of Jesus? Which is of greater importance, the spending of millions of dollars for whiskey or the spending of millions in the support of Christ-called men and women in the lands of spiritual darkness and death? Those who stand in God's presence will see things in their correct significance. But this is only one of the many invaluable acquirements which come to those who stand in His presence.

Those who stand in God's presence are given the courage to speak God's message and to carry forward in the work of His assignment. And Christian courage is imperatively needed today. Many church members are falling victims to habits which cripple or ruin their influence because they have not courage to resist the appealing and alluring enticements into evil. There are vast numbers of church people who have not a sufficiency of Christian courage to search out the men and the women who are lost and to present to them, in appealing earnestness, Christ Jesus and His power to save. How much, how very much, are the churches needing today more members who are equipped with a sufficiency of Christian courage to go anywhere on a mission for humanity under God's direction!

The pulpits are suffering for want of more ministers who, as did Elijah, stand in God's presence. It would be an unspeakable calamity if it could not be said with certainty that the ministry possesses the noblest men of earth. But that is not enough. If the modern minister is not God's chosen man for the most important assignment under heaven, he is pitiably failing at a post of supreme importance. If the minister does not stand in God's presence, study in God's presence, search for the lost in His presence, and proclaim his message in His presence,

his work will be superficial and he will fall lamentably short of God's standard for his life.

The men and the women who stand in God's presence will echo the message of Jehovah. They will carry the consciousness that they are not speaking for themselves but that they are speaking for God and with the authority of God. The men and the women who stand in God's presence carry the purpose of God in their hearts. In this strange hour in human history the world needs to hear God's message. His message can be delivered only by those who stand in His presence. God's message involves far more than the proclaiming of certain truths and doctrines. To deliver God's message is to speak what He would have spoken and to speak what He would have spoken in the spirit of Jehovah. "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word," and here are sincerity, earnestness, and authority. There is no question mark in sight. What the immediate influence of these words upon King Ahab was, one does not know, but they would have had a very profound influence upon anyone who knew their authority and felt their earnestness.

The many millions of Sunday school pupils need to feel that they are hearing words from those who know and experience the power of God's presence. The young people in the train-

ing department of the churches need to feel that they are listening to leaders who are echoing the message of the Lord Jesus. The millions of members in the woman's department of the churches need to feel, in their weekly gatherings, that they are listening to those who know what it means to stand in the presence of God. What a change will come in many congregations when more ministers of the Word of Life give unmistakable evidence of speaking with the authority, the earnestness, and the compassion which are born as men stand before God!

Those who stand in God's presence carry an elevating awe in their hearts. Those who stand in God's presence will evidence a convincing earnestness in their testimony. Those who stand in the presence of the Lord will carry with them the love which makes their testimony reflect the very spirit of Him who loves as no other ever loved.

Those who stand in God's presence will be equipped to carry God's orders. The world needs to know that messengers from God are speaking. Only stupidity, ignorance, or a lack of reasonable discernment would prompt any one to deny that, around the world, there is a most urgent and imperative need for ministers and teachers who carry unmistakable evidence of the authority of God and the presence of God.

Graft and corruption have stolen their way

into city, state, and national governments. Multitudes of noble citizens have been shocked and have had their confidence severely shaken. To read the list of betrayers of trust—the list is long and contains the names of many who have been highly honored—is to learn something of the devastating, demoralizing, and destroying power of the forces of the devil.

There is a lack of earnestness and compassion in many churches, including many pulpits, which is disquieting and disturbing to those who are deeply concerned about the redemption of the world. Multitudes of churches show but little of the mighty concern which was arrestingly evident in the words and the doings of the Man of Calvary. The sickening conditions in many places in America and in places in all the other countries of earth appealingly call for churches whose ministers and members show convincingly and compellingly that they know the purifying, elevating, and vitalizing experience of standing before God.

God in Christ is the only hope of the world. He wants to make His message known to every heart on the planet. But He must have messengers. No man can give Christ's message except the man who has a vital experience with Christ.

If the ministers and other members of churches will enter into God's presence and stand before

Him, they will deliver His messages with a mighty and a marvelous fervency and, in their constant contacts, they will convey redeeming and elevating power. Surely then the kingdom of God will come into vast numbers of hearts and homes around the world, and peace and righteousness will pervade the earth as at no hour since the Prince of Glory sent forth His messengers on their mission of world redemption. The imperative and urgent need throughout Christendom is for all who name the name of Jesus to stand in God's presence, advance in God's presence, and deliver their messages with the authority, the earnestness, and the compassion of Elijah. Then the kingdom of God will sweep forward in unprecedented power, and millions will be won to the Saviour and enlisted in the redemptive enterprise.

CHAPTER II

CHRIST SPOKE—A WORLD TASK WAS ACCEPTED

CHRIST'S presence changes things. This is just as true in New York, Berlin, and London as it was in Jerusalem. He came to change things. When Christ is welcomed into a city, He changes the city. When He is welcomed into a home, He changes that home. When He is received into a life, He changes that life.

Though the people of Jerusalem knew nothing of what was taking place between the former persecutor and Christ, that hour in the temple when He appeared and spoke to Paul was one of the great moments in human history. Christ changed Paul's plan, and turned his eyes upon territory and his heart to peoples far beyond his previous purpose.

Quite probably Paul was intent upon carrying forward his work in the same city where his persecution had spread alarm. One would infer from his argument presented to Jesus that his plan was to work in Jerusalem. Jerusalem had Christian workers. The city had felt the power which emanated from the personality of Stephen. The city had received the imperishable experience of Pentecost. There were other cities

and other lands which had never had such a rare experience as that of a man evidencing divine courage in the face of jealousy—jealousy doing its deadliest in the name of religion. There were other lands whose men, women, and children had not heard of One who came to heal wounded and broken hearts; who could make out of scraps of humanity noble men and women; and who taught that goodness and righteousness are matters of superlative importance. There were lands sunken in sin and shame. God planned to deliver a message in those lands. He had to have a messenger. Something happened to a man who had gone into the temple in Jerusalem to pray. That man was to be one of God's imperial messengers.

Paul's plans were changed, completely changed. Paul saw Jesus and heard Jesus. The sight of Jesus and the words of Jesus changed the man and changed his plans. It was not Jerusalem, Jerusalem that had enjoyed the finest of privileges, but the Gentile world into which his thoughts were sent and upon which his eyes were turned. Those who are really concerned about the work for which Christ gave His life dare not pass over this experience lightly. The weakness of Christendom in many places may be learned just here. The cause of the failure of a sufficient flow of funds to maintain the work of the kingdom, a failure which is seriously disturbing many, causing them to lie awake nights, can be learned

right here. But this is not the only or the most important thing which may be learned from this experience.

From this experience churches and individuals may learn how to get their bearings. The multitudes that are limping and halting along the way; those who are looking into fog banks and are seriously disturbed about possible progress; those who are leading the forces of the kingdom: all these may learn the things of supreme importance in this very experience.

What was it that changed the plans of the man in the temple? What was it that turned his eyes from one city to the world outside? What was it that made this man a mighty and marvelous messenger directly to Europe and indirectly to the world?

The man in the temple saw Jesus.

The man in the temple talked with Jesus.

Jesus had been crucified, had been buried, had arisen, and had ascended. Yet, Jesus met Paul in the temple and talked with him. And there have been increasing and immortal results from this meeting. One thing explains the results—the man in the temple saw and had a conversation with Jesus. Jesus' presence changed things. Christ Jesus was the matter of supreme importance in this meeting.

In a modern missionary meeting of the women of the church the comment usually is concern-

ing the attendance and the program. Four women were walking from a church toward a car. One said, "Wasn't the attendance fine today?" Another said, "Yes, and our circle led all the others." A third remarked, "And wasn't that an interesting program?" If the hour is unusually good, according to present-day standards, one or more of these questions will quite probably be heard several times. Seldom is any reference made to the absence or presence of Jesus. And His absence or His presence determines everything. The matter of first concern in a modern missionary meeting is getting the people to attend and presenting a good "program." These are not matters of first importance. The matter of first concern is the presence of Jesus.

We cannot make one foot of progress without Jesus. It would be far better for only three to be present in the missionary meeting without any program at all, with Christ one of the three, than for the attendance to be record-breaking and the program to be admirably presented but with little evidence of the presence of the Man of Calvary. We may plan admirably and present admirably but if Christ is not in the meeting, no progress will be made.

American churches are very seriously in need of that which will make their members feel the needs, the serious and sore needs, of those who are trying to make their way without the guid-

ing and the sustaining presence of their peerless Leader. It is seriously feared that such feeling is not deeply experienced in the average church assembly. Churches everywhere are in need of that which will make their members see the millions who are groping in the darkness without light or leadership.

Why is Tibet with scarcely one messenger of the Lord Jesus? Why have the churches failed to carry Christ to her six million? Who are responsible for these not having a chance of knowing the Friend of Sinners? Why are not at least one hundred of our trained young Christians over there? Here is the explanation: too many of our church people are not seeing Christ and are not hearing what He is saying.

South of Tibet are Bhutan and Nepal, very few of whose peoples have heard the good news of redemption. Why have not the churches of Europe and America compassionately offered to those five million hope and life?

Lying to the west of Nepal is Afghanistan with her four million and little Bokhara with her million and a half and these peoples have scarcely one messenger of the Cross. Why are the churches of America holding their trained young volunteers at home while multitudes are dying with no chance of knowing of the wondrous Saviour? What justifiable excuse can our college and university young Christians offer to

God for permitting these Afghans and Bokharians to live and die without hearing of the redemptive and the transforming power of the Man of Calvary?

I have turned another page of my atlas and here before me in Southeastern Asia is a territory where live more than twenty million people, and in this territory there is scarcely a missionary to be found. If some of our church people would come face to face with Jesus as did the man in the temple in Jerusalem, very soon ships would be carrying messengers of light and life into these neglected lands. The supreme and urgent need now is a consciousness of Christ in the churches.

I have turned to another page in my atlas and now I am looking at the land of Livingstone and Stanley. In this land of such dire need, here where the spiritual pall is thick and black, there are between sixty-five and seventy-five million people whom the multitudes of churches in far more favored lands have made no attempt to reach and are not even contemplating any plans whatsoever for telling them of the Giver of light, life, and redemption.

Something is seriously and alarmingly wrong with Christendom. To fail to say this is to back away from evidence, evidence which removes every doubt, and also to close one's lips cowardly when our peerless Leader is commanding His

messengers to cry from the housetops. The bringing home of our finely equipped and noble missionaries is one of the most pitiable spectacles and one of the most alarming omens of modern times. How long God will permit this, no one can know. God is not dependent upon any denomination. The large denominations may be forcing God to change His plans. There are large Christian bodies that are suffering serious losses today, and all Christian bodies that are not worthily engaged in carrying the message of redemption to those who are dying in the darkness may find themselves dying tomorrow.

The missionary gatherings, all the way from the small group meetings to the large assemblies, must change their emphasis. The emphasis must be not the program but His presence; not awards but an awakening; not attendance but attention to Him: these are some of the changes which must be made, and they are changes of supreme moment.

This chapter is making no attempt to present a survey of a few of the many mission fields where the needs are appalling. It is attempting to indicate that the churches and the denominations cannot make another inch of advance unless their members recognize the presence of their Leader and move in the power of His fellowship. That is a sentence of mighty meaning which E. Stanley Jones speaks:

“We cannot go further until we go deeper.”

Deeper. That is a significant word now. Deeper in our determination to obey the Lord Jesus; deeper in our fellowship with Him; deeper in our devotion to the work which he assigns: these are matters of first consideration now.

Congregations led by choirs sing, “I’ll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,” but the deportment of many who thus sing does not indicate that there was depth of meaning in the pledge to God in the singing. Not many put themselves with arresting attention into the redemptive enterprise. We pray, “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth,” but many who make this prayer do not go to the most serious situations and many others do not make acceptable sacrifices to send messengers. We must reach new depths of devotion before we win new victories. We cannot go further until we go deeper.

A man one day went into a temple to pray. Christ met him and entered into a conversation. Quite probably the man was talking to God about his work. Christ took up the conversation and told him what to do. The doing of that Christ-assigned task required serious sacrifices. Would the man be equal to the strain and the test? History has answered that question.

The churches must have more men and more women now who will sacrifice and never take

their eyes from the task. It is not enough to sing hymns expressive of high devotion. It is not enough to attend church services with impressive regularity. It is not enough to pay tithes and offerings. It is not enough to evidence careful preparation on the missionary program. It is not enough to attend the hour of prayer and take part. This is the way of ease. The churches cannot advance another step without men and women who will come face to face with Jesus, listen to what He says, and then go in His own wondrous fellowship to the work of His assignment.

God can use men and women of this type. He can use them at home or He can send them far hence where the difficulties may be greater and the work much harder. Such men and women are commissioned, and their hearts carry the awe of their divine appointment. The carrying out of their commission may send them into difficulties which call for far more wisdom than they possess but their Companion is always present to give both counsel and encouragement. That superlative commission may send them into enterprises which demand severe sacrifices but their hearts are equipped with such divine determination that sacrifices, when they advance their Christ-assigned work, are counted a joy.

Yes, God can use men and women of this kind in America, Europe, Asia, or Africa. He can

and will use men and women of this kind in any country or community. Indeed, He will be delighted to use them. And such men and women will win imperishable victories anywhere. It is doubtful if God can use any other.

CHAPTER III

A SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE—HOW?

THE most wonderful discovery within the possibilities of men and women is the discovery of Christ's presence in the assembly of the churches on any Sunday morning or Sunday night.

One of the most meaningful pronouncements ever made by the Man of Galilee is this amazing declaration: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." In every church service Christ is present or He is absent. If even two or three have come together with Christ as the center of their desire, He is present. If He is absent, the occasion for His absence is chargeable to those present.

If He is absent, how foolish for the members to assemble! If the members of a church assemble in a building erected for the definite purpose of worship, Christian fellowship, and fostering faith, and if they have not met the conditions for having Christ present, they certainly are bordering on the worst form of hypocrisy. A stranger to Christianity either by accident or design enters a church at the hour of worship. The minister announces a hymn and the choir and congregation arise and sing:

“My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine,
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

“I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me,
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree;
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow:
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now!

“I'll love Thee in life, I will love Thee in death,
And praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath;
And say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.”

The stranger muses. Enquiring thoughts get busy. He rightly reasons that the devotion of these people is nothing less than marked and marvelous. The singers have been expressing high homage to Jesus. Which one is Jesus? This would be quite a natural question for the stranger. He muses further. He is in the assembly because all the choir and many of the congregation have been speaking to him in the song. They have been singing, “My Jesus,” and “My Gracious Redeemer.” Which one is he? Perhaps the stranger, unacquainted with church manners, would be seen searching with his eyes through the congregation for this Jesus.

But the indescribably lamentable fact is that the majority, by far the majority, who thus sing do not act as if they believe what they sing. If the members of a church congregation expected

Christ in the service as confidently as they expect a voice when they put the telephone receiver to their ears, frequently there would be an impressive change of attitude on the part of the attendants. There is no mistake about what Christ meant. His statement is so clear that any one can understand it.

“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

If the New Testament is accepted as authentic, then anyone who questions this statement questions the honor and the integrity of the Lord Jesus Himself. Indeed Christ may not be present. But what a farce the “service” would be if the conditions for having Jesus present should not be met! Evidence convincingly declares that there are vast numbers of church members who are not meeting the conditions for having Christ in the audience.

There are those who attend because church pride prompts them. There are others who are in the audience because they enjoy the fellowship with their friends. There are others who are seen promptly in their pews because they are attracted by the music or the minister’s message. And there may be merit in all these motives. But motives of secondary or tertiary importance do not meet the conditions for having Christ present. If there is an audience of even two or three whose members are drawn together by

loyalty to Christ and out of a desire to know more fully His will and His plans, then Christ is also present. And a compelling sense of His presence in the assembly of the churches—that is the supreme and urgent need now.

Scientists made almost unbelievable advances during the first quarter of the twentieth century. In 1903 Orville Wright flew the first heavier-than-air machine. The next year the electron tube was first used in the radio. In 1907 the first commercial wireless message was sent across the Atlantic. The following year there was secured the first experimental evidence of the atomic theory. In 1909 Peary discovered the North Pole, and during the same year Millikan measured the charge of the electron. Three years later Amundsen made his discovery of the South Pole. Then in 1915 came Einstein's theory of relativity. And these are only a few of the achievements of scientists. The continents have been brought closer than communities of only a few years ago. Science has made of the world one large neighborhood.

Science has made a contribution to conveniences and comforts but the ministry of science is not the urgent need of the world today. Just at the time when scientists are giving to humanity their best products there are the most serious and indeed the most threatening disturb-

ances in many places on our planet which have been experienced for many generations.

Redemption for sinning men cannot be found in the radio, or in radium, or relativity. Divine vitality has not been found and will never be found in vitamins. Christian compassion will never be discovered in cosmic rays. Emancipation for those who are severely shackled by sin cannot be found in the atom or electron.

I am not attempting to discredit in the slightest the valuable and brilliant achievements of the scientists who have worked worthily in their fields. I am contending that the cure for the world's woes is to be found elsewhere. I am contending that the power to lift and to elevate and to transform can be secured only through contact and communion with Christ Jesus. And the churches of Jesus Christ are commanded to make known to sinning and suffering men and women this urgent and supreme fact.

While the churches have achieved invaluablely there is in vast numbers a lack of earnestness and zeal and power which seriously disturbs many who are deeply concerned to see the Lord Jesus, the Prince of Peace, presented to every lost man, woman, boy, and girl of earth. Many churches are suffering and suffering seriously for a renaissance, a rebirth, a spiritual transformation.

In this day when our churches have the finest buildings, the most modern furnishings, and the

largest number of "trained" workers, forty members are required a whole year to win one to membership. "Or, to put it differently, it takes one Christian forty years, or a life time, to win one convert."

Here before me is a Book which contains many inspiring stories. On one page I read that an Easterner had an experience one night which sent him immediately across a sea to tell his story of Christ. Very soon the story is told of this man's winning a business woman and those associated with her to the Lord Jesus. On the same page I read that this man won a jailer and his family to the Saviour. I have now turned over one leaf. The historian is carrying me rather rapidly. This man who had crossed the sea for the privilege of telling about Christ has gone to another town.

In this new center the man immediately begins telling his story and the historian makes this entry, "Some of them believed," and they cast in their lots with this earnest stranger. Persecution pushes the man out of town but it cannot silence his message.

Here he is in another town, and the historian makes this record: "Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of the men not a few." I have turned to another page and find that this man of such gripping earnestness is in the educational

and cultural center of the world. Here he faces a cold, critical, and cynical crowd. But there was something in his heart which made him invincible, and the historian has this interesting entry, "Certain men clave unto him and believed." Out of the severely critical crowd he won both a hearing and a deathless loyalty to the Lord Jesus. The historian takes me immediately to another city.

Now the Easterner is in a commercial metropolis of wealth and wickedness. Each has been and still is a serious problem for Christian workers. In this city which presented to the Asiatic problems enough to discourage and defeat many another, the crusader for Christ was not without a victory. I find this entry, "And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized."

Since leaving the coast town of Asia the historian has directed me to five distinct stops where the Asiatic gave himself with marked earnestness to the proclaiming of his story concerning the Man of Galilee. He made these five stops quite probably within a period of a few weeks. The number of those won to Christ is not given. Modern churches are suffering losses, serious losses, by placing undue emphasis on numbers. Counting numbers and playing them up in the papers may be a very trifling business.

However, when numbers are given to indicate the matchless work of redemption in human lives, numbers have imperishable significance. In these five European engagements the evidence indicates that scores were won to Christ. Now the moment has come for some serious comparisons and some serious thinking.

In modern churches with modern equipment forty members a year win only one new member.

One modern church member requires forty years to win one new church member.

An Easterner with no churches in which to work and with no organizations to reenforce him pressed his way into unknown towns and cities, contended with difficulties and perilous opposition, and won scores to Christ within a few weeks. There is a striking difference in this Easterner and most modern church members. By far the most urgent need of the churches today is that their members possess just what the Asiatic possessed.

And the pivotal need of the churches is in their pulpits. Let the ministers meet the conditions for a spiritual renaissance and marked changes will be immediately observed in very much of the pulpit ministry. When the compassion of Christ burns in the soul of the man in the pulpit, his message carries compassion to disturbed and sorely pressed hearts in the pews. Then there will be those in the pews who will

discover that a new concern is developing in their hearts. This concern will grow into compassion and this compassion will express itself in living and thinking and doing which will convince and compel and capture hearts for the Man of Calvary.

Recently a long drouth disturbingly reduced our city's supply of water. That which remained became quite unsatisfactory. Citizens complained of the taste and of the results of using the water. What was needed was a fresh supply from God's clouds filtered through God's atmosphere. The clouds came and brought from distant streams and lakes abundant supplies of water, and the quality of the city water was changed and the complaining ceased.

Christ's presence will change the condition of the churches and change the condition immediately. "There am I in the midst of them" and that is where He delights to be. When the members of a congregation open their hearts to Him and experience the depths of fellowship with Him, the impure thoughts must go and the unworthy purposes are dropped. In His presence the noble takes the place of the ignoble; the pure, of the impure; the worthy, of the unworthy; the high, of the low. Conditions change when He is welcomed.

His presence will make the languishing church, the dying church, a living witness with influence

which will carry healing and health to those who are sorely afflicted. Christ's presence among His people will give to every member a story, and the highest joy will be found in telling that story. The consciousness of His presence and the power experienced in the secrets of His fellowship will completely change the purpose of life and make all sacrifices necessary to the realization of that purpose a sustaining joy.

When Christ's presence is realized by the members of the congregations, the churches will hold the confidence of the communities and the cities. When Christ is welcomed by the members of the churches and His presence is experienced, the attendants will carry from the service a new story, and Christ will be the heart of that story. Every attendant will be a witness and a herald.

The churches in whose services Christ is welcomed and His presence is realized will experience perpetual growth; will send forth light to the places of darkness; will send messengers of hope to the hopeless; and will give heralds of freedom to those who are in slavery. The churches that experience the transforming power of Christ's presence in their assemblies will be invincible in the work of world redemption.

CHAPTER IV

THE FORGOTTEN HEART OF THE COMMISSION

A MAN who has traveled much in the interest of Christian work and, in addition to his opportunity for very extended observation, has held positions with large churches in his denomination, was giving to me his appraisal of the churches in a large southern city. Referring to a particular church, he said, "That's the only church in the city with a program."

Apparently he thought that a program is the essential thing. That is the world's way of estimating many institutions. And while my acquaintance may be a valuable Christian, he has caught the spirit of the world. Indeed many churches have gone over to the world's way of doing things. A program, a plan for carrying forward the work of winning the lost and fostering Christian growth, is both valuable and necessary. I follow with strict application a program in my own work, and no church can work intelligently and effectively without a worthy program. However, when the average church enthusiast speaks about a program his thoughts may not reach very deeply into the things which concerned Christ supremely. The

things which tugged at His heart as He said to His disciples, "Go," are concerning Him deeply now.

A man of large business interests sat with me at a late hour one night talking about the supreme need of the churches. His church has a house finely finished and attractively furnished. And this business man is an officer in his church. As the conversation went deeper into the needs of millions today, my acquaintance said, "I stood at the door of my church tonight and cried, actually cried." And why was this business man who daily carries large and heavy responsibilities so deeply moved? He was thinking about what the churches could do if only they were ready for their Christ-assigned commission. The supremely important matter today, just as it has always been, is not a program but a Presence.

In a retreat with His disciples the Man of Calvary spoke the deep passion of His heart when He said, "Go ye . . . and make disciples." Here our Saviour, our Lord, our Leader, clearly assigns to His friends the work to be done; the work for which he had died; the work to which He is now giving Himself; the work which must supremely engage every close and devoted disciple of His.

The work of disciple-making is vitally related to that pivotal experience and achievement of God's Son upon the cross. No holier task was ever

assigned to any man or any woman. The congregations that assemble week by week or month by month will never take Christ seriously until they see the emphasis which He placed upon the commission and until they come into possession of a compelling, divine urge.

Houses of worship are necessary for the protection and the comfort of the church attendants but Christ made no direct reference to them in His commission. Departmentalized and graded methods are valuable expressions of the technique of teaching and training, but Christ made no specific of these in His commission. Certainly church people have come to believe that an order of service is of serious moment in the hour of worship but to this Christ made not the slightest reference in this holy hour when He said to His disciples, "Go ye . . . and make disciples." Now a word must be said which is not popular but it is imperative and here it is, for the sake of the work for which Christ gave all: the average active church member is giving considerable attention to some of the incidentals but he is leaving out the heart, the very heart, of the Lord's destiny-determining commission.

By far the great majority of ministers, teachers, and leaders in the training departments of the churches need to search deeply into the meaning which the Founder of the churches put into the word "disciple." A disciple is one who puts

his feet in the tracks of earth's peerless Man and follows Him in the most daring venture known to the heart of man. A disciple is one who accepts the teaching of Him who taught as no other ever taught. Careless handling of the Word has robbed it of much of the wealth and worth of its meaning in the thinking of most people. A disciple is one whose deportment gives unmistakable and compelling evidence of the power which has immortalized Calvary.

A passion for numbers has become a disease which is doing serious harm in the work of the kingdom. This passion for numbers in the Sunday schools, the training organizations, the additions to the churches, is being felt everywhere. Indeed any worthy disciple desires and deeply desires that the elevating and ennobling message of Jesus shall be heard by the largest numbers possible. This is a worthy desire. But the passion for numbers is working serious harm in many churches.

There are vast numbers in the churches today who give no convincing evidence of discipleship. More than two million new members have been received into the churches of one Christian body in the States during the last ten years. If all the two million had experienced regeneration and had been trained in the fine art of discipleship, they alone would now be making an impact,

and a powerful impact, upon the non-Christian world.

Facing on Franklin Place is a church with a membership of two thousand five hundred seventy. More than fourteen hundred attend the departments and the classes of the school every Sunday. In the training department every Sunday night are three hundred, and sometimes more, young people. Over a period of five years more than four hundred have been baptized into the fellowship of this unusual church. The congregation has a beautiful building and one admirably designed and equipped for the work which is being done. The indebtedness on the plant is only two hundred ten thousand dollars. The interest obligation, however, would keep fifteen missionaries in places where there are no magnificent church buildings and where the name of Christ has scarcely been heard. The church is able to carry forward the work with only five full-time paid workers. Beyond question this church is doing a valuable service for the city, the state, and the world.

But what might be accomplished if the two thousand five hundred seventy were all disciples? What might be accomplished if half of them were disciples? If twelve hundred eighty-five were to leave that church facing on Franklin Place any Sunday morning and go forth with the unconquerable urge of Christ in their hearts

and with unshaken determination to live out the teachings of the Man of Calvary, they would immediately produce the greatest sensation the city ever experienced and they would make an impact upon the city and the state which would be felt to the ends of earth.

I am not attempting to depreciate the importance of buildings and equipment which the work of Christ demands, nor am I depreciating the importance of workers who are giving their full time to the work of Christ's kingdom in secretarial or other activities. However, I am contending that many of our churches are suffering from debility, many seriously and sorely suffering, and some sick unto death because emphasis has been placed on a program rather than on a Person and a Presence.

An Asiatic entered a city in which wickedness was debasing, degrading, and debauching the men, women, and children. He entered alone. No friend was there to welcome him. He entered without friends but he had a Friend. There was no capital behind him but there was a Comrade with him. He had no salary but he had a Saviour. He had no elaborate program but he had a sustaining and inspiring Presence. In the midst of opposition which otherwise would have crushed this daring Asiatic, his Comrade spoke, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee." And

the Asiatic was invincible. In the midst of wickedness he won a mighty victory for righteousness.

When the Man of Calvary gave His incomparable commission on that Galilean mountain, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples," He also gave a promise which is worth infinitely more to the disciples of Jesus than all the money of Christendom. There has been much going of one kind and another by His disciples and there is much going today but there is but little being said about the greatest possession which any disciple can have, "Lo, I am with you always." Here is the supremely urgent need of the churches around the world today—a clear, conscious, compelling realization that Jesus meant exactly what He said and that He is available for every disciple in every kind of experience.

Why have God-called ministers so often failed to proclaim this incomparable evangel? Why have the teachers of God's imperishable Word said so little about the possible presence of Christ for every church member around the world? The second coming of the Lord Jesus has had considerable place in Bible conferences, in pulpit ministry, and in Bible teaching. Indeed this is one of the greatest of the hopes entertained by many of His followers. That is a wonderful evangel for the future. But here is an inde-

scribably great evangel for the present, "Lo, I am with you always."

Multitudes who claim to be His disciples have never had or have lost the power of this gospel, "Lo, I am with you." The power of this evangel would bring back to vigorous life many dying churches. The power of this evangel would put hope and heart into almost countless numbers who have grown faint in the contest of life. Here is a brief chapter from the life of one of the greatest men of the centuries.

David Livingstone has been in Africa sixteen years. During the sixteen years he has passed through many severe and threatening hours. Perhaps he has never been in such grave peril as now. Infuriated savages have surrounded him. He is looking death in the face. He is tempted to try to make his escape under cover of darkness. Here is what one may find in his journal:

"January 14, 1856. Evening. Felt much turmoil of spirit in prospect of having all my plans for the welfare of this great region and this teeming population knocked on the head by savages tomorrow. But I read that Jesus said: 'All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' It is the word of a gentleman of the most strict and sacred honour, so there's an end of it! I will not cross furtively tonight as

I intended. Should such a man as I flee? Nay, verily, I shall take observations for latitude and longitude tonight, though they may be the last. I feel quite calm now, thank God!"

One will find underlined in Livingstone's journal these words, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Who doubts for a moment that this mighty messenger of the land of deepest darkness, meditating upon this evangel "for the thousandth time," became wondrously supported by the presence of Him who said, "Lo, I am with you?"

Let the friends of righteousness and redemption and the Redeemer retire to their chambers of meditation and communion and there sanely and seriously ask this question: what would a worthy presentation of this evangel, "Lo, I am with you," do for the disciples of the Prince of Peace and His churches everywhere? If the followers of the Man of Calvary accept fully His promise, and advance in the power of His presence, what changes would be observed?

Many, very many, ministers would come before their congregations with new messages. There would be a sublime certainty in their testimony and a new power in their proclamation. Many teachers of the wondrous Word of Life in the Sunday school, the college, and the theological seminary would come before their classes with a new fervor in their faces and with an

earnestness never evidenced before. There would be something far more valuable than the teaching of languages; there would be the presentation of life. There would be something of greater importance than the study of comparative religions; there would be realized the presence of the Comrade Himself. What might be expected of those who do not minister in the pulpit or the class room?

These groups of disciples would carry into the factory, the foundry, the office, the store, the shop; they would carry everywhere the duties of the day directed their feet unmistakable evidence of power to emancipate and elevate. A love for the less fortunate would express itself in every relation. Men and women would evidence far less interest in profits and far more concern in people. Men and women would become far less interested in the size of the dividend and far more keenly concerned about the development of the Divine in those whose lives they influenced. Christ came to help men and women out of death into life, abundant life, and He is still engaged in this superlative enterprise. And this is the supremely important assignment for His disciples this day. But what are many of the members of His churches doing? With many there is no winsome power radiating from their presence when every contact should convey the influence of their evangel. Many are

silent concerning their possession when they should be expressing through every relation the matchless character of the Man of Calvary. Out of His incomparable concern and compassion Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and make disciples and lo, I am with you."

Quite probably fewer than five percent of the members of churches are making any direct effort to win disciples to the Lord Jesus. The great majority of those who attend the services with worthy regularity seem content to be present and to contribute to the support of their churches. And all the while there are many, many millions who have scarcely heard of the One who alone can lift them out of their poverty into wealth, out of their darkness into light, and out of death into life. Vast numbers of churches and many more church members are seriously in need of a power which they are not evidencing.

What will awake and arouse the sleeping and the sluggish churches? What will transform an ordinary church member into a fervent herald of the matchless story? What will make men and women sacrifice to the point of suffering and yet in their sacrifice find joy? What will make of every man and every woman who have accepted Christ as their Saviour living letters filled with compelling testimony? What will equip the churches with courage and compassion

which will make them invincible in the work which is so urgently important? The answer to these questions is found in words from the heart of Jesus to His disciples, "Lo, I am with you."

The disciple who lives in the consciousness that Jesus meant just what He said in this pronouncement will live nobly, impressively, and triumphantly. He or she will be a living message capturing the attention of those who know not the Son of God. The churches that experience and proclaim this mighty evangel, whose members move in the consciousness that their Lord and Leader is daily doing what He said in this promise, "Lo, I am with you," such churches will get the attention of the community or the city, and from such churches there will go without strain or effort an influence which will carry healing and transforming power to every life within their reach. When the churches proclaim this gospel, "Lo, I am with you," out of the power of Christ's presence, they will be equipped, sufficiently equipped, for carrying the message of light and life to the ends of the earth.

CHAPTER V

OUT OF FEAR INTO FEARLESSNESS

FOR years I have quoted from memory the beautiful, inspiring, and heartening twenty-third psalm. One morning last week as I sat in a convention there came to me a deeper message out of the psalm than I had ever seen or had ever heard expressed, and the message came quite unexpectedly.

This message the churches seriously need in these testing, trying, and turbulent days. This message which the psalm possesses would give the finest equipment to the members of Christ's churches everywhere. It is greatly needed by all people in all life's experiences.

I have just come from a home where a woman of lovely character and unusual opportunities has just passed into the land beyond the sunset. On a previous visit a member of the family, in soft and gentle words, told me that she was unconscious and then added, "We think it best that she is this way for when she is conscious she realizes her condition and cries." Did she fear death? Most people do.

"I will fear no evil" declares this Asiatic. Quite probably he had experienced many, many times the dreadful attacks of fear. He had lived

the life of an exile; he had been an outlaw; he had gone into evil ways and had been guilty of sins which were horrible; he had been hunted like a wild beast which had killed the lambs of a flock; he had been rebelled against by his own son; he had received news of that son's death in battle. Doubtless he had been besieged and assaulted by fear again and again. Fear is a subject of serious importance. Nearly everybody has been assailed and most people have been assailed again and again by fear.

Less than thirty-six hours ago, far into the night, a man called to see me and laid before me his feelings as only a few do. This man is a noble Christian and has received an income far above the average for a number of years. Just now he is facing a change in his plans and he feels uncertain about the future. As he sat by my side he declared, "There are times when I can see my children being kept out of school and my family facing starvation." During recent years he has felt secure in his income but now with uncertainty before him, fear is on his heels. I doubt not that at times fear drives away sleep and makes many of his moments miserable. What message has this Easterner for him? What message has God for him in this psalm? Fear is one of the most terrible enemies of men and women.

There are those who have offered themselves

for office who fear defeat. There are business men who fear that their business will fail. There are millions of men and women who are producing the commodities for the people of earth who fear that they will lose their positions and suffer for want of income. At this time there are millions of Asiatics, Europeans, Africans, and Americans who are looking into the future with uncertainty and who are being hounded by fear. There are multitudes moving along life's highways smiling as they touch elbows with other travelers, and yet they are carrying fear in their hearts.

The man who can stand up, speak out of his own experience, and declare, "I will fear no evil," has a message of marvelous moment for multitudes of Asiatics, Europeans, Islanders, Africans, and Americans. This man has a message for the armies of youth as they are getting ready to take their places in world affairs. This man who is speaking for God has a message which the professional and business men of earth should hear. He is speaking a message which parents should receive with keenest interest. Here is a message for Christian people of all creeds and of all lands. What is the source of the psalmist's assurance?

Beyond a doubt this Easterner who has made an imperishable and invaluable contribution to humanity had been sorely afflicted with fear but

he declares that he has learned the way of victory. Any man who can tell the world how to conquer fear has a message for millions. In the libraries one can find many, many volumes dealing with fear and how fear may be conquered. Here are a few sentences from the opening chapter of one of the best books which I have read dealing with the conquest of fear:

“When I say that during most of my conscious life I have been a prey to fears I take it for granted that I am expressing the case of the majority of people. . . . Fear dogs one of us in one way and another in another, but every one in some way. . . . There is not a home or an office or a factory or a school or a church in which some hang-dog apprehension is not eating at the hearts of the men, women, and children who go in and out.”

I declare unhesitatingly that I find more help in this short psalm of six verses made up of one hundred seventeen words in dealing with this monster, than I have found in all the books dealing with the mastery of fear. The motif in the message is strikingly evident from the opening phrase. The motif is faith in the love and the care of God. During the first three verses the inspired spokesman is speaking of God in the third person. Mark carefully his words:

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s
sake.”

There is commanding confidence in every utterance. There is asserting assurance in every word. In the fourth verse this spokesman for God suddenly changes from the third person to the second. God’s presence becomes real to him and he reaches heights of commanding assurance, and declares:

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.”

And here he gives the secret of his confidence. He shows to all who are anxious to know the source of his assurance the reason for his testimony. In five words and each a monosyllable he gives to the vast multitudes of earth who have been and are afflicted and severely assaulted by fear the secret of victory. Certainly there was turmoil then; certainly there were turbulent seas over which men must steer their vessels on life’s unexplored voyage; certainly there were storms which would overtake the pilgrims and beat upon them in fearful fury. But here is a man who speaks out of a heart of assurance a message of assurance to men and women whose

hearts are almost fainting under the affliction of fear. What is the ground for his assurance? What is the source of his calmness and courage? He tells us in five short words. With the noblest thoughts on duty and with hearts adorned with humility those who are concerned in the emancipation of humanity and who are ready to measure their strength in the world-wide work of redemption should spend time, much time, in the matchless experience indicated in the psalmist's words:

“For thou art with me.”

That is the source of his assurance. Here is the secret of his emancipation. As he writes about the wonder and the wealth of God's care and protection the Lord's presence becomes real to him and he boldly declares, “I will fear no evil.” He was conscious of God's care but he became conscious of God's presence. Then he ceases talking about God and talks to God.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

A Presence—that's the greatest need of Christendom today. It is one thing to talk about God and quite another to talk to God. His presence gives perfect protection. His presence possesses power. Christian men and women cannot put

their hands to the redemptive task without power. They may have the most perfect productions which church architects can give; they may have the best methods in all departments which the students of methods can devise; they may resort to the newest and the most unique devices to spur action: all these, as valuable as they may be made, can never set forward one inch the work of the kingdom. "Pep" in many instances has been substituted for power. Too often far more has been said about a program than about a Presence.

A program which is a product of prayer should be accepted and followed in every church in the world. Earnestness and enthusiasm which are born and fostered in fellowship with Christ should be experienced in every redeemed life. However, the most careful observers realize that there has been in many churches a swing toward programs and "pep" and away from power and a Presence. And this swing has been indeed a deadly swing for many churches.

Churches everywhere are in the midst of evils, and are facing difficulties. The most serious difficulty, the only one which can retard their progress, is within. A very careful observer, after spending seventeen months in Europe, comes back with the conviction that the Christ of Europe is a concealed Christ. His report is that the churches are not giving evidence of

Christ's transforming presence and His elevating power. Communism, Fascism, and Militarism are perplexing problems for the Christian forces of Europe.*

What are some of the difficulties which the churches of America are facing? One large denomination reports that fifty-seven percent of its members are giving nothing to any Christian enterprise. There are thousands who are being called upon to teach the greatest Book which earth has known who have never had the privilege of one hour of Bible study under a capable teacher and who have done but little careful study at home. The average church official never makes an effort to lead a lost person to Christ. Certainly there are church officials who have inspiring records in personal achievements in turning the lost to the Saviour, and yet by far the majority quite probably never make an effort in personal testimony. What can lift the churches out of the lethargy in which many find themselves today and endow them with a power which will make them invincible?

And let no one doubt for even a moment that this condition of life is Christ's ideal for every one of His churches. Every church should be sending out redemptive influence into every part of the community or city and sending out this

*Dr. H. W. Tribble in *Seminary News*, No. 2, Vol. III.

influence constantly. The church that is failing to do just this is falling below her privilege and below her Lord's ideal. The churches should be sending out more than arresting and awakening and transforming influence. The members of every church should be so endowed with concern and compassion for the lost that they would give their testimony wherever they go.

A weakness, a weakness which is serious beyond understanding, in many churches is the lack of concern on the part of many of the members and sometimes on the part of the minister which will urge them forth in search for those whose feet are carrying them toward certain destruction and death. In the average American church there are but very few unsaved non-church members in either the morning or the night congregations. The lost of the communities and the cities are not hearing the gospel. The great majority of our churches in this country are not sufficiently endowed with the deathless concern of Christ to make a determined and sustained effort for the lost of our communities and cities. This is the most serious evil which the churches are meeting today.

But the atmosphere of many churches can be changed. Here is a man who speaks out and says, "I will fear no evil," and then gives as his reason, "for thou art with me." God's presence is the source of inspiration, the source of

strength, the source of courage, and the source of compassion.

The churches need to make a new discovery—the discovery of the Lord's presence among His people. His presence will banish the little differences which work injury. His presence will give assurance in the face of all kinds of evils. His presence changes the appearance of things which produce fear. His presence will warm the hearts which hold to the frozen assets and make sacrifice a joy. When His presence is realized in the churches and by the individuals who make up the churches, the funds will flow into the treasuries of the kingdom and increasing numbers of messengers will be released for the lands where spiritual darkness reigns. His presence will give concern for those who are lost and impel the saved to go in search of those who are in peril.

“I will fear no evil for Thou art with me.” Wonderful testimony! Yes, His presence emancipates. His presence—that is the greatest need of many churches and of multitudes of church members today. That is the most urgent need of many a minister's study.

A Presence—that is the most urgent need now. That will change everything which needs changing. There can be no lack of concern where His presence is realized. There will be joy; there

will be an experience; there will be a readiness to sacrifice; there will be a matchless story wherever He is welcomed and realized. A Presence, His presence—that is the urgent and supreme need of the hour.

CHAPTER VI

CHRIST LEADS OUT OF THREATENING DISASTER

MANY churches seem to have lost their most valuable possession. If they have lost this possession, certainly they will never be able to do their work until they find it.

Other institutions may carry on with other means, but the churches of Jesus Christ cannot do their work, according to the plan and the purpose of the Leader, without perpetual inspiration and perpetual power. The churches, certainly multitudes of them, need and seriously need to find Him who alone can give this equipment.

There are many church people who sing about the presence of Jesus, read or hear others read about His presence, pray or hear others pray about His presence, and repeat creeds about His presence but who, apparently, never really experience His presence. The reverent study of one man's experience should convince all who are searching for the inspiration and the power which they so much need.

Christ is the light for life's perplexities. How different will be the experiences of countless thousands when this truth is fully realized!

Here is an Asiatic who has been assaulted by a mob in an Eastern city. A Roman officer rescues the man from death. He is brought before the court and is given the privilege of presenting his case. Quite soon the court is in turmoil and the Roman official rescues the Asiatic again. The court is the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Asiatic is Saul of Tarsus. Saul has made his defense before the mob and he has made it before the court but the deadly determination of his enemies grows more deadly. Who is left to whom he can make an appeal for justice, for protection, for light, and for leading? A mob with death in the hearts of its members is forming on the street, and the mob will ask the court to aid it in intriguing Paul into their death plot. And here is a wonderful statement in the midst of the story:

“And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so thou must bear witness also at Rome.”

Think of the feeling which must have filled the heart of Paul that night. One can easily imagine that his spirit was harassed. Quite probably there were perplexing problems which pressed upon him. Would he be taken from the prison and killed? Would he have the privilege of giving his testimony in Rome? Would he ever have the privilege of writing other mes-

sages? Would he have the opportunity of telling others what Christ had done for him? The man against whom a murderous plot was forming discovered again that which every Christian of earth needs to know—that Christ is available; that Christ's presence brings light upon all of life's perplexities.

If the mob that dragged him from the temple had succeeded in killing the incomparable crusader, or if the Sanhedrin had silenced him forever, or if the mob that formed on the street and took an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed him had succeeded, the world would have suffered irreparable losses.

The third group of Paul's letters would never have been written. The letters to the Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians—messages which deal chiefly with the person and the power of the Lord Jesus—would never have been written. But these letters do not constitute the full loss which the world would have suffered. The fourth group of Paul's letters would never have been given to the world. The letter to Titus and the two letters to Timothy would not be available. But Christ was deeply concerned about His servant and He was present in the tower of Antonia.

We have come upon a day in our church life when the care and the concern of Christ are

poorly appreciated. Christ cared enough for this crusader of His to be with him that night in the castle in Jerusalem. This marvelous messenger, this incomparable crusader, this sacrificial servant, this peerless pioneer, was giving his best to the redemptive enterprise; and the Son of God, King Immanuel, the Prince of Peace, gave His presence to the man who was giving the full force of his strength. A hard place on the journey was entered. Doubtless there was severe suffering of spirit. To those who did not know of the presence and the power of Christ it looked as though the life of this mighty herald would be ended and ended viciously.

But the Lord Jesus was present. The tower of Antonia never had such a Visitor before. The castle never contained one previous to this hour like Him who entered and spoke His inspiriting and healing words that night. Jesus had said, said clearly, said unmistakably: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations . . . and lo, I am with you all the days," and again this crusader of the Cross discovered that Christ meant what He said, that He could be depended upon in any hour of test or trial.

The churches have no need today comparable to their need of a return to Christ and entering into their matchless heritage—the consciousness of His presence. If Christ came to an Asiatic

when he was putting his very self into the redemptive effort, why will He not come to an American when he puts his very self into the same effort? Certainly He is just as ready to accompany a European, an African, an Indian, a Chinese, an American, or any other individual from any land who will measure his strength in the redemptive cause as He was to move by the side of this earnest, enthusiastic, sacrificing, peerless Asiatic. And He will delight to make His presence felt in the churches increasingly when the members of the churches present the attitude which will make His presence possible.

Choirs and congregations sing:

“He leadeth me! O blessed thought!
O words with heav’nly comfort fraught!
What-e’er I do, wher-e’er I be,
Still ’tis God’s hand that leadeth me.”

And we sing as if there were always a beautiful and sustaining fellowship. We sing as if Christ’s presence were just as real as the presence of the air or the presence of a comrade in the car by our side. And I am convinced that His presence is real to some and His presence is the only explanation of the strength of their gentleness, their endurance, their courage, and their compassion. Choirs and congregations sing that great, enduring hymn of Charles Wesley:

“Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high!
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storms of life are past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.

* * *

“Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy name,
I am all unrighteousness;
False, and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.”

Was Christ real to Charles Wesley when he was writing this hymn? In this hymn Wesley sees in Christ a safe Protector from a beating storm; a mighty Helper for those who have fallen beneath their burdens; a safe and certain Physician for those who are faint with sickness; a dependable Leader for those who are feeling their way in blindness. Every line expresses the feeling that Christ is just as real as a friend standing before him. Quite probably the secret of the life and the power of the hymn is found in the presence of Jesus which the writer experienced. Blind but immortal Fanny Crosby writes:

“Jesus, keep me near the cross,
There a precious fountain,
Free to all, a healing stream,
Flows from Calv’ry’s mountain.”

And the writer is talking to Jesus. Was Christ real to this marvelous Christian woman? Did she mean what she said when she wrote, “Jesus, keep me near the cross?” Do not this and other hymns present the evidence that Christ was quite real and quite present with her?

When church people sing of the presence of Jesus, do they mean what they say or are they just singing? In the lines from Fanny Crosby one hears her speaking to Jesus about a matter of tremendous importance, and she is speaking as if Jesus and she were in intimate conversation. Did she mean what she said? Who would doubt for a moment that she did? In the lines from Charles Wesley one hears him speaking to Jesus as if he and Christ were brought together by a great cause in which both were deeply interested, and Wesley is presenting his heart’s deep needs to his incomparable Friend. Who doubts that Christ was very real to Charles Wesley?

Is Christ available today for those who are giving themselves to the mighty and the matchless work of world redemption? If He is not, then men and women cannot accept the clear teaching of God’s Word. If He is available, then multitudes are failing to use their mightiest

resources. What is the testimony concerning this Asiatic whose life has so profoundly influenced millions and whose influence continues, without loss of power, down through the centuries?

“And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.”

“And the night following the Lord stood by him,” and Christ was available in one of the severest hours a man ever entered. Only a few hours before, Paul had been face to face with death. He had explained his experience to those who were attempting to kill him. He had explained his position and his work to the court. Opposition had become so deadly that a mob was forming and those joining the mob were taking an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. The divinely inspired historian says: “The Lord stood by him,” and the Lord came with a message which the incomparable Asiatic needed, and the message brought invaluable strength for an hour of need. What did Christ’s presence do for the Asiatic who was surrounded by difficulties and against whom a death plot had been made?

No one can carefully examine the words and the deeds of Paul without finding abundant evidence of powerful courage. The presence of the

Lord Jesus and His words that night must have made a great contribution to Paul's endurance, to his courage, and to the character of his work. With marked steadfastness his face was set to the future and, though difficulties were severe and perilous, he did a work which has endured through the centuries.

Christendom needs incomparable courage for the days into which we have come. If Christianity has come to the parting of the ways, nothing but the presence of Him who knows every hour of the way ahead can meet the testing needs of the hour and direct the churches to increasing and commanding victories.

These are great days for the churches of Jesus Christ. There are many millions who are out of employment and the hearts of many of them are filled with fears. There are large numbers of business and professional men and women who feel severely insecure as they look into the future. There is a restlessness around the world which is without an example in recent years. This is an unusual hour for the man and the woman who bear the name of Jesus Christ. This stressful, turbulent, and testing day presents to the churches a great privilege to reflect clearly and commandingly the power of Christ's presence.

The most serious and, to those who look deep into the conditions around them, the most alarm-

ing loss which Christendom has ever suffered is the loss on the part of many churches of the consciousness of Christ's presence among His people. There are some inevitable results which have followed the loss of the God-consciousness. There are ministers who have gone for weeks without once going in search of one who was lost and telling, with the compassion of Calvary, that one the way into the kingdom. There are teachers of God's Word who have appeared before their classes Sunday morning after Sunday morning without beseeching the Father for power to lead those who know not Christ into eternal fellowship with Him. There are office bearers who have never gone as did Philip to the imperial task of winning the unsaved to the Saviour. There has been a lamentable failure on the part of many who are supposed to be heralds of the passion of Christ. Every redeemed soul is expected to be a herald of the redemptive reaches of the Savior. How miserably multitudes have failed in the most important work ever assigned to man!

But this is the hour for large numbers of churches to realize their lamentable mistakes and to enter into their incomparable privilege of advancing in the inspiration and in the power of their Leader's presence.

Christ's presence will equip the heart with calmness.

Christ's presence will supply the heart with courage.

Christ's presence will give strength in the hour of supreme struggle.

Christ's presence will give to ministers of God's Word a reaching compassion for those who are lost.

Christ's presence will give to His churches an awakening concern for those who are walking in the ways of ruin and sinking in the depths of sin. In the midst of the world's restlessness and disturbed condition, Christ's presence in His churches will make their members evangelists of light and life to all who are walking the perilous ways without the sustaining and guiding presence of our Redeemer and Lord.

Christ is the only hope of the world.

Christ is sufficient and fully sufficient for all the world's ills. He is ready to walk by our side along the way. Let us meet every condition for having His wondrous presence.

CHAPTER VII

“I COME TO YOU”—CHRIST

A GROUP of eleven Asiatics were listening to their Leader. The men had gone from a quiet room in an Eastern city to a spot unknown to history. There had been growing enmity against the Leader and His followers for days. Hate had become filled with subtlety, jealousy, hypocrisy, and a determined purpose to bring the Leader to His death. With surpassing and indeed unearthly perception the Leader had selected an hour when He would make more complete revelations of His purpose to His followers. Quite probably the clear consciousness of the enemies' plans was responsible for the Leader's retiring with His small number to a room in an empty temple or to a secluded spot in the darkness. The Leader was the Lord Jesus and the men were the eleven apostles. In that unknown spot the Son of God gave to these men a promise which is the hope of Christendom today, and the present realization of which would give all the power which all the churches around the world need at this hour.

The greatest pronouncements have not been made on battlefields, from thrones, in parliaments, or in presidents' chambers. During the

darkness of the night, at a spot unknown to all historians, one of the most potential and powerful pronouncements of the ages was made. The importance and the power of the pronouncement cannot be appreciated without some understanding of the enterprise contemplated.

The plan by which every man, woman, boy, and girl of earth and of all time might be reclaimed, redeemed, re-made was to be told, told earnestly, told compassionately, and told repeatedly in every place on the planet. No plan like it had been contemplated in all the ages. Its magnitude was transcendently above the dreams and the aspirations of any reformer of the centuries. And eleven men had received the pronouncement.

These men had no capital but they had a commission. They had no definite plans but they were promised a Presence. They were to be left without an appointed human leader but they were to have access every step of the way to their Lord. A world task filled with innumerable difficulties was before them, a task infinitely beyond the reach of their power, but Christ said, "I am with you."

The stupendousness of the work assigned indicates the power to be experienced in the realization of the pronouncement. The power of Christ's presence is only realized when one

lifts his eyes and sees the marvelous magnitude of the task assigned.

There stand or sit the eleven Asiatics. Around them for days hate, jealousy, and enmity have been boiling. Their Leader has told them that He would be killed. He has also told them that they are to face heartless and vicious opposition. The fires of persecution are to be seen on every side. With the persecutors planning, with hate filling the air, and with death on the cross just before Him, the Son of God says, "I come unto you."

Christ knew that these men could not withstand the opposition alone. He knew full well that they could not press forward in their work of redemption without inspiring, inspiriting, and sustaining help. The need, urgent and supreme, of the churches today is to appropriate the help which is theirs, and for their multitude of members to realize the power of this pronouncement. Dr. Alexander Maclaren, one of the greatest of all expositors and one of the towering men of his generation, declares:

"I cannot but think that the average Christian life of this day woefully fails in the simple, conscious realization of this great truth, and that we are all far too little living in the calm, happy, strengthening assurance that we are never alone, but have Jesus Christ with each of us more

closely, more truly, in a more available fashion, and with more omnipotence of influence than they had who were nearest Him during the days that He lived upon earth.”

I am quite convinced that the only thing that will set the churches forward in their work of matchless importance, the only thing that will cause the hearts of their millions of members to burn with a new zeal, a zeal which will make many of us who are loitering along the way become flaming evangelists, is recapturing the consciousness of Christ’s own presence. E. Stanley Jones, a man who has won the attention of tens of thousands, a student of Christian conditions in the world of distinguished experience, has this timely word:

“The fact is that we, as Christians, at home and abroad, have come to the parting of the ways. The strain on our Christianity is getting greater and greater. The growing complexity of our civilization is increasing the complexity of demand for an adequate spiritual dynamic. We must give it or fail to function as Christians. The extent of the projection of our gospel into the soul of this age will be determined by the depth of our own experience of that gospel. We cannot go further than we have experienced.”*

“We cannot go further than we have experi-

*The Christ of Every Road, p. 268.

enced.” Those who are experiencing Christ are the ones who are able to testify to the worth of Christ’s fellowship and Christ’s peace. The churches are seriously in need of something. Their first need is not equipment. Their greatest need is not larger schools and larger young people’s organizations and larger numbers in their membership. The supreme and urgent need of the churches is to recapture the consciousness of their Leader’s presence. The most deplorable and lamentable loss that the churches have ever experienced is the loss, on the part of multitudes, of the consciousness of the presence of Jesus.

“I will not leave you desolate.” Christ knew that the eleven men could never grapple with the redemptive task alone. He knew that eleven thousand men could not go forth with any assurance to win the world to righteousness. Listen as He speaks His message of confidence, “I will not leave you orphans: I come to you.” He is not referring to an event in the far distant future. He is referring to an experience to be realized immediately upon His ascension. His bodily presence was about at an end but His real presence was to last forever.

Earth has known no greater nor finer courage than that evidenced by the early Christians. With no human leadership, with no financial backing, with no churches to welcome them, but with

determined opposition on every side, these men went to their work with enthusiasm and joy. They went through repeated persecutions but they went forward with victory in their hearts. There is no earthly explanation for their confidence, calmness, and courage. Christ had said, "I am with you always," and surely they believed it. Surely they realized His presence. Certainly it was the power of His presence which gave certainty to their steps and unfaltering devotion to their hearts.

As I write this chapter, only God knows how much I need to experience daily and hourly the immeasurable power of the pronouncement which Christ made on that night to that small body of men. My work will be so mechanical, my efforts so shallow, and my steps so uncertain if Christ is not present. There is no greater responsibility upon any man or woman of earth than upon the minister of Jesus Christ. The minister carries a commission which is filled with the compassion of the Man of Calvary. That commission bears the death marks of God's own Son. The one who reads it correctly will find the earnestness and the glow of Calvary in it. Those who read it to its depths will find the destiny of mankind involved in it. Every true minister of Jesus Christ carries this commission. What will the modern minister do with his com-

mission? Only God can measure the results which will follow the answering of this question.

The minister who does not experience the power of this pronouncement in his study can never come before his people with the message which their problems and their privileges demand. Let the study be made holy by the presence of the Lord Jesus; let the pronouncement, "I come to you," be realized while the messages for the people are being prepared; and the power of that same pronouncement will be experienced when the people assemble in the name of the Prince of Peace. If Christ's presence is not realized in the minister's study, he may deal with timely themes, he may embellish his message with striking sayings and excerpts from the most brilliant poets but his people will go away from the house of the Lord without that which their deepest needs demand. The power of the prophetic pulpit will perish from the earth if Christ's presence is not realized in the study. The power of prophetic preaching will be realized around the world when the power of Christ's presence is daily experienced in the study.

"I will not leave you orphans: I come to you," and this is a pronouncement and a promise with all the honor of Christ behind it. This is not a reference to the second coming of the Lord Jesus. If He had been referring to that momen-

tous event, He would have explained that He would be absent from them and from all others who might become His followers until He should come again. He was talking to the men who were with Him and to them He said, "I will not leave you orphans." Then He follows that promise with these words, "I come to you." No statement could be clearer than this and it comes from the very heart of the Lord Jesus. When the churches accept this pronouncement, not as a creed to be repeated but as a truth to be realized in their world-redemptive task, and when their millions of members advance to their Christ-assigned work in the wonderful wealth of His presence, the most striking and indeed the most thrilling changes, which the world has yet seen, will be observed.

This change will be clearly felt and seen in many pulpits. A new fervency will be felt. A new earnestness will be in evidence. Ministers who have not had sufficient interest to go in search for the lost will be seen getting into the tracks of their Saviour and going into uninviting places to tell men and women, even the outcasts and the refuse of society, about the mighty power and the charming friendship of the Son of God. And as they win one here and another yonder, after struggles unknown before, they

will find the zeal in their own hearts burning with an exhilarating glow.

This change will also be impressively seen in the activities of other church leaders. Office bearers, who have never experienced the compelling urge to go in search of men and women who are straying into ruin and death, will now be seen on their way going after the man who has been handcuffed by the officers of perdition and is on his way to hell. The officer will go with a prayer which will reach to the very center of his own soul and to the God of all grace. He will tell that manacled man that there is freedom for him; that he does not have to go the way of ruin; that he does not have to be a slave to habits which debase, defeat, and disgrace him; that he does not have to spend eternity with those who have walked the ways of eternal death. There will be assurance in the officer's words; there will be sympathy in his eyes; there will be an unearthly compassion in his plea. And, like Deacon Philip, he will turn men and women from the ways of ruin into the ways of redemption.

When the wonder of this pronouncement and promise is realized by the teachers of the Word of Life, what changes will be observed in the ministry of many teachers? The teaching of the geography and the history of the lesson will

only be an introduction to the teacher's message. The passion of Luther and Livingstone, of Carey and Bunyan will be felt in ten thousand class rooms. In these rooms immortal experiences will take place because the teacher's own heart has been mightily moved by the presence of his incomparable Comrade. The future of the churches depends upon whether or not their members will enter into their matchless privileges of advancing in the power of this pronouncement and in the presence of the Prince of Peace. That eminent expositor, Alexander Maclaren, speaks his heart in this testimony:

"How did that dispirited group of cowardly men ever pluck up courage to hold together after the crucifixion at all? Why was it that they did not follow the example of John's disciples, and dissolve and disappear; and say, 'The game is up. It is no use in holding together any longer?' The process of separation began on the very day of the crucifixion. Only one thing could have stopped it, and that is the resurrection and the presence with His Church of the risen Christ in His power and in all the fulness of His gifts. If it had not been that He came to them, they would have disappeared, and Christianity would have been one more of the abortive sects forgotten in Judaism. But, as it is, the whole of the New Testament after Pentecost is aflame with

the consciousness of a present Christ, working amongst His people.”

Wonderful pronouncement, “I come to you!”

Wonderful promise, “I come to you!”

The truth of the pronouncement has been experienced by many. If the churches are to possess refreshing, revitalizing power, this pronouncement must be experienced by the multitudes of church members. “I come to you.” It has been fulfilled and it is being fulfilled every day and every hour. When the churches awake to His presence and their vast number of members enter into the wonder and the wealth of His presence, they will stand forth in power and give themselves to the work of world redemption with a divine daring which has never been surpassed since Christ commanded His followers to give the gospel to the lost multitudes of earth.

CHAPTER VIII

INVINCIBLE CHURCHES—HOW?

HERE is a statement from Jesus which one cannot read with reasonably clear understanding without experiencing a rising of the deepest emotions. In one sentence the matchless Teacher is sweeping away forever a misunderstanding which otherwise would have disturbed millions through the centuries. One of His disciples had asked, "Lord, what is come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" In his reply Jesus makes unmistakably clear the way by which one may have the invaluable and the imperishable fellowship of both God the Son and God the Father. Apparently Judas, not Iscariot, believed that the manifestation of Christ was for the apostles only. Christ, in His reply, had a message of mighty meaning for the churches of to-day. Here is His answer:

"If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

The privileges which Judas had in mind were available for the apostles and they were available for any one who would meet the conditions. They are just as available now as they were when

Jesus spoke His heart to one of the Twelve. Without experiencing these privileges those who bear the name of Jesus will find themselves halting along the way and making no worthy contribution to the work of winning the world to Christ.

Those who meet the conditions and enter into the privileges which Christ explained to one of His intimate associates will come into possession of that which will make their lives mighty contributing forces in the work of world redemption. In the work of the churches around the world and in all the history of Christendom the meeting of the condition which Christ here makes clear determines everything. To a reverent consideration of the conditions given by the Lord Jesus Himself this study now turns.

“If a man love me, he will keep my word,” and here Christ clearly declares that love is the basis and cause of obedience. A man’s obedience to Christ measures his love for Christ. A woman’s obedience to Christ measures her love for Christ.

Just recently I called at a home from which there is a lovely daughter in school. When I reached the home, I enquired about the father and the mother and learned that both were away at work. There was a home which required all the time and effort of that mother,

but at night she performed her duties in the home, and then early in the morning she was up and making ready to go to hard work that she might share in keeping her daughter in school. I came away from that home with a consciousness that there is a mother whose love is expressing itself in real sacrifice for her growing daughter. Choirs and congregations sing:

“My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine,
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

“I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me,
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree;
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow:
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.”

But Christ speaks His heart and declares, “If a man love me, he will keep my word.” Obedience is the measure of one's love. Those who love Christ are careful to learn what Christ would have them do and then are careful to obey Christ. Love always prompts obedience. If I love the Lord Jesus, can I treat lightly my engagement with Him in the beginning of each new day? If I love the Lord Jesus, can I treat lightly the study of His Word? If I love the Lord Jesus, will I not be found trying to tell others of what Christ means to me? If I really

love the Lord Jesus, will I not tell men and women, though I may tell them awkwardly, how much they are missing in not knowing Him?

In thousands of churches and in tens of thousands of hearts the prayer of Elizabeth Prentiss should be earnestly and repeatedly made:

“More love to Thee, O Christ, More love to Thee!
Hear Thou the prayer I make On bended knee;
This is my earnest plea: More love, O Christ, to Thee,
More love to Thee, More love to Thee!”

I think Matthew loved the Lord Jesus when he called together a group of fellow social outcasts, made a dinner, and presented to them his Redeemer. I think that Andrew loved the Lord Jesus when he went searching for his brother Simon and brought him to his new Friend. I think Stephen loved the Lord Jesus when he gave his testimony with such earnestness that the enemies of Christ stoned him to death. When Saul broke from what careful, keen thinkers of his day regarded as a most brilliant career, broke with his own relatives and gave himself through repeated persecutions to the work of winning others to the Saviour, I think he evidenced unmistakable love for His Lord. When the modern foreign missionary packs his trunk and starts to one of the almost innumerable places of spiritual destitution and death, I think he is evidencing a love for the Lord Jesus.

There is need today for a devotion to Christ which will result in loyalty to the local church in attendance, in giving, and in fervently inviting others. There is need of devotion in many, many hearts which will express itself in constant and zealous effort to bring those who know not the Saviour to the Lord Jesus. There is imperative need for devotion which will express itself in going anywhere and undertaking any kind of task which the Master may indicate. But this reply of the Prince of Peace to one of His friends has other tremendously important messages for modern church people. Follow carefully the thought of humanity's peerless Friend as he opens his heart further to this enquirer.

“If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

Every Christian of earth should look into the depths of this message from the Lord Jesus and look with profoundest reverence. Those who love the Friend of all friends are careful to learn His wishes and they are careful to obey Him. He does not ask that which is unreasonable. He may call for the supremely sacrificial but He will have a supremely important goal in mind and He will be ready to provide the most valuable equipment and bestow the most valuable awards.

Concerning the man who loves the Lord Jesus

and obeys Him, Jesus says, "My Father will love him." How wonderful for a man to advance along life's highway in the consciousness that God loves him! How heartening for a woman to approach her tasks in the morning in the thought that God loves her! Just now there are many millions who are feeling the pressure of conditions and quite large numbers of these have lost considerable heart and hope. There are those who are looking into the future without the assurance which their hearts deeply desire.

I cannot go to my own tasks without help. I cannot continue to push forward without reinforcement. I cannot look into the future without Another to sustain me and to hearten me. How wonderful the message of my Lord! Those who have learned to love the Lord Jesus and who have expressed their love in their obedience are loved every step of the way by the Father.

There is never an hour but what the Father loves them. There is never a day so dark but what His love will come through the darkness. There is never a testing place on the journey but what His love will express itself. I must search my own heart and see whether or not I love the Lord Jesus and whether or not I am obeying the Lord Jesus. If I am, then I have met the condition for having the sustaining love of my

Father during every experience which may be mine in the unexplored tomorrow.

The consciousness of God's care and God's love takes much of the sting out of persecution. The inspiration of His love has taken much of the heat out of the fire as martyrs were giving their lives to the cause of redemption. The courage contributed by the consciousness of His care and His love has supplied the finest equipment in many an hour of battle. "My Father will love him." Marvelous is the privilege of which Jesus speaks to the hearts of multitudes who are engaged at this hour in the work of world redemption! Every man and every woman who know the Lord Jesus are privileged to move through the experiences of the day sustained and inspired by the love of God.

But Christ has something perhaps of greater importance still to say to those who have learned the wonderful way of real obedience. And what He has to say here quite probably is the most important thing which the churches of Jesus Christ need to learn at this hour. How much men and women need to have their choicest thoughts on duty and their hearts equipped with reverence and spiritual discernment when they come to hear this message from the Redeemer! From the first word this indefinably important message should be examined.

“If a man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

These words are so clear that a junior boy or girl should be able to understand them. Jesus says quite clearly that He and the Father will make their abode with those who love and obey the Lord Jesus. The vast majority of church members would profess to believe what Jesus has said about the land beyond the sunset. Church members generally confess that they believe what He has said about making complete preparation for those who finish faithfully their assignments here and go hence to live with their Lord. Professing Christians claim to believe what the Son of God has said about the character of the Father. Here the Prince of Peace, our matchless Friend, is giving to us one of the most inspiriting and inspiring truths to be found in all the messages which He ever gave, and yet His friends have had so little to say about it.

How He elevates a friend when He says, “We will come unto him and make our abode with him!” Think of God the Father and God the Son coming to live with one on our earth. That is just what the Lord plainly says. What a change will be observed in many of our lives when we meet the condition for Christ’s abiding with us! Those who know us most intimately

will feel the power of an ennobling purpose in the very tone of our conversation and in the direction of our thinking. Think of it—"We will come unto him and make our abode with him!" No words can possibly express the depth of meaning in such fellowship. When the Father and the Lord Jesus come to live with a man, the things which mar character are not welcomed any more but the ideals which elevate and the purposes which purify flourish in this new fellowship.

When the churches fully realize that Jesus meant just what He said and that their members may have the very presence of our good and great Father and the very presence of Christ Jesus Himself, there will be seen the most vital changes since the days of apostolic zeal and apostolic fervor.

Those who never spend thirty minutes a week examining and feeding upon the Word of Life will be seen diligently searching for the great riches reserved in its messages. Those who make their offerings out of a sense of duty or a sense of church pride will give and give joyously and give sacrificially because of a divine compulsion within. Many pastors will come to their pulpits with a new fervency in their hearts and a new power in their messages. What a day it will be for the kingdom of Christ when the Chris-

tian forces realize their imperial privileges and live and move in the strength of this matchless fellowship! With deeper interest than any diamond searcher ever knew, let us look again at this statement of the Lord Jesus.

“We will come unto him and make our abode with him,” and here our incomparable Comrade makes it clear that it is not a visit of which He is speaking. Indeed, it is a permanent residence. What may be expected from the residence of the Father and the Lord Jesus?

The man’s aspirations will constantly be reaching up towards God’s thoughts and God’s purposes, and the whole life will be set to a higher key. He will emerge from the mediocre and struggle for the heights in his spiritual conquests. He can never be content to loiter along the way and be indolent in the work of the kingdom as long as there is one lost person to whom he may give his testimony. Indefinably great is the ministry of this fellowship, “We will come unto him and make our abode with him.”

When the churches are composed of members and ministers who have experienced the mighty power of redeeming grace and are living in this ennobling fellowship, they will become units of an invincible crusade which will carry and carry quickly the Redeemer and His matchless message

to every spot on the planet. Great numbers of church people have no need today comparable to that of recapturing or coming into possession of the consciousness of Christ's presence.

CHAPTER IX

CHRIST APPEARS IN A NIGHT OF PERIL

FEAR is a terrifying and paralyzing monster. Fear is destructive and deadly. No human mind has yet measured the power of fear.

Fear is forcing itself into the office of the business man and telling him that the future is filled with failures. Fear suddenly appears in the home and leaves its message of alarm. Fear overtakes the farmer as, in the early morning, he goes to his fields and tells him that his crops will be a failure or that the market will be dull or dead. This is not the end of the devastating work of fear.

Fear is making very threatening assaults upon the workers of the kingdom. Single-handed, but equipped with a divine urge, a man made his way into a city where the forces of death and hell were pressing their work of ruin. No board stood behind the man. No human companion attended him. No church was ready to receive him. Alone! The daring of it! The determination he evidenced! The churches of Jesus Christ are suffering, seriously suffering, in my day for lack of a sufficient number of such workers. No churches with chimes or appealing appearances awaited this man, but wickedness en-

trenched on every street awaited him. Into the contaminating, corrupting Corinth this man entered to tell his story. Hawks, Peary, Byrd, nor Lindbergh evidenced such courage. Away from the eyes of militarists, statesmen, and royalty something unearthly is taking place. An epic is being born. What are to be the results of this unusual and marvelous undertaking?

This immortal messenger, this peerless pioneer, this daring, determined doer, enters upon his task—the task of telling a city sunken in sin the way of cleansing and redemption. Some progress was being made when opposition, vicious and relentless, developed. Fear followed. No one knows the power and the peril of that fear.

Fear today is shattering the nerves of multitudes. Fear is paralyzing the hands and the hearts of many who are engaged in tasks of great importance. Fear is driving valuable men and noble women from their positions into the sick room and some to the mad house. If fear had defeated this man in the wealthy and wicked Corinth, what losses the city, the continent, and the centuries would have suffered!

If fear had driven him from the field, some of the most vital messages of earth would never have been spoken and some of the greatest riches of revelation would not be available today. If fear had conquered the stranger who was work-

ing worthily in the wicked city at his redemptive task; if fear had succeeded in driving this man to an invalid's chair or to a burial in a potter's field; ten or twelve books of the New Testament would never have been written. If this mighty man was to survive the pitiless assaults of fear, help was imperatively necessary. And something took place in that hour of crisis which should give hope to every worthy heart of earth.

When Paul was having a decisive struggle with fear, help, invaluable help, was given. And the Giver came with the help and gave it to the man who had undertaken alone the work of redemption in corrupting Corinth. And who was this Helper? The answer needs to be given and considered with reverence. Christ came to Corinth. Christ came because a man dared to undertake a task of measureless moment.

It was during a night when, quite probably, this man of such unearthly determination was thinking over the stupendousness of his task and talking to the Father about the vicious opposition which he was facing that this immortal experience took place. Christ appeared and brought this message, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee." *For I am with thee.* No human thought can survey the power of that statement. A little while before His death and His ascension, Christ

had said, "Lo, I am with you all the days," and here He is making His presence known at a crucial hour on the way of one of His devoted disciples. Surely the heart of Robert Keene of London must have been experiencing the fulfillment of this wonderful promise when he wrote:

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismay'd,
For I am thy God, I will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand."

The greatest need for my generation is for the churches to make a discovery of the presence of Jesus. I went to church last night. It was the hour of prayer. The church has a beautiful building and a large membership. I attended first a group meeting of teachers of the Sunday school. Then, when the sessions of the several groups were closed, I entered the assembly room for the hour of prayer.

The people entered greeting each other, many talking and some laughing. The fellowship seemed to be fine. The genial director of music led the congregation in singing some choice hymns. A secretary announced the number attending the several groups of teachers. A minister was introduced who gave an earnest and an impressive exposition of a selection of Scripture. The meeting was adjourned with prayer.

Judged by present-day standards the meeting was above the average Wednesday night service, far above many. In the group meeting of teachers which I attended and in the assembly one could see but little evidence in the discussions, the announcements, the singing, and the sermon that the people had any idea that Jesus was present. The world has been profoundly influenced by another meeting, in another city, on another night. Only one man was present but Christ also was there.

The greatest need of the churches of my day is to make a discovery of the presence of Jesus. Church members need to see Jesus and to hear Him speak. What was the powerfully impressive feature of that meeting in wicked Corinth? The bitter opposition had pushed Paul out of the synagogue. The meeting certainly was not in any lovely chapel or church. The place was not of sufficient importance even to be mentioned. Three things were of sufficient importance to be carefully recorded:

A work of redemption in a wicked city;
A man engaged in this work meeting vicious and threatening opposition;
The presence of Christ Jesus.

And Christ's presence that night changed things.

Finely trained choirs may be valuable and inspirational but there was no choir present that night. Church buildings which are the creations of architectural genius are impressive and important but this meeting did not take place in any church. Organization is important and may be used for setting forward the work of the kingdom but there was no organization in evidence that night. Christ was present and the influence of the meeting of these two, Paul and Christ, has lived through the centuries and covered much of the earth.

There are almost countless numbers who attend church, take part perhaps in the singing, probably make an offering, but go away with the same quantity and quality of courage, the same measure of might, with nothing added to their inspiration, and with no new supplies of hope and faith. Such experiences are tragic.

I was doing some reporting in a Christian congress in which were representatives from many nations. A speaker brought a message which was filled with elevating inspiration. Many were powerfully moved. The theme was of mighty moment. At the close of the message I asked a fellow reporter what was his reaction to the address. He replied that he did not react to it—that he was just reporting. I discovered that he was literally dead to the great

heart appeal which had marvelously moved many others in the audience.

The serious and lamentable weakness of many church services is that there is not experienced the elevating awe, the urge of inspiration, and the compelling compassion which attend the presence of Jesus. The next step of the church, if she is to move forward capturing the attention of the unreached millions, will not be in the direction of more efficient organization or better equipment but toward Jesus Christ. When a congregation comes face to face with Jesus, listens to His counsel and command, and catches the unearthly power of His presence, then, if the members are not present with closed minds and hearts, something is just as certain to follow as light is certain to come with the rising of the sun.

“And he continued a year and six months” and this is one result of that night’s meeting with Jesus. Not only was he working in one of the most wicked cities earth has known but he was working in the face of cruel and determined opposition. Week by week and morning by morning this man faced the subtle and luring forces before which many noble men and women have gone down. But he did not go down. He went forward. He went forward with challenging courage. In the midst of this suffocating sen-

suality he established and built a church whose influence lifted men and women out of their wickedness and ruin.

This man awoke one morning to face corrupting Corinth and to go to his task with new confidence and with powerful assurance. During the night he had seen Jesus. During the night he had heard Jesus say, "Be not afraid . . . hold not thy peace . . . for I am with thee." Those who had come to know this remarkable man surely saw a new light in his eyes that morning. There was an assuring note in his words. He went to his task with confidence in control. When he put his hands to his work that morning, he saw the face of Christ and he heard Jesus saying, "I am with thee." There is no possible chance to defeat a man who has such experiences. He still grappled with a task of stupendous magnitude and weight but his efforts were sustained with mighty equipment.

Buildings and equipment are very valuable in the work of the kingdom but such an experience as this Asiatic had that night is worth more to the cause of world redemption than a million dollar "plant." Indeed I am not minimizing the importance of worthy buildings but I would like, if I could, to give worthy emphasis to the importance of the presence of the Redeemer.

The churches of America have a matchless

privilege. Our churches are facing a task which is causing deep concern for many. Forty million lost men, women, boys, and girls walk or ride by the doors of America's churches every week. Forty million! Think of it—there are enough lost people passing by America's churches to make eighty cities the size of our national capital. In the midst of these forty millions are churches, many thousands of churches. Many of these churches have memberships from one hundred to three and four thousand. Hundreds and hundreds of these churches have trained staffs of workers and elaborate equipment and yet forty million lost people are weekly passing the doors of America's churches.

Today the churches of America are not evidencing the finest faith and are not making the most worthy efforts. Some large denominations are suffering serious losses in their membership. Has death set in? I do not know. I do know that there is a work of vast and stupendous magnitude before these churches, and I know that this work is not being worthily undertaken. Forty million lost men, women, boys, and girls passing by America's churches and a number of large bodies losing in membership! American churches have the buildings, the wealth, the schools, and the members. However, every careful observer knows that there is something lack-

ing just now. Those who are deeply in earnest are feeling and feeling keenly that something more is needed. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman felt this need when he wrote:

“I know of a world that is sunk in shame,
Where hearts oft faint and tire;
But I know of a Name, a precious Name,
That can set that world on fire:
Its sound is sweet, its letters flame.
I know of a name, a precious name, 'tis Jesus.”

The supreme and imperative need of the churches of this generation is the clear consciousness that Christ is present with His people. The man who contended in Corinth with vicious opposition and worked in the midst of wickedness won a mighty triumph. But he worked with regal equipment. A look into the eyes of Jesus put new power into his speech, and the words of the Man of Calvary gave certainty to his efforts.

When Christ is realized in His churches, the members will go to the kingdom tasks in their own communities with earnestness which will capture attention; they will permit no difficulties to defeat or to deter them seriously; they will win to Christ Jesus multitudes who daily pass their doors and enlist them in the work of world redemption. The churches can win mighty and imperishable victories today but they can win only in the power of Christ.

CHAPTER X

MIGHTY MEN AND HOW THEY ARE MADE

AN ambassador from God unexpectedly and suddenly enters the presence of King Ahab. He has come on a mission of great importance and he has brought a message with Jehovah's authority upon it. Indeed, the message is Jehovah's. The announcement reveals the fearful-ness and the awfulness of sin and God's mighty concern for those who were being consumed by the iniquities of the day. The character of the ambassador presents a study of tremendous and urgent importance for the whole world at this hour.

When Elijah enters unheralded into the presence of King Ahab, he evidences remarkable strength of character. Stanley declares that he is "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced." And the condition of the country sorely needed a man of commanding strength. And the world at this hour is almost if not entirely desperately in need of men and women of marked strength and daring courage. The New York Times of May 24, 1931, quotes Arthur Henderson, British Foreign

Secretary, as saying before the Third Session of the Commission on European Union of the League of Nations, at Geneva, on May 19, 1931:

“In our countries, unemployment, poverty and actual starvation are present; and yet, while men walk the streets and cannot find work to earn bread for their hungry families, the corn bins of Europe and the countries overseas are bursting with food that cannot be sold.

“Our potential power to create wealth is greater than it has ever been. Capital by countless millions is lying idle in our banks waiting to be used. There are hundreds of millions of people in the world whose demands, not for comforts and luxuries but for the strict necessities of life, are not satisfied in anything like a reasonable measure, and so far we have been unable to break the vicious circle of disaster.”*

In his recent book, *AMERICA WEIGHS HER GOLD*, James Harvey Rogers, Sterling Professor of Political Economy, Yale University, shows us in diagram that on December 31, 1913, the United States owned 23.1% of the world's monetary gold supply and that on June 30, 1931, she owned 42.7%. In view of her gold supply and her other unusually favorable conditions one would expect the blooming of rose gardens, the singing of birds, and evidences of abundance

* James Harvey Rogers, *America Weighs Her Gold*, p. 71.

everywhere. But Professor Rogers reminds his readers that:

“The severe and prolonged depression conditions in the United States need no description here. The unusual phenomena of starvation in the midst of plenty, of all kinds of misery in the face of apparent overproduction of articles most distressingly needed, of tragic unemployment, of severe decline in prices and incomes, and of hopeless bankruptcies require no elaboration.”**

That there is something seriously wrong with the country every one who thinks knows and knows quite well. The United States has invested in educational institutions billions of dollars and today there are thousands of students who have graduated from these institutions of learning who cannot find employment. There are hundreds of thousands in industrial centers who go to sleep every night with want at their doors. Many manufacturers have machinery idle a part of almost every week. There are many merchants who are battling bravely to continue in business and there are many thousands of farmers who have brought their crops from the fields knowing that they could not pay for their production.

The economic and financial disturbances, serious though they may be, are not the matters

**Ibid., p. 171.

which need first attention. These conditions are a product of far deeper and far more severe needs. The only hope of dealing successfully with these matters of minor importance is to deal frankly and worthily with the matter of major importance. Elijah was equipped with powerful strength of character and wonderful courage because he gave attention to matters of first consideration. One of the greatest needs of the nations now is more men and more women who are equipped with the possessions of Elijah.

There are indeed multitudes of mediocre men in positions of very great importance. And this is true in every department of life's activities.

In legislative halls men are needed who will not bend to the pressure of any selfish interest. Men are always needed who are strong enough to resist and spurn offers which, though they promise ease or income, and though they are wrapped in pleasing colors, carry dishonor. Men in the lawmaking bodies and in the offices where justice is supposed to be administered should be girded with strength of character and equipped with courage which will defy any condition.

There are relations now between the United States and many of the leading nations which demand men who possess the character of the man who suddenly appeared before King Ahab and, without apology, made an announcement which

should have shaken him wide awake. The relation between England and India calls for men whose hearts are fortified with divine courage and the sense of fairness which imbued the spirit of the Man of Calvary. The relation between Japan and China will never be an inspiring and an elevating relation until the qualities which made Elijah are evidenced in the deportment of Japan's and China's leaders.

A major need and one of the greatest needs of earth now is men and women who are courageous enough to obey God. From some spot unknown to all historians and students, Elijah came on a mission of transcendent importance. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel may have been living in "their ivory palace," and the strange visitor may have worn nothing but his crude girdle and his cloak of sheepskin, but the king and the queen that day saw the passion for righteousness burning in the visitor's eyes. That day Ahab saw evidence of divine courage breaking through a great man's message.

When Elijah had delivered his soul to the king, God signaled him into seclusion and he went without a question. Elijah was brave enough to obey God. And just here is to be found one of the most serious of many weaknesses of Christendom. How very much many who attempt to proclaim the messages of Jehovah need the

courage of Elijah! Surely obedience to God in more pulpits would marvelously quicken many churches. Here is Obedience advancing into the king's presence with a message of serious moment. There is Obedience turning away from the palace going into seclusion.

"Hide thyself by the brook Cherith," and here is another marked evidence of Elijah's greatness. He was great enough to accept the inconveniences of seclusion. There were no luxuries out there, but God gave His presence, and God's presence was infinitely more important than elegantly furnished rooms. There was no delicatessen at hand, but the ravens came at God's command and the sight of the ravens was a reminder of God's care. Elijah's greatness was reflected in his accepting the Cherith assignment. He was out there by the brook in God's presence and he and Jehovah were building one of the mighty characters of all time.

Was this plain man out in seclusion a great man? He was great enough for Jehovah to suspend one of His laws, and to take the mighty reformer to heaven without being touched by the hand of Death. When God had a mission of supreme importance, He sent Elijah as one of the two men back to earth on that mission to our Lord. If God could not have trusted him to deliver the message to Ahab and to retire into

seclusion, He could not have trusted him with this imperial mission.

God's missions always require men and women whose hearts possess a high devotion to the cause of righteousness. The world just now needs more men and women of the Elijah type. Men and women who are willing to sacrifice to the point of suffering and sacrifice not only without complaining but sacrifice with joy are needed in every church around the world. Did Elijah think of apologizing to Ahab or Jezebel for not having a suit finely finished and properly pressed for the occasion of his visit to the royal palace? Such incidentals may seriously disturb lesser men but they never disturbed this man who was capable of being sent by God on an imperial mission. He was robed with the splendor of God and his spirit was not disquieted about small matters.

We have come to a very serious period in world affairs. Those who have not taken time to look into the underlying causes of what appears on the surface do not know how very serious the conditions are around and before the nations at this hour. And many noble men and noble women are honestly enquiring the way out and up and on. I have not met one man or one woman who is satisfied with conditions. There is almost an unprecedented restlessness and discontent in the world. Men and women of medi-

ocre courage cannot grapple successfully with supreme issues. The kind of men and women to engage in the supremely important tasks are made just as Elijah was made. They are men and women whose divine courage makes it possible for them to put their very lives into their efforts without trembling in their tracks over the results. And how may such men and women be made?

“As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand”—and there is the secret of the commanding character of Elijah. He knew the power of Jehovah’s presence. Jehovah’s presence always carries transforming power.

Jehovah’s presence put courage into the heart of Elijah. Jehovah’s presence gave authority to the message of the strange visitor who entered the presence of Ahab. Jehovah’s presence made fearless the heart of him who went to the king on a mission of great moment. Yes, there is emancipating power in the very presence of Jehovah.

Any permanent change for the better in world conditions must have at its heart the power of the Prince of Peace. Somebody must stand in God’s presence and move in His authority and strength. Every minister of Jesus Christ must recognize that his ministry depends wholly upon his contact with Christ. Every teacher of the

Word of Life must recognize that the weight and the worth of his teaching depends upon the weight and the worth of his relation to the Lord Jesus. Every singer of the gospel should come to feel and to feel keenly that the worth of his message in song depends upon the place which Christ has in his life. Men and women who stand in God's presence will carry Jehovah's elevating power into every contact.

Yes, there is a way out of present world conditions, and there is a way onward and upward. And this way is the one which Elijah traveled. Great courage is necessary on this way and this courage can be found as Elijah found it—in the presence of Jehovah. And this privilege of living in Jehovah's presence was not reserved alone for Elijah. This privilege of unspeakable importance may be enjoyed by any man and any woman willing to meet the conditions, willing to make the work of the kingdom supremely first in their lives. There are multitudes who hold membership in Christ's churches who have never known what it is to make the work of their Saviour first in their lives. There are imperial privileges awaiting them.

An officer in a church accepted my invitation to call upon an unsaved member of the Bible school of which the officer was a member. The officer is a business man of distinction in his city

and a church member who has the confidence of the church. After making the call he confessed frankly that the experience was new to him and yet he had been a member of that church for more than a quarter of a century. That is a tragedy. Who was this man? His name is Legion. Yes, Jehovah's peace, Jehovah's power, and Jehovah's presence are available but they are available only for those who, like Elijah, make the work of the kingdom supremely first.

One who stands and moves in God's presence speaks Jehovah's message, carries and evidences commanding courage, and possesses emancipating power. Elijah's words, Elijah's will, and Elijah's way were fashioned out of his fellowship with Him before whom he stood and in whose presence he advanced. It needs to be said with tremendous emphasis that the wonderful privilege which Elijah enjoyed is available today for all who will move as did Elijah.

If the ministers of Christ's churches and other members will stand in God's presence as did this mighty man of the centuries, a spiritual awakening will be experienced which will sweep the continents. Then the minor matters of economic and financial maladjustments, in the nations where Christianity is established, will be corrected but the supremely important thing will be realized—every man and every woman who

know the Lord Jesus will become messengers of the good news of the kingdom, and the Prince of Peace will be presented to the many millions who have not yet heard the name of the Lord Jesus. Then the divine impact of Christ's churches will be felt to the ends of the earth.

CHAPTER XI

A NIGHT WHICH CLAIMED NEW CONTINENTS

AN imperial motive was moving in the mind of a man as he crossed some provinces in western Asia. He was not searching for markets for goods. No military mission lay hidden in his brain. Much of the thinking of the world is being done about matters of secondary and tertiary importance. When the major thinking of the Christian men and the Christian women of earth is done concerning matters of major importance, many sluggish, silent, and sleeping churches will become centers of transforming power.

This Asiatic was being driven forward by a motive unsurpassed in earth's history. For the sake of the work to which he was giving himself, he had abandoned the dreams of his young manhood and had suffered the loss of things which men and women of smaller caliber and ideals hold highest in their ambitions. Without boards to support him or friends to welcome and to assist him he was going forth to tell men and women about the Friend of Sinners, the Prince of Peace. He was on the very highest mission.

The churches have multitudes of members to-

day who have church pride, department devotion and loyalty which issue in attendance and financial support but whose hearts are not imbued with that Christ-given zeal which makes men and women restless for the privilege of presenting the Redeemer. Churches must die whose members are equipped with only shallow and superficial devotion.

Churches whose members carry into their daily contacts the compassion of the Lord Jesus are invincible. Nothing will make the churches equal to the conditions of the world today except the same matchless power which moved in the heart of this man who gave up everything for Christ.

This man who had sacrificed the plans which were once supremely dear for the opportunity of telling men and women of the wonderful work of redemption had drawn his plans for work in certain communities but Christ counseled him to stop and turn his steps in another direction. And he turned his course.

The ministers of many churches, the men who are supposed to be more like the Lord Jesus than any other group of people in the world, are very much influenced by the size of the churches, the kind of building and equipment, the character of the people, and the salary. The character of the ministry will profoundly influence the work

of the churches. There are weaknesses in the ministry today which may greatly grieve the Lord Jesus.

This marvelous Asiatic changed his steps when Christ suggested a change. Many churches today are impotent and some are literally dying for want of more men and more women who are strong enough and brave enough to follow instantly the counsel of Christ Jesus. Here is a statement of very deep significance for ministers and churches of all time: "And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." Follow the story a bit further and evidences of God's plan will come clearly into sight. "And passing by Mysia they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There was a man of Macedonia, standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us."

I do not know who this man was but I am quite convinced that Jesus Christ had planned the course of this peerless Asiatic and that this experience that night in Troas was a clear revelation of a part of the plan. In the vision the man plead, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

There lay Europe untouched by the heralds of the good news of the kingdom. Very wisely

denominations have created boards for studying the needs in territories where the light and the life of the gospel have not been sent and where darkness and death are pervading the lands. Very wisely denominations are maintaining such boards for invaluable ministry in carrying forward the work in these lands of moral and spiritual night.

The power of the spirit of Christ upon this Asiatic is more clearly realized when it is remembered that there was no supporting board behind him and no friend or group of friends in Macedonia ready to receive him and to give him inspiring comradeship in his new and very difficult task. The marvelous power of Christ in the life of this Asiatic is reflected in this statement, "And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia."

Suppose he had not been sufficiently equipped with the strength of Christ to respond to the vision. Apparently multitudes of others have faltered and turned back when God called to advance. There is every reason for believing that the denominations today are halting before opportunities of mighty significance. What if the Asiatic had turned back? So far as human eyes can see—tragedies indescribable! What would have been the result if the very presence

of Christ had not equipped his heart for this daring expedition?

Then the story, the inspiring story, of Philippi would never have been written. That triumphant jail experience would never have occurred. Turn to an atlas and mark that first journey on the continent of Europe. Stand at Troas on the shore of the Aegean Sea and look across to Philippi. Then follow that immortal journey down to Thessalonica, on to Berea, then south to Athens, and west to Corinth. If the Asiatic had turned back at Troas! Then there would never have been the story of that fine, faithful, and fervent effort in cultured Athens. The world would never have had the epic born in Corinth. If his heart had faltered that night at Troas and his feet had turned back toward Antioch, with the story of his vision hidden in his heart, there are other lamentable losses which the world would have suffered.

The two letters to the Thessalonians were born out of experiences at Thessalonica. The two great doctrinal letters, I and II Corinthians, were born out of experiences in Corinth. That greatest of all his letters, Romans, was written on the continent of Europe. The letter to the Philip-pians, this message of triumphant joy, was conceived and given to the world as a direct result of the Asiatic's experience in Europe. The

unique, charming, inspiring message to Philemon, this distinctly personal message which is filled with gospel for the world today, was written by the Asiatic while he was confined a prisoner in the most powerful of European cities. The mighty and marvelous achievements of this Easterner on the continent of Europe may have contributed much to the vicious opposition which sent him to prison and to death. The world might never have had this imperishable letter but for his response to the leadership of the Lord Jesus. If he had turned back at Troas, the world would never have had five of his great messages and probably not even one of them. If his faith and courage had faltered in that hour of crisis, he probably never would have been assigned the work by the Holy Spirit of writing any of the thirteen epoch-making messages. God's assignments for the greater tasks of tomorrow depend upon our faithfulness in the tasks of today.

While the story of this Asiatic's journey through the provinces of Asia Minor is filled with interest, there is one fact of supreme importance—the man with his message was responsive to the suggestions of the Lord Jesus. When his face was set toward Bithynia and his plans were made to enter that territory, Jesus coun-

seled otherwise and the man set his face in another direction.

The vision at Troas and the call to Europe were reserved for the heart that was ready to respond to the will of the world's Redeemer. Christ's counsel was the matter of first consideration. The Asiatic had seen Christ. He had talked to Christ. Christ had come to fill the purpose of his life. To do what Christ wanted done—that was the matter of supreme importance with him. If Christ put His hands upon him and said not Bithynia but go west, what difference to him? Christ was filling the horizon of his life and for him Christ's word was supremely right.

The presence of Christ is reserved for those who will obey Him. This is just as true of denominations as of individuals. "Lo, I am with you always" was a promise made to a group. And this promise was made following a command of Christ, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." The presence of Christ is reserved for the individual or the group of individuals who will dare to obey the world's Redeemer. The loss of the Christ-consciousness by multitudes of professing Christians is the most serious loss of the Christian centuries.

I believe thoroughly in the importance of organization in the churches and the denomina-

tions. I believe fully that sufficient buildings and equipment are matters which deserve careful attention. Graded courses of study have a very important mission. The offering of awards in the training life of the churches and the denominations can be made to stimulate study. But some mistakes have been made which will require decades to correct. Matters of secondary and tertiary importance have been made to appear as of first importance.

The motor may be highly and perfectly designed, admirably finished, and finely equipped but if there is no power within, the motor will never move the car an inch. The matter of first and supreme importance in the life of every believer, every church, and every denomination is not the organization, not the building and the equipment, but Christ. To even suggest that Christ's presence has not been and is not seriously being neglected in the vast majority of churches is to confess to an ignorance of church life today. Church magazines and papers have been supplied by the churches with numbers in the teaching and training departments until vast multitudes have come to feel that these are matters of first importance. The reports in the churches on Sunday mornings and Sunday nights have made so much of other matters and so little of Christ that the present generation has been

educated to think supremely about buildings, awards, finances, and numbers, and but little of the presence of Christ. If the churches are to continue in their Christ-assigned mission, a change of emphasis must be made and made immediately.

This Asiatic had divine courage enough to obey the call to a new field. O that Christians everywhere had that courage! How his fare across the Aegean Sea was paid I do not know. What kind of lodging was secured when he entered the first town in Europe no one knows. He had Silas, Timothy, and Luke on the journey but he had another Companion and this other Companion determined matters.

He gave instructions at Troas, and His presence was providing the inspiration and the power at every stop and in every task. That Troas experience has lessons of tremendous significance for those who have ears to hear the words of the Master and eyes to see the way and the only way to power and to progress.

Committees may perform a valuable ministry but there were no committees to report. Speakers of charm and persuasive appeals were not brought from Jerusalem, or Philippi, or Athens to urge the consideration of matters which were thought to be seriously important. Dinners may be made an occasion of fine fel-

lowship but there was no dinner at one dollar or two dollars the plate and a toastmaster of political preferment to preside. But something took place in Troas that night which many believe marked an epoch in human affairs.

Christ indirectly or directly gave a message to one man and the giving of that message was accompanied by the impelling consciousness that Christ was in the message; that Christ had spoken. Immediately a new continent was claimed for Christ. Language fails as attempt is made to describe the importance of that experience at Troas. A new continent, a pivotal continent in world affairs and in world history, was immediately swung into view and claimed in a human heart for Christ. Much of Christendom, vast numbers of churches, have been lured away from the matter of supreme importance.

Similar experiences to that Troas hour is the one outstanding need of the denominations and the churches at this hour. When the presence of Christ is commandingly recognized in the annual gathering of any denomination and His message is clearly heard, the world will feel the impact of the experience. When Christ's presence is realized in any church and His message is heard by the members, the community and the city will feel the power of that experience. Christendom's supreme need now is to make

room and make ready for Christ and His message. In the churches nothing else is of very serious importance. His presence, His message, and His power will change everything. The Troas experience is a supreme need of the churches today. Christ is ready to reveal Himself. Will not the churches and the church members make immediate room and make ready for Him?

CHAPTER XII

OUT OF WORLD TURMOIL INTO KING- DOM PROGRESS

THE serious disturbance of the day is quite largely world wide. It is not confined to our own great and rich land. But a few references can be much more easily made and much better understood when they refer to home conditions.

Our own country has been guided or has drifted into turbulent waters and it is time that every patriot is asking himself some questions about our condition. Today, we are told, our country is suffering from overproduction of food and yet many are hungry and cannot get food and some are starving. We have an overproduction of cotton and at the same time there are millions who are or will be cold because of insufficient clothes. Bumper crops of corn and wheat have been harvested and yet there are bread lines. The United States is the richest and the most powerful nation on earth but all of our riches and all of our political machinery and power are not meeting the needs, the fundamental needs, of millions of our citizens.

Recently in the Southern Conference on Education in session at the University of North

Carolina, the emeritus president of one of our most historic colleges declared "that the structure of our organized life trembles on the edge of revolution." Two decades ago there scarcely could have been found a man with an established reputation for national knowledge who would have thought of making such a statement. This brilliant student of affairs in his own country tells us "that the psychopathic wards of the hospitals are crowded with people gone stark mad under the pressure of hopeless adversity." One serious, contributing cause to the harrowing pressure on the backs of many Americans is here mentioned.

The annual cost of our army and navy is approximately seven hundred million dollars. Providing for the cost of wars past and future is consuming approximately three-fourths of our national income. How long, O Lord, how long will American people commit such lamentable and inexcusable sins? Our national income now is above sixty-five billion dollars and increasing, and Ambassador Gerard declares that this volume of business is controlled by sixty-four business men and he gives us their names. So far these men have not denied the accusation of Mr. Gerard.

Would it not be indescribably deplorable if the citizens of this country should permit our

nation to repeat the history of Babylon, and Greece, and Rome? The cities of America, like the cities of other lands, are giving direction to the life currents of the country. In many of our larger cities and in great numbers of our smaller cities and towns it is openly claimed that the law is being perverted by the hand of the criminal. It is commonly claimed that criminals, in some cases, are controlling and using the law for their protection and for the promotion of contemplated crimes. If some power is not brought to the heart of our national life to change conditions which have already become seriously threatening, what may be expected in the future?

President Glenn Frank of the University of Wisconsin, a man who has won a wide hearing, makes this alarming prediction:

“I believe that we shall inevitably enter a new ‘dark ages,’ a period in which civilized values will go into decline and the race be thrust back into the precarious existence of its primitive ancestors, unless we begin with a decent promptness to remove the legitimate grounds for these fears.”

Mr. Francis Gribble, in an article in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine*, expresses the belief that the future historians “will write that, some time in the early part of the twentieth century,

the last and the most highly organized of the world's civilizations deliberately committed suicide." In his book, *Is America Safe for Democracy?*, Professor McDougall of Harvard University gives this startling word:

"As I watch the American nation speeding gaily, with invincible optimism, down the road to destruction, I seem to be contemplating the greatest tragedy in the history of mankind."

Walter N. Johnson, a man who is regarded by many of our clearest thinkers as possessing an unusual prophetic insight, in one of his recent books, speaks his heart in these sentences:

"The public school is failing in moral education and Christian private schools are no longer sure of a healthy existence. . . . Our whole planet is reeling and quaking under a contest that spans all seas and covers all lands. . . .

"An absolute necessity now is a renewed dynamic in men that will solidify government; reinforce our courts; launder our political parties; purify our schools; give the family a clean bill of health; and empower our churches for their work. . . . And the churches are under pounding criticism. If they are not vital institutions, they are going to be pulverized. Will they stand the test?"

This brief look has been taken at present world conditions for the purpose of seeing more clear-

ly the very imperative and urgent need of an adequate remedy. The needs of the race are just the needs of the individual. Christ can meet every need of the individual and every need of the world. Dr. Johnson says, "An absolute necessity now is a renewed dynamic that will . . . empower our churches for their work." And President Glenn Frank declares, "I believe that we shall inevitably enter a new 'dark ages' . . . unless we begin with a decent promptness to remove the legitimate grounds for these fears."

How are the grounds for these fears to be removed? How are the churches to be adequately empowered for their transcendently important work? The Scripture has the answer to these questions. Here is a clear, compelling statement of the Lord Jesus:

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself," and I believe what Jesus says. When Christ lifts up a man, He lifts him away from the desire for destructive and deadly war. When Christ enters a life and elevates that life, He lifts it above any desire to share in profits secured out of corrupt practices. When Christ's power is permitted to do its ennobling work in a man, that power lifts the man completely away from any sort of desire to profit at the expense of another. The supreme business of the churches is to lift up Christ.

Christ can meet every need of the individual. Christ can meet every need of the world. However, Christ can meet the needs of the individual and the needs of the world only as His power is received and experienced.

Certainly one of the greatest needs of the churches today is the consciousness of Christ's presence in their midst. Church people claim to assemble for worship in the name of Jesus; they claim to be following Him; they declare that they love Him; but multitudes do not believe all that He said. Here is Christ speaking. The finest thoughts should be summoned to receive what He says. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." There are many who believe that Christ was earth's greatest teacher; that Christ died on a cross to redeem all who would accept His pardon and His power; that Christ is able to save those who have been lured into the depths of iniquity; but many of these do not believe that His own wondrous presence may be realized among His people. The supreme need of the churches at this perilous period of human history is to come into possession of His presence.

I never saw electricity but I have been made conscious that its power was lighting cities, driving diseases from human bodies, and turning mighty wheels of industry. I have never seen

the intricate and sensitive powers of the air but I have been convinced that these powers can convey the sound of breathing from the South Pole and deliver it to waiting ears thousands of miles away. I never saw love but I have been made conscious that this mighty, matchless, miracle-working power is binding together in beautiful bonds millions of human hearts today. I never saw Christ in any church but again and again I have seen evidence of a power which all the material sciences of earth cannot possibly explain.

Christ may not be present in some church services because there may not be two or three assembled in His matchless name. But if there are two or three, even this small number, assembled with the spirit of the Man of Calvary directing and controlling, then, according to His own declaration, Christ is present. The discovery of Christ's presence is the most important discovery for the church people to make now.

Dean Inge reasons that if men and women spend sixteen hours of the day with things and not five minutes of the day in the presence of the spiritual, things will seem two hundred times more real than God. And Sherwood Eddy earnestly declares: "Men are not enough in tune with the spiritual to discover it; they are not

pure enough in heart to see God; they are not enough morally in earnest to find him.”

What may be reasonably expected of that church whose members meet the condition of having Christ in their midst? Not the singing, and not the fellowship, and not the preaching would be the attraction in that church. The presence of the unseen Christ would be the surpassing attraction. Men and women and young people would enter the building with reverential and elevating awe and during the hour of worship their spirits would be purified afresh by His presence. And this purifying process would go on continuously. In the services where the presence of the Man of Galilee is the predominating power, those who assemble in His name will go hence to reflect His spirit.

One cannot be in the presence of Jesus with open mind and open heart without carrying out of such an experience a measure of the very life of Christ. In His presence men see their sins and want to be freed from their guilt. In His presence men see their privilege for progress and want to become more like the perfect Man. In His presence men and women are captured by the wonder of His spirit and they want to go hence and tell others what they think. In His presence men and women become deeply anxious for their acquaintances to know what they have

learned, and they go out with a message fired and filled with earnestness. One cannot be in the presence of the Man of Calvary with open mind and open heart without coming into possession of the most fascinating story earth has heard. Men and women cannot be in the presence of the Prince of Peace without being profoundly influenced. If they attend services where His presence is the distinguishing characteristic of the hour, and if their minds and their hearts are responsive, they will go hence from that service with new strength for the contests ahead, and with unflinching devotion to their Saviour.

In his history of Napoleon, Tom Watson, describing the retreat from Moscow, gives an example of appealing devotion. "On the coldest night of the retreat, when it seemed that the young Prince Emil would freeze to death, the remnant of the Hessians closed around him, 'wrapped in their great white cloaks pressed tightly against one another, protecting him from the wind and cold. The next morning three-fourths of them were dead and buried beneath the snow.' "

If Hessians would sacrifice their lives for a prince whose devotion was uncertain and in a cause which possessed but little or no elevating power, what should be the character of loyalty which those who bear the name of Christ should

evidence toward the Man of Galilee, the Prince of Peace?

The churches today must have members with an unsurpassed type of courage. The tasks are too vast and too great for men and women of uncertain endurance. The churches must have members with the finest loyalty earth has known. About us and before us are problems which will test the souls even of daring spirits. The churches now cannot advance and win the attention, the confidence, and the admiration of earth's lost millions except with members whose hearts are animated, inspired, and sustained by the presence of our matchless Leader and Lord. The churches know no need comparable to the discovery of Christ's presence.

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This is the statement of Jesus Himself. When the churches assemble in His name, and the members discover that He is present, awakenings and revivals will be experienced in many thousands of congregations, and the kingdom of Christ will sweep forward in unprecedented power.

CHAPTER XIII

SINKING HEARTS—GOD SPEAKS

WITHOUT God any life is on a perilous sea.

Fascinating beyond understanding is a life which gives evidence of sustaining power even in places which are filled with perils. Nothing, nothing within the imagination of man, can make the churches invincible in the work of world redemption except members whose lives give constant and unmistakable evidence of such power.

A prisoner, an Asiatic Jew, was being taken by ship from his own country to Rome where he was to be tried for a supposed crime. On the journey the vessel ran into a storm of threatening severity. The captains in those days had no chart or compass and were unable to sail in safety when their vessels were overtaken or met by violent winds. The crew met the assaults of the storm with all the skill and courage they possessed. One day they threw into the sea a part of the freight and the next day the furniture of the ship. For days the clouds hid the stars and the sun, and the fury of the storm drove hope from the hearts of the seamen.

The fall following that fearful storm which

wrecked or damaged thousands of homes and business houses on the lower east coast of Florida, when the government sent out warnings that another storm was approaching out of the Caribbean Sea, there were many who locked their homes, left their work, and drove out of what they believed would be the path of the storm.

But the vessel which was carrying the Asiatic prisoner could not get away from the storm. The tempest beat upon the ship until "all hope" for the ship, the crew, and the passengers, except the hope in the heart of that Asiatic prisoner, was gone. Hardy seamen lost their appetite as their hearts sank in despair. In the midst of their peril something happened which can bring courage and hope to men and women everywhere who are giving themselves worthily to matters of first importance.

I find something in the Asiatic prisoner which the others in that harrowing experience did not possess, and that something is the greatest need of humanity today. While others were hopeless in their uncertainty, he was sustained with hope. While others were faltering with fear, this unusual prisoner was fearless. If his breast was exposed to the storm, the winds beat upon him with just as much fury as they beat upon any other but he had that which lifted him above alarm. He heard the surge of the sea just as did

the others on board but he heard a voice above the roar of the sea.

In this story of gripping interest there is a message for every heart which is feeling today the stress and the strain of world conditions. And those who are not feeling the strain of world conditions might well understand that they are not giving themselves worthily to the world's needs. In the very teeth of apparent death the Asiatic prisoner out of a heart of calmness and courage speaks this word of assurance, "Be of good cheer." While all others must have been thinking and talking of their certain death, what was it that made one man able to stand up and say, "Be of good cheer?" What set this prisoner apart from all others on board? He had that which multitudes of church members need today.

There are denominations that have won many thousands of members and have built magnificent temples in which God is supposed to be worshipped by every one who enters. Some of these denominations that have been reporting in their annual gatherings thousands of new adherents are now reporting heavy losses. Many of the largest Christian bodies in America have rejoiced in their annual meetings in the testimony of increasing heralds of the redemptive message whom they were able to send to the severely needy places of earth, but they are not

rejoicing today in the consciousness that they are sending larger numbers of workers to the millions who are dying without the privilege of even hearing of Jesus. Most of the large bodies are seeing their forces distressingly decreased in the lands of severest need. There may be those who have not taken time to look or who cannot see, but there are others who see and see clearly today that there is an imperative and urgent need for vast numbers of church members really to possess that same power which made the Asiatic prisoner the commanding man of the ship.

There was that in the life of this man from Asia, Paul, which set him distinctly apart and above every man on the vessel. Frankly, fearlessly, and fervently, evidence indicates, the prisoner stood up in the midst of those who had lost hope and declared that he was God's man. He began his Christian career with a face to face experience with Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus had spoken to him in very searching language and he had humbly and earnestly replied to Jesus.

Quite apparently there are vast numbers in the churches today who have never had any experience with Jesus. When one meets the Man of Galilee, sees something of the wonder of His matchless life, offers himself to the Saviour for cleansing, and completely commits his life to Him as Lord, he never gets over it. He will

always have an experience to give to others. And as he advances with Jesus in the task which stands above every other task, he will have other rich and radiant experiences.

The lamentable weakness of many churches today is to be found in the apparent fact that there are in their membership a large percent who have had no such contact with Christ as did this man on the Damascus highway. What percent of Sunday school teachers have the Christian courage to stand up in the presence of those who know not this matchless One and declare that they are God's men and God's women? There are vast numbers "teaching" the Word of Life who have never had and do not have contact with Christ which will urge them with inspiring compassion to the holy effort of winning the lost of their classes to Christ Jesus. Another serious need in many churches is the transforming contact with the Redeemer which will make the man who sings on Sunday morning:

"So precious is Jesus, my Saviour, my King,
His praise all the day long with rapture I sing;
To Him in my weakness for strength I can cling,
For He is so precious to me,"

a convincing messenger on Monday morning to those who do not know the power of Christ.

Here is a man who stands up with powerful

courage in the midst of those who know not God and declares that he is God's man. There is something indescribably great, profoundly heartening, in being able to say that we are God's. How many church members believe that they are God's? There are many who are His and they carry that assurance in their hearts and yet, evidence would compel one to believe, that there are many who can not make this wonderful claim. How tremendously important for every one who carries the name of Christ to be able to say anywhere and in any kind of company, "I am God's!"

This vital relation with God gave to the prisoner from Asia a personal power in the hour of peril which made the prisoner the leader, the key man, of all on board. How important for church members everywhere to realize that they should constantly give evidence of the emancipating and ennobling power of the Lord Jesus whose name they bear.

Everywhere and in all kinds of conditions there should be distinguishing marks about the men and the women who bear the name of Christ. Just here is one of the shameful and one of the threatening weaknesses of many churches and indeed of all Christendom at this hour. Too frequently there are church members who do not give evidence in their conduct of the matchless power of the Man of Galilee. The physician

is suffering with the same disease which has afflicted his patient and sometimes his condition is just as severe. That is, the distinguishing line between the church member and the non-church member is sometimes pathetically and pitiably absent. No man informed about this ship voyage doubts for a moment that such line between the unusual prisoner and the members of that crew was strikingly clear. If the church member does not give unmistakable evidence of the distinguishing marks of the Man of Calvary, he is failing in his supreme privilege and he may be doing incalculable harm.

For a period of years I knew well a man who was an office bearer in a church. He was prominent in the political affairs of the city, the county, and the state. What an opportunity was his for presenting in his own conduct the power which infinitely excels all earthly power, the elevating power of Christ Jesus! But just here was his shameful and lamentable failure.

In his office and on the streets he was at times very profane. And he was "filling" an office in his church of great responsibility. According to evidence he became a victim of dishonest practices in his business, but, for quite a period, was able to cover his dishonest dealings. At last his sins were made public, and he was forced to bear the shame, the serious shame, of his guilt. He held an office of large responsibility in a church

where the indescribably glorious power of Christ might have been experienced in his own life and evidenced in every day's doings.

If the churches of Jesus Christ are to carry out His purpose and capture the attention of the multitudes who know not the cleansing power of Calvary, their members must be able to stand up in any company or crowd and declare, "We are God's men and women." And their lives must give unmistakable evidence that their claim is correct.

Denominations may project one campaign after another to raise funds to support their institutions and their work and then see their campaigns relatively fail. The secret of the invincible power of any and all denominations will be found in the men and the women who carry increasingly in their own lives the power of Calvary which expresses itself in every word and in every deed. Church members must be able to say, "We are His," and their daily deportment must speak louder than their words.

That was an impressive and a great moment as day was breaking, after thirteen days of harrowing experience in a storm at sea, when an unseen power lifted one of the prisoners on the ship far above every other man on board and made him the real master of the situation. In the presence of the two hundred seventy-six who were on board, this prisoner who had been lifted

into the position of master of the situation counseled the men to break their fast, and spoke to God in the presence of all. Quite probably there had never been such a scene as that on any ship which had sailed the waters of the Mediterranean. God had been declared in a man's private deponentment and now God is acknowledged and held up in his open testimony. A ship's crew and passengers had seen marked evidence in a man's life of the measureless power of God. What is the secret of this man's calmness and courage in the midst of hopeless and sinking hearts? Let him tell the secret.

"There stood by me this night the angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Caesar: and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee."

God had His eyes on the ship as she was beaten by the storm for more than thirteen days and as the hearts of the seamen sank into despair. God had His hands on the winds as they shook the ship and threatened to send her to the depths of the sea. There was a man on board who had met and talked with Jesus, had met Him and talked with Him after His ascension. There was a man on board who was putting his whole life into his effort to lead others to know the Christ who was filling the whole horizon of his life. God was deeply interested in this man and

was always for him available. In hours of severe test Christ had appeared to him and had given him assurance of His presence and His support.

The churches need nothing so much in this turbulent time as that their members shall carry into every kind of experience the consciousness of God's deep concern and His presence. Is God really available in every kind of experience on the unexplored way of tonight and tomorrow? This experience declares that He is. Is He able to give hope and strength in severely testing hours? This experience presents evidence that He is. The churches cannot advance another step except as they advance in the consciousness of God's care and in the power of His strength. We can go further if we will go with Christ. Will we not go with Him?

CHAPTER XIV

WHEN CHURCHES WILL NEVER TURN BACK

A MAN breathing menace and murder was going forth on his mission of destruction and death. Death was in his purpose and death was in his plan. He was breathing death. He was succeeding in his enterprise. His efforts were directed against the new power which men and women call Christianity. Some had been lodged in jail while others had been brought to death. He had marshalled all the forces of his soul against the new movement and was now on his way with death in his brain and death in his heart. As he advanced, quite unexpectedly he came face to face with the Head of the new movement; he came face to face with Jesus.

Here a man of powerful driving force was changed. His plans were changed. His thoughts were sent in another direction, the opposite direction, and soon he was seen an ardent supporter of the very cause and the very people that he was trying to destroy. A striking and a marvelous change occurred in the persecutor's life. He became the most powerful advocate of Christianity and the most ardent supporter of Christ that the world has known. The secret of

the change in his life is quite evident. He met Jesus and he was transformed by Jesus. Jesus had been crucified, had been buried, had arisen, and had ascended; but Saul met Jesus, saw Jesus, and talked with Jesus, and the experience completely captured the man and transformed his life. This experience occurred on a highway in the open, and away from any kind of place of worship. Organization was not involved in this greatest of all transactions and experiences in Christian history.

Buildings adequate to the working and worshiping needs of congregations are necessary, and organization may be made a very valuable adjunct to the work of redemption. Quite unfortunately, lamentably so, many noble church people have permitted their attention to be drawn away from Christ to the equipment and to the organization. The million dollar plant is valueless in the work of redemption if Christ is not commandingly present.

The most perfect organization has no power to arrest decay and to give light and life. Lamentable losses have been suffered and are being suffered because multitudes of noble-minded church people have permitted their attention and their major efforts to be directed to matters of minor importance and to be drawn away from Christ. The churches that advance, lift humanity out of the slough of despair, and have

a worthy place in the saving work of Calvary must live and move in the power of Christ's presence. Members of such churches will carry the consciousness of Christ's wondrous power to change men and women. See the indefinable power of the Man of Calvary changing, indeed transforming, a man!

On his way to the ancient capital of Syria this man was going. Nobody was sending him. No organization, according to the best testimony, was supporting him financially. This "most respectable persecutor" was bloodthirsty and was making a four or five days' journey to bring to jail and, if need be, to death the men and the women who had committed their lives to the Lord Jesus. Finely trained, richly endowed by nature, and equipped with a mighty determination, this man, with destruction and death in his heart, was hunting for the men and the women who were friends and followers of the Prince of Peace. And on this search he met the Prince of Peace. A conversation followed, every word of which is packed with significance. Ask God for wisdom and discernment and listen to this conversation.

Jesus speaks: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

Saul replies: "Who art thou, Lord?"

Jesus speaks: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

Saul replies: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

At first the bloodthirsty persecutor did not know that he had met the Lord Jesus. Now he discovered that he was face to face with God's Son. He had believed that Jesus was an imposter and that His followers were "blasphemers worthy of death." But now he was convinced that he had been altogether mistaken and that He, in whose presence he was, was the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Son of God. In the presence of the Lord Jesus! What could he do? He was convinced; he abandoned his purpose instantly; he offered himself to the Redeemer. Changed! Indeed he was changed. Transformed! Certainly he was transformed. This is exactly what Christ is ready to do now. An instant ago he was a bloodthirsty persecutor with destruction and death in his heart; immediately he became a transformed man enquiring of the Stranger what he should do. What was the influence of Christ's presence upon this bloodthirsty persecutor?

The contribution of the experience became Paul's powerful equipment. Christ's presence changed everything. His life was ever afterward directed by a wholly different purpose. It was Christ that changed the man and it was Christ's presence that made his life an invincible force in changing the lives of others. The pres-

ence of Jesus was the power which sustained and supported him every step of the way.

Having been rescued from a mob, he stands here on the stairs of the tower of Antonia in charge of the military tribune, and asks for the privilege of speaking. And what does he say? He goes back to that hour when he first met Jesus and declares:

“I fell upon the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’ And I answered, ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ And He said unto me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.’ ”

There he is in Caesarea brought out of prison by Festus, the Roman governor, before Herod Agrippa II and his sister, Bernice, of Chalsis. He is given the privilege of presenting his own cause and case. What’s the very heart of his message? Here is the heart of his mighty appeal:

“Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And . . . I heard a voice saying unto me . . . ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’ And I said, ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.’ ”

In the presence of the Lord of Glory the spirit

of persecution died. It could not live in Christ's presence. It never has been able to live where Christ lived. Jealousy, hate, enmity, and prejudice must die when Christ approaches and is received. In the place of the spirit of persecution the immortal virtues were given, and soon one saw evidence of their appealing growth, and they grew until their possessor became a man of towering strength and marvelous influence.

The presence of Christ is the secret of Paul's determination to carry the gospel to the great centers of population. The presence of the Prince of Peace is the secret of his courage as he constantly contended with his persecutors. The presence of Jesus explains his compelling compassion as he proclaimed the gospel and planted churches. The presence of the Friend of Sinners is the source of his inspiration as he wrote his immortal messages, messages which have influenced millions, many millions, down through the centuries. The presence of Jesus made Paul all that he was and all that he is.

Here is to be found the secret of power for the testing days and the mighty tasks of the present. If all who are members of churches today had experienced the presence of Christ Jesus as did Paul, Christendom would capture the attention of the world within sixty days. The lamentable weakness of many churches is the utter lack of a vital experience with the Lord

Jesus on the part of many of us who are members. The work of the kingdom cannot be set forward by the hands of men and women who know not the Saviour. There are multitudes, volumes of evidence indicates, who have "joined" the churches without ever having heard Jesus speak and without ever having felt the power of His presence.

The churches whose influence reaches out in redemptive work in the community or city; the churches that will send forth God-called young men and young women to the places of appalling need; the churches whose members will sacrifice and rejoice in their sacrifices to send and support those who have answered the divine summons to fields of destitution and even death; the churches that move with the Son of God into the great work of world redemption will be the churches whose members had, before they were received into the fellowship of the church and continue to have, vital contact with Him who said to Saul, "I am Jesus."

The churches today must have this type of man and this type of woman. Christendom is suffering, lamentably suffering, for the presence of those whose equipment is their conscious contact with the Redeemer. Some can stand before classes with the Word of Life in their hands and impressively give the historicity and the geography of certain events but they will never bring

one soul into fellowship with Christ. Others may go to lands and live among people who know nothing of the reclaiming and the lifting power of the Lord of Glory and they may tell and teach much of the social work of the gospel and the by-products of Christianity, but they will never set the kingdom forward in the community of darkness. Men may stand in God's pulpits who have spent years in school and received the ministry of finely prepared professors but, unless they are evangelists of the matchless experience of daily contact with Christ, they will never give hope to one heavy heart and they will never turn one pair of feet from the way of ruin.

The rediscovery of the consciousness of Christ is an imperative. The fading out of the God-consciousness on the part of many is the most lamentable loss of the centuries. Nothing will bring back power to the churches except the rediscovery of Christ's presence. The finest fellowship will never produce the power to transform.

On a Sunday morning I visited a large and beautiful house of the Lord and attended an enthusiastic class of men in the Sunday school. The fellowship was fine, much the same as one would experience in an ideal dinner club. The director of music for the class led the men in singing three hymns which had for their subject

the Friend of Sinners, the Prince of Peace, the Lord of Glory. The first hymn was:

“So precious is Jesus, my Saviour, my King,
His praise all the day long with rapture I sing;
To Him in my weakness for strength I can cling,
For He is so precious to me.”

The second hymn was one of praise.

“We praise Thee, O God! for the Son of Thy love,
For Jesus who died, and is now gone above.”

The third hymn was designed by the hymn writer to give opportunity for the expression of joy in the consciousness of Christ's inclusive work of redemption.

“I am so happy in Christ today,
That I go singing along my way;
Yes, I am so happy to know and say,
'Jesus included me too.'”

I saw on no man's face any evidence that he was “so happy in Christ today.” The fellowship was splendid of its kind. So far as one could observe it was almost entirely human. Human fellowship of the right kind is noble but the most noble of all human fellowship cannot change the human heart. The singing was enthusiastic to some degree but there seemed to

be no evidence of divine awe and no sense of Christ's presence in the singing.

The teacher was a professional man and perhaps the leader of his profession in the state. The lesson dealt with the work of God the Holy Spirit in one of the great epochs of Christianity. The teacher said some valuable things about conditions in his city, his county, his state, and his nation, and mentioned some of the edges of the lesson. The heart was not reached. I wondered if the men went away with any more "zeal to labor," and with any more of the courage of Christ in their hearts. I wondered if they felt that they had been in His presence. If that body of men had realized convincingly the presence of the Lord Jesus that hour, they would have gone forth with a story which would have captured the attention of the city. The fading out of the Christ-consciousness is the most lamentable loss of the Christian centuries.

One man, a bloodthirsty persecutor, met the Lord Jesus and talked with Him. He was changed instantly. He was transformed. He possessed an experience which was a mighty equipment and which has made his influence a mighty power through the centuries. When professing Christians advance in the presence of Christ, they will capture the attention of the world and will win millions and multi-millions to the Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER XV

THIS EXPERIENCE IS THE SUPREME NEED NOW

THIS morning, the daily papers are carrying a United Press story of an unusual experience in the Ohio State prison located in Columbus. The article has lessons which will burn themselves into the thinking of thoughtful readers. Here are excerpts from the portrayal of this strange drama:

“Broken and silent, forty convicts were led today from the solitary punishment cells in which they had been confined for eighteen months, sullenly to resume ‘normal’ life with their fellow prisoners at Ohio State penitentiary.

“Ring leaders in the riot and incendiarism that made a charnel house of the prison last year and cost the lives of three hundred twenty-two convicts, the forty silent men appeared burned out in spirit and wrecked in physique. Two of their fellows went mad under the torture of isolation, and are now in the Lima institution for mental treatment.

“Among the forty released after a year and a half of solitude, wherein there was no man to talk to, no man to see, and nothing with which to occupy the mind except the dread of mem-

ories of the night of April 21, 1930, when the prison became a screaming inferno, were two who were directly responsible for the fire.

* * *

“Months passed and the guards reported that ‘when a kindness is shown to one of them he weeps.’ When this was announced, Warden P. E. Thomas decided to let them have magazines.”

Shut away from the attractive incidentals of life and shut away from all companions, all reading matter, and all the usual methods of entertaining, these prisoners who had gone or had been lured deep into sin saw life differently and some of them, and perchance most of them, saw their imperative need of God. The story closes with these words:

“Today, it was said, some of the prayers of the men could be heard in the corridors at night. They had turned to religion for comfort against the awful silence.”

How any one could survive the severity of such solitary confinement is quite difficult to understand. Such confinement does give opportunity for one to meditate upon his past record, his present condition, and his future possibilities.

I have read another story this morning which is transcendently more interesting than is this prison story of gripping human concern. This second story also comes out of a prison experi-

ence. The writer had been exiled on Patmos "for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." This commandingly interesting prisoner, this man of whom much has been written, begins the relating of his experience by saying, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day." He was under the control of the Spirit, completely responsive to the Spirit, on the Lord's day.

These nine words from this Asiatic prisoner, from this man whose story of Christ is loved around the world, contain the secret to the wonderful revelation which follows. He was in the Spirit, he was under control of the Spirit, he was completely responsive to the Spirit, on the Lord's day.

One of the very serious weaknesses of Christendom, indeed a weakness which is fatal with many church members, is to be found just here. There are millions who enter churches on the Lord's day who are not in the Spirit. They are not under His control. They are not completely responsive to Him. Shall the deep conviction of the heart be spoken? Evidence compels one to believe that there are large numbers in the churches who have never known Him.

I was the guest of a church of recognized influence in the convention in which it is located. This also was on the Lord's day. One of the men of the church, a man who has held for years

positions of large responsibility both in his city and in the state, a "leading" man in the church, was asked to teach a men's Bible class. Another adult class was invited to sit with this body of men that its members might hear the teaching of the Scripture by this man who had distinguished himself in his city and in his state. The man had a real opportunity. Some time was spent by the president of the men's class and by an officer of the visiting class lauding the man who had been asked to present that morning the Word of Life. The teacher for the classes for the day was then presented.

He evidenced a very superficial knowledge of the Word of God and apparently did not impress any one present that he "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." If he too had been under the control of the Spirit, what elevated thinking and what holy purposes might have been experienced! It was the Lord's day. The man was asked and was expected to unfold the message of God Himself. This message demands men and women who experience the power of the Lord's presence, who are completely responsive to the Spirit when they present His message. A pleasing, popular politician cannot function in this holy place. Anyone who unfolds God's message must experience God's peace, must be quickened by Christ's presence, and must give

his testimony in the Spirit's power. Here is indicated an imperative need in many churches.

If the members of Christ's churches would assemble on the Lord's day in the Spirit, there would be a power of fellowship which would kill all snobbery and cant and insincerity; there would be present a power which would stir into growth noble purposes which are now being starved; there would be a warmth and a winsomeness in the assembly which would profoundly influence the stranger, and cause him to feel that he was in God's house; there would be an impelling Presence that would send forth those who know Christ with their own hearts equipped with fresh strength and courage for all the tests and tasks ahead. For all who are in the Spirit on the Lord's day there are revelations of eternal moment.

For this prisoner on dreary Patmos who "was in the spirit on the Lord's day" there were other imperishable experiences. He heard a matchless voice. He was assigned an immortal task. He saw the Prince of Peace. The great majority of church members are neither hearing the voice of Christ nor the voices of the many, many millions who do not yet know Him who is their only hope. There are numbers almost too large to count who do not feel that they have any assignment in the work of world redemption. There are multitudes, vast multitudes, through-

out Christendom who do not realize the presence of Christ. Very reverently follow the exiled Asiatic in his experience.

"I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice

"And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man."

What was the influence on this exiled Asiatic, this man whose influence since has covered continents and centuries, of his vision of Christ? He had walked with the Lord Jesus when Christ was on the earth. He was present when the Man of Calvary was transfigured. He stood near when the Prince of Peace was hanging on the Cross. He must have been present when Jesus ascended. And now he is permitted to see Him in His post-ascension glory. What was the influence on this apostle of this look at Jesus? His own words indicate that influence. Here is what he says:

"And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

There was an hour when a glimpse of the power of the Man of Galilee brought Simon Peter to his knees. And the first impact of the matchless power of the presence and the glory of His personality smote that daring and dauntless man, Saul of Tarsus, to the earth. Here on a

Lord's day morning one of His most loyal friends is given the privilege of looking upon Him in His post-ascension glory and the influence cannot be fully described or comprehended. He surely saw the holiness of Christ as he had never seen it before. Out of this clearer vision of Christ's holiness and His glory, he is assigned the task of writing a book and this book lives and gives hope and inspiration to men and women through the centuries. John on Patmos saw Christ and experienced the indefinable power of His presence, and his whole life by the experience was powerfully influenced. Until Christ is permitted to become real to men and women, they can never make Him real to others.

How real is Christ to the average teacher of God's Word? How real is Christ to many ministers who are expected to lead the people into closer relations with God? How real is Christ to many church officers? How real is Christ to the average member of the average Sunday school class? Men and women to whom Christ is not real can never make Christ real to others.

The world is sick, seriously sick, and Christ, the real, living Christ, is the only hope of this sick world. There are perhaps but very few who know how seriously sick the world is. The seriousness of sin is only seen by those who know something of God's holiness. Dr. John Henry Jowett fervently declares:

“Because we do not discern the majestic crusade of holiness, we do not realize the enormity of sin. If we look into the mystery of redemption and do not see the august holiness of God, we can never see the blackness of the sovereignty of sin. Dim your sense of holiness, and you lighten the colour of sin. Obscure the holiness and you relieve the blackness of sin.”

Ministers everywhere need to realize anew a sense of Christ's presence and His holiness. The teachers of the Word of Life—teachers in the colleges, seminaries, and in the churches—need to see Christ and feel the wonder of His holiness. Singers who are heralding the messages of praise and proclamation, of goodness and grace, are wasting their time unless they are singing out of hearts that experience the power of the Prince of Peace. Ministers, teachers, singers, and leaders can never lead into experiences which they do not know. They cannot proclaim the evangel which they themselves do not possess. They can never undertake with any hope of victory the immortal tasks for which they are not prepared.

The prisoner on Patmos proclaims a marvelous story because he had a marvelous experience. The men and the women who are able to put their hands with hope to the task of ministering to a sorely sick world are the men and the women who are vitally acquainted with the Man of Galilee and are experiencing the purifying power

of His holiness. The churches that capture the attention of their communities and their cities for Christ and that develop workers and witnesses of invincible courage and compassion must experience the purifying power of Christ's holiness and the sustaining strength of His presence.

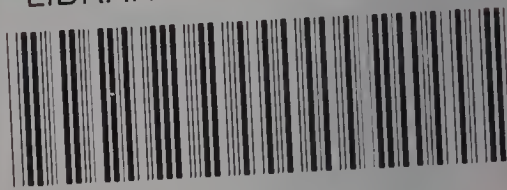
Behold the prisoner of Patmos! Instead of having freedom of movement he was in exile; in place of a half-million or a million dollar pulpit from which to proclaim his message, he probably had a rude cave in the side of a hill; in place of railway mail cars, airplanes, and sensitive microphones to dispatch quickly his messages across states and continents, the prisoner on Patmos had to trust his message to what appeared to be almost impossible difficulties; instead of an easy chair surrounded by cases of the most valuable books, the Patmos apostle probably sat in the crude environment of a cave and looked upon the barren walls of rock or earth. But he had that which has projected his message through the superstition and darkness of the centuries and has given hope to unnumbered millions.

Modern conveniences and equipment can be made to contribute to the effectiveness of the evangel but the churches must have the essentials of John's experiences or close their doors. Many are already dead though they may not know it. Other churches are dying and are not very con-

scious that death is upon them. There are still others and many of them that are hesitating and halting before opportunities which are urgent and appealing. There are other churches that are giving themselves seriously to the tasks assigned by Christ. Such churches are the hope of Christendom.

The Patmos prisoner, the apostle who was exiled "for the Word of God," saw Christ in the midst of the churches. That is where Christ delights to be. The churches must have Him or discontinue. If their members will welcome Him and enter deep into His fellowship, if they will look upon Him and have their own spirits fired by a sense of His holiness and the splendour of His glory, they will immediately make matchless impacts upon their communities and cities, and they will awaken and arouse whole continents. Christ, Christ in His awe-inspiring, purifying holiness; Christ in His redeeming and transforming power: that is the immediate and the supreme need of the churches. The members of such churches will be invincible in carrying the gospel to the corners of the earth.

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