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Call Back.

If you have gone a little way
ahead of me, call back.
'Twill cheer my heart and help
my feet along the stony track;
And if perchance, Faith's light is dim,
because the oil is low,
Your call will guide my lagging course
as wearily I go.

Call back, and tell me that He went
with you into the storm;
Call back and say He kept you when
the forest's roots were torn;
That when the heavens thundered and
the earthquake shook the hill,
He bore you up and held you where
the very air was still.

(over)

O, friend, call back, and tell me,
for I cannot see your face;
They say it glows with triumph and
your feet bound in the race;
But there are mists between us, and
my spirit eyes are dim,
And I cannot see the glory, though
I long for word from Him.

But if you'll say he heard you
when your prayer was but a cry,
And if you'll say he saw you through
the night's sin darkened sky -
If you have gone a little way ahead,
O, friend, call back -
'I will cheer my heart and help my
feet along the stony track.

Author - unknown -

John W. Follette often quoted the preceding poem. His own experience found expression therein. And since he had a singular gift and calling, he felt sometime like one who had to forage ahead—like a forerunner who had to go on to new territory to find the terrain, know its pitfalls, and its gorgeous and wonderful scenery. Then calling back he would say: “Come, it is marvelous over in here, come along.”—Hearts will be cheered and “feet helped along the stony track” to hear this voice calling back again through the pages of this book saying: “Come, I have found the SOURCE of all Life, Light, Reality and Truth.”

S.M.S. & C.S.

CHAPTER 1

WHY I WRITE THIS BOOK

I make no apology for this book. It is the result of an urge which has been pulling at my heart for a long time. It has come as the result of observations made over a period of years during which I have been greatly privileged to contact hearts and lives at most vital points. During my ministry as teacher in public schools, pastor of churches, teacher in two Bible Schools, and teacher and lecturer before congregations in camp meetings, Bible conferences, conventions, forums and classes, I have been greatly encouraged to find a hunger and desire on the part of many Christians for a deeper and fuller meaning to life. The forms in which this hunger manifests itself are rather technical and not to be discussed now. We will start with this established fact that on the part of many Christians there is at the center a longing and deep hunger for God and spiritual reality. This elemental desire is also in my heart and is the common bond of spiritual fellowship and mutual understanding.

I have also found that in the reaching out for God and exploration of fields for spiritual fellowship we have all met with opposition, frustration and sometimes abject failure. This reaction usually begins a series of questions. If Christianity is such a wonderful life, is so necessary, and if God is almighty and loves us, why, why, and again why? These questions usually fall into groups and may be classified under different headings according to type of difficulty. Had I time here, I think I could help you with a few, but I wish rather to deal with questions in a general way. More interesting than the questions are the dear souls who ask them. Here too, the people may be classified as to type and need. Human hearts hungry for the Infinite! The outer and more articulate voice calling in a wilderness of natural disorder, sounding from a region of human need best likened to "Deep calling to deep" (Psa. 42:7).

For years my work has been among students who not only desired to work out a Christian philosophy for life from the standpoint of theory, but who have also sought to discover a system for practical application. *Here is where I wish to help you—at fundamentals and with basic questions which should have due attention at the beginning and not after a soul is overwhelmed or too near defeat.*

In helping you I do not come offering some new and magic panacea for life. I have no new philosophy or creed for living. However, here are some fragments of truth which have helped me. They are like segments of an arc high circling over my life. As I have needed truth, God patiently let light (only fragmentary bits) shine down from the perfect Arc—the Christ—into my heart and life. These flashes of truth I desire to share with you. The truth I bring is not mine. It is His. Truth is never original with anyone. There may be a multiplicity of forms, patterns, designs and methods for its presentation and interpretation, but it is never original with anybody. No church, no person, no creed, no sect or group, has a corner on truth. It is just too big. It is universal, absolute and final. It finds perfect embodiment in Christ for in Him it became personified. Who contacts Christ contacts truth. So we are safe in taking His Word as our guide. All of us need fresh revelations of truth as we pass through different cycles of spiritual evolution and development. Each new cycle calls for a new revelation of truth and inner manifestation of the Christ as the peculiar need may demand. "Give us *this* day our daily bread." "Feed me with food convenient for me."

For a moment let us glance at the fields from whence these needs arise. If we could spend a little time here in analysis of man, first as regards personality and second as a human being, we might clear up some hangovers and tie down the fringes of loose thinking. As viewed from either standpoint—personality or being—he is a trinity; so there will naturally be a large field from which to find difficulties calling, questions arising, and needs to be supplied. That is why it is so safe to let Christ come

into the life and do with such infinite wisdom, patience, love, understanding and grace, what no psychiatrist can do with less skillful hands.

Christ still employs the methods He used when He helped broken lives and hearts two thousand years ago. Have you not thrilled to watch Him move through the Gospels to see how He meets a situation, or note His approach and His reaction to different propositions, suggestions and problems? Study Him and *love* Him as the great Teacher. Not only did He come to redeem man, but to *teach* him *how* to live. Only it seems that people want to do everything else *but* live. You know it is easier to *do* than to *be*.

Usually the real needs are not so apparent on the surface, but are lodged in more hidden or forgotten strata of life. Too often they are left untouched and unnoticed until tragedy, misfit, or overwhelming frustration (often in some physical or material form) arouses the soul to consciousness of a need and trouble. God has a way of getting at the deeper and more serious need by discovering to us some surface or local need or disturbance. In His method of revelation of our need He is tactful according to the nature and temperament of the one concerned. He does not always make direct attack. And in His application of truth and help He is correspondingly as delicate and yet forceful. The story of the prodigal son is enacted every day in fresh form. The lad, you remember, was acutely conscious of a need—a local, physical one too—a hungry stomach. But God was after a deep-seated spiritual need—a general overhauling and self revelation to the lad. God reached the basic need by way of a physical distress. The patient and tactful God! Many today could testify to the fact that the first vital contact and revelation of truth have come by way of sickness, physical distress, frustrations calling from the devastated fields of human disorder. We are on a holy quest for truth, and life affords a series of crises in which we may make a choice for God and this opens up new doors for light and truth. Learn *how* to interpret these crises and let us move on in God.

Naturally, in dealing with lives, I have had to do some very personal work, enter into sacred places of the heart, look upon life unmasked, tread softly over graves where lost hopes and broken dreams lie sleeping, touch tenderly the wounds where healing (real healing) was so very much needed but could not come because of a scab of defense mechanism which the overwhelmed ego had set up. Again I have gone into the sunny atmosphere of faith where hearts sang to me their hopes all drenched in the ethereal light of first love. Or, it may be I have shared the ambitions and hopes still vibrating between two very hard words to learn—*possibility* and *probability*. And again to share the most delicate of spiritual revelations and vibrations of the inner heart quite inarticulate to the limitations of the human but perfectly and refreshingly discerned in the realm of the spirit. The field has been varied and the range general.

But in writing this book I must retire from that field—direct contact and actual experience. I must not remain too concerned with the immediate, local and acute. I must move from cause to effect. When I stand back far enough and look, I see a general array of trouble, misfits, sins, unbelief, maladjustments, inhibition, heredity, complexes, hangovers, perversions, frustrations, pain and all the other what-nots. And I still have HOPE. It is into such a field that the Holy Spirit delights to move. Did He not in the beginning bring creation out of chaos! Remember, God is still creating.

I shall try to keep the teaching in most simple form avoiding terminology or phraseology which might hinder a seeker rather than help him. I want to help you *where you are* and in a most practical way. As a rule I find the difficulties of the average Christian are a result of not having given careful thought to some of the most elemental and basic things pertaining to the spiritual life. Usually these issues were never prayed through so that there was clear direction and focusing of purpose. The thinking too many times was lazy and hazy, so there was failure to properly discriminate between issues and items involved.

Many times an overwhelming emotional impulse or reaction had given place to the more essential spiritual pivoting of the life with sane, spiritual understanding of the same. So many, many times I have had to lead a needy, disillusioned soul (one who has come to himself) back, past any number of experiences, good, blest, bad and indifferent, to the point in the beginning where the failure was lodged.

In this book I shall not analyze the difficulties and prescribe a way of deliverance. I desire rather to acquaint you with some basic purposes, objectives, laws, methods and dynamics which I find involved in this wonderful venture called Christian living.

At the very beginning let us have a few things clearly understood. I am dealing with Christians and not sinners. I am trying to help Christians who are reaching out for a more abundant life in Christ. That does not mean that a sinner may not be helped. Let us remember that truth has a revolutionary aspect. Your Christian life and general system of thought may need correction and tuning up by a definite acceptance and application of the truth as found in Christ. Truth will not rob or destroy any other truth you already hold. However, truth does upset, disturb and unmask traditions which are not scriptural, religious habits (of natural religious type), notions, errors, and much that often accrue to the Christian in his venture and seeking of life.

Many times the new life has a hard time breaking through dogma (where it is unsafe and unnecessary), religious habits and forms. I call these *husks of unreality* which becloud and hinder the radiance of divine truth. So if at times you feel some items, such as mistaken ideas and notions, getting "jittery", be brave, and embrace the truth at any cost and let the rest go into eclipse. Do not try to re-establish them again. The precious, life-giving truth is what we are after.

We all move under the power of some philosophy of life. We are so made. It may be simple and almost inarticulate, but it is

there. It may be so ethereal and other world minded that it has no practical application. It may be very idealistic and lack proper dynamics for outworking. We all have some kind of philosophy, so it pays to know *what* it is. Christ, in His matchless love and interest offers us a field of ultimate truth from which we may deduce an adequate and workable philosophy. But please remember, that one must pay the price, meet the requirements and accept the discipline required in the curriculum of the school of the Holy Spirit. Christianity is *not* a philosophy—it is a life.

I sometimes feel like a recruiting officer. I am seeking Christians who are willing to offer themselves as candidates for this glorious life. The new creation is made for the highest and most spiritual life heaven can afford.

CHAPTER 2

THE SPIRITUAL PURPOSE IN LIFE AND METHOD OF ATTAINMENT

I like to know *what* I am doing and *why*. I must have design or purpose even in the simplest matters of daily living. Some I know are not constructed so, and life to such is generally a series of accidents or unrelated circumstances—there seems to be no purpose aside from the physical existence and getting through.

Very often in the transfer from the old life and creation over to the new we are still conscious of characteristics of the natural. They may form patterns for the new life to fall into, so we need to be careful here. A careless habit of the old life may ruin the flow of life in the new order and hinder the fuller manifestation of God in our lives. Sometimes it may be helpful to carry a desirable trait or habit along. For instance, I have noticed people who in childhood and youth have been thoroughly disciplined, and have learned the value of obeying promptly and yielding quickly, when they come into the walk of the Spirit this background is of great value and saves them many a difficult jolt.

In life I like to know (as far as possible in God's will) what I am doing and why. In this wonderful new life, God does not leave us in the dark and expect us to stumble along and get through the best we can. Life is more than being good and getting to heaven. I am sure He wants us spiritually minded in this matter of living. The Christian life is not a series of disjointed affairs or an ordeal, or even a song through which we pass. There is a definite purpose for which we were each one created. This divine purpose is like a vision toward which we move. In our make-up, according to God's creative touch, we are all made to follow a vision or some pattern. All life and activity are due to motivation toward some *desired* end or purpose. That is how we are *made* and is basic in our constitution. This is seen in the most

simple and prosaic doings of life. With some the whole purpose rests in the realm of the material, and life is governed and colored by it. Others have caught a vision of spiritual purposes and meaning to life and so are living, right now, for eternity.

Christians many times fail and their faith is harmed because they try so hard to accomplish things that God has no idea of doing. Instead of doing all sorts of good things—not wicked—but not in His will, they should find His will and walk in that. What a revelation to some hearts to find that after all the prayer, struggle, hard work and effort they fail to realize their purpose—all because it was *their* idea and plan and not God's! So in our Christian living if we do not have a spiritual worthwhile purpose we shall make a great failure.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he” (Prov. 29:18). This verse is a great favorite with our missionaries. But I think it has a broader teaching than that usually given—where there is no vision (no Christ or Gospel) the people perish (or are lost). It means that but much more. So we will let our dear Christian workers use it and get the vision of Christ to all they can. And you know I am a missionary in heart and would have gone to the field long ago only God had other plans for my life. In my college days I was a member of the Student Volunteer Movement and hoped to go. But God kept me home to train others to go—so now I go “by proxy” in the lives of dozens of dear young men and women whom it has been my joy to train, and today they are serving in all the different fields of the world.

Let us read not only the first part of the text, but the second part as well, “He that keepeth the law, happy is he.” I do not think the *law* here relates to the Ten Commandments. He is rather teaching us a principle of Christian living, and suggests the *power* of beholding or not beholding a vision and the *law* governing the same. After all, it is the law of cause and effect. Failure, loss, defeat, and tragedy are not just a “happenstance” or accidental. There is always a cause back of it all—a law. So

the text tells us, "happy" or most fortunate is one who discovers it and abides by it.

A more careful translation of the text from the original Hebrew will help us here: "Where there is no vision, the people *cast off restraint*." How suggestive! Now we see why the loss is evident—there has been a casting off of restraint. The vision has power to restrain or to constrain in your life. Many times it becomes positive in its constraining ministry. Do you remember Paul in this position?—"The love of Christ constraineth us" (II Cor. 5:14). And as to restraint: "The Spirit suffered them not" (Acts 16:7).

We do or refuse to do (in the matter of conduct) because of the power of the vision. Now we see more clearly the force of the verse. Where there is no vision (no restraining or constraining power in life), the people cast off restraint, and of course there is loss and failure. The objective and purpose have *not* been realized or attained. So there is loss, and life does not come to fruition. The design or pattern is not filled out. But most fortunate or happy is the one who discovers the law underneath the matter. Knowing this principle, he will order his steps accordingly.

Concerning the purpose of vision in Christian living, I want to give you a few scriptures.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or *whatsoever ye do*, do all to the *glory* of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Col. 3:17).

"If any man speak let him speak as the oracle of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in *all things* may be *glorified* through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever" (I Peter 4:11).

From these texts we are able to see off in the distance a

divine, supreme and spiritual purpose: the *glory* of God. In fact, the *glory* of God is the supreme purpose toward which the whole creation moves. Let us remember that God is a Supreme Being. He is a dynamic, living personality and the first vocation of personality is expression. This is a necessary characteristic of God. He continually desires to move *out* and express Himself. It is a fixed function of a living being. Therefore God never hides Himself within the confines of His own nature. This power to express and move out is found in the whole universe. It is found first in His creative mood. The order of angelic beings, ministering spirits, move to His glory. The whole celestial realm declares the *glory* of God. All His creative power and design in life move on to the *glory* of God. So when we read these texts touching upon the glory as the purpose in life, we see *why* even the commonplace, ordinary acts of life are blessed with great dignity and may bear a mark of distinction. Why? Just because He has so planned. Think again of *motives* in your living and service and be encouraged to know it is His glory that gives life dignity, beauty, strength and godly character.

So we must keep in mind that all spiritual living is, after all, not dependent upon certain blessings and emotional reactions, but the whole structure rests upon divine unchanging principles. These are fundamental and basic to give stability to the structure whether it be an individual life or a Christian assembly or church. Then the fact of spiritual law to govern in the building or erection in this wonderful divine life must be duly recognized.

Were we as sincere and careful in the matter of spiritual purpose as we are about material ends, I am sure we should grow in grace and save ourselves many a "spiritual headache."

Why not study His Word and tarry long enough in His presence to find the purpose toward which He is working? Then we could trust Him to make the necessary adjustments in spirit to help us in *living* to His *glory*. Were we once able to see this and brave enough to let God *reduce* our many activities and doings and prayers and what-not, life would take on *spiritual* val-

ues and God would be glorified. I am sure it would *not* be according to the general design made by the human wisdom or even *religious* desires, but it would fall in a divine pattern, and His will and the glory of God would color even the most uneventful life. Man's creation was unto the glory of God and He has *not* changed the original purpose.

Now let us consider *how* this glory or purpose may be realized. How may such a lofty, idealistic scheme be made a reality? God has not left us in the dark here.

So many times we get confused and erect all sorts of natural or religious standards for living and measures for gauging our lives. Thus we become involved with details, technique, and side issues. We try to *do so many things*. We forget that *all* He wants of us is to do *His will*. Let Him shape the pattern as He sees good. It is *His will* that becomes the *divine method*. Every life should fall into a divine pattern governed by *His will*. That would not make all our lives alike but a marvelous display of glory would be reflected in each life by each one doing God's will. Your design may not be *like* mine, nor mine like my brother's. But all will reflect His glory. Too many quarrel over their patterns and designs instead of surrendering *quickly to His will*, and *flowing* into them, and thus really *living*. Accept life, do not quarrel with it! Offer it freely to Him and let Him focus your living to His glory; and live, just *live*. Folks are trying to *do* almost anything else but *live*.

The *divine method* is doing His will. The doing of His will, great or small, always glorifies Him.

By way of illustration to show us a scriptural picture of this teaching, let us look at the life of Christ. We know He kept the glory of God ever before Him, and spoke of it and related His life to it. It was *the motto* of His life. "Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psa. 40: 7, 8). So, long before He reaches Calvary we find Him as the *ideal man* doing God's will.

Again we find the truth told in the Old Testament offerings. You will remember the order of them. The *first* is not a sin offering. No, it is *toward God*, and is a picture of Christ—the ideal man—doing *the will* of God. No mention of blood, sin or atonement. It is the *will of God first*. Isn't that beautiful? God first. Even Christ in life, as told in the meal offering, has God's will first. So Christ emphasizes the great necessity of doing *God's will first*. Run through the Gospels again and note this.—John 4:34; Matt. 26:42.

Now let us turn to an incident in His life showing the other side of the question—the glory or the purpose side. You remember very well the story of Jesus' raising of Lazarus as given in John's Gospel. Many times we read purely from a traditional standpoint and so miss anything fresh and inspirational in the bit we read. We have a certain mental attitude or approach and *knowing* the story from so many readings, we anticipate the climax and are thus blessed or thrilled. I am trying to read the Gospels afresh, and not to anticipate too much, but rather keep open to the Spirit to lay emphasis or throw light on some of the least expected portions, and I am charmed to find the Word opening up like a beautiful flower.

I was reading this story and waiting to reach the thrilling climax—"Lazarus, come forth," but as I *tarried* the Spirit helped me to see *so much even before* I reached the usual point of victory. My heart and my mind had been flooded for days with the thought of God's glory as the great purpose, and back in my mind was this atmosphere and condition. I was not directly conscious of it but I am sure *God was*.

How many of you who are familiar with this incident can recall Jesus' *first* words in relation to the situation? Let us review the story. The sisters are overwhelmed and are lamenting the fact of Jesus' absence. Lazarus is dead. Jesus is away—miles away—and on top of this distress He remains away two more days. What a very unhappy, depressing and tragic situation! How do they react? In the *natural* (note this: in the natural)

they are so conscious of things seen that they are completely localized and seemingly have lost faith. They see Lazarus dead and in a tomb, and that sealed. They are tomb conscious, dead-man conscious, and are bound to the immediate and the death side of the situation. What are they *thinking*? “Oh, our dear Lazarus is dead, *what shall we do*? Oh, if the Lord had only been here! If He only *knew* our situation!”

Oh, dear soul, have you a Lazarus dead and laid in a tomb? Has some precious hope died on your hands and so you have had to bury it? It became so very annoying that you *had* to. Some idea, plan, hope, dream, ambition has failed (in health) and died. It is even *sealed* in a tomb. Are you, too, saying, “Oh, if the Lord only knew!” Listen, my dear brother, or sister, do not stay so *near* the tomb! You become tomb conscious, dead-man conscious, stone-over-the-tomb conscious and thus too local, too bound. You thus lose *perspective* of thought and vision. Do you not see how it affected the dear souls here?

What are the *first* words Jesus utters as He is fully aware of the *whole* situation—dead man, tomb, and the tragedy of broken hearts? Listen, “When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is *not* unto death, *but for the glory of God*, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” (John 11:4). Isn’t that wonderful and beautiful? What is Jesus doing? He has faith, perspective of thought and vision, clear sight as to the *purpose*, and so *relates* the whole thing to the *glory* of God. What a miracle! He is able to *relate* tragedy, death, loss, and failure, all to the glory of God!

Here is a blessed secret. He *refuses* to be influenced by the shadow and gloom of a sepulcher. The dead man inside (all very real) did not disturb Him. His farsighted vision carried beyond all this and found a resting point in the *glory of God*. What a lesson! Can you today interpret your Lazarus or your tomb in the light of the glory of God? If you are a Christian and life is dedicated to God and His will, you will see again in this light the force of Romans 8:28, which is the same teaching. Could we

all do this, and faith were manifest, what an unfolding and display of God's power we should witness! But people are *bound* by sense perception. They are Lazarus conscious, tomb conscious, stone-on-the-tomb conscious. Jesus refused to be held under the limitation of anything seen. He did the only correct and constructive thing faith could do—He *related* things properly. Yes, related even death and a tomb—the absolutely impossible—all to the glory of God.

O, faith, thou glorious means of reaching, help us to see the *desire* and purpose of God! Teach us to relate in this Lazarus-hour of our experience, the tomb to God's glory, and anoint our eyes to trace God's leading over the pressure and through the distress until we may see God's glory!

Jesus does this all through His life and ministry—always looking *away, away, away* to God and His glory—ever *relating*. See Him dealing with a blind man. John 9:3—Here blindness is related to the works of God and thus to His glory.

In the wonderful seventeenth chapter of John we find the Lord's prayer (really), or the High Priestly prayer. Usually we are occupied with the portions which have bearing upon *our* lives and relationships. We like the portions dealing with, "Thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word," also the *unity* of group and verses 9 and 10, "They are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine;" etc., and delight in what I call the *divine entanglement*. As a rule we are interested in the portions which offer personal appeal. But let us go back to the first part of the prayer. With what is He first concerned? Nothing less than the glory of God. It is a point to ponder—"Glorify thy Son," and now listen! Verse 4, "I have glorified thee on the earth." Isn't that wonderful? The *first* matter of value: the *glory* of God. "I have glorified thee on the earth." Then in the next phrase or thought He tells us how: "I have finished the *work* which thou gavest me to *do*." Isn't that clear and sweet? *First* was the glory of God. How accomplished? By doing His will: "The work thou gavest me to do."

Shall we not get our bearings in this matter of spiritual living? Some are so at sea. I find many misfits in life. Why? Often it is due to desires, plans, ambitions and schemes—good and often *very* religious—but *not* spiritual or related to God's will or purpose. Sometimes a dear soul forces his or her desire and plan upon *another's* life and he tries so hard to make a go of it just because it is to him a splendid plan. Many, many times God is not within a million miles of it. And they have a terrible time using the promises, trying to *make* God do things He has no intention of doing, for they do not relate to His purpose at all. Life need not be a tragedy. Do not quarrel with life; *accept* it. Then offer it to God and let Him relate it to His *will* and purpose. We may not *enjoy* all the phases of it—often we *endure*—but as long as we find life and its doings *contingent* unto His will, we can live.

Stop long enough for a spiritual adjustment and much of the friction will pass away. The dead man in a tomb was *contingent* upon the will of God in purpose and needed faith to thus relate it. Let us take a little inventory of life. What is the real purpose and objective toward which you focus your living? Is it cluttered with the details of *doing* this, that, and the other? Are you bound by the technical aspect, *not* so much the doing? All the doing must *relate*. Do less and have it properly related, and life will take on spiritual proportions and color. God does not thank you or reward you for doing a thousand things—good and religious—which do not relate to His will. Seek His will; do *that* and you cannot but glorify Him.

In this chapter we have seen that God's desire for man is to glorify Him. The glory of God is the supreme objective for Christian living as seen from man's side. That is why the most commonplace and prosaic life may become radiant, resplendent, helpful and elevated to a place of real dignity just because it is lived unto the glory of God. If to sweep a street of a city were to the glory of God, then that would be the most glorious and noble thing for either angel or man to do. It is not the specific

act with its natural coloring and trappings and man-made evaluations that counts—that has to do with the flesh and natural man—it is a question of His glory that counts. So it is very safe to ask ourselves concerning the issues of life, where we are to make a meaningful choice, is this to the glory of God?

CHAPTER 3

MISTAKEN GOALS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

In this chapter let us consider two goals set up by some Christians toward which they focus their living. We shall see how deflecting a goal may be even though earnestly and honestly sought. These mistaken goals cover necessary and accepted truth but when arranged as an objective for focusing life and activity they are tragically unscriptural and deflecting.

I have found here one of the neediest fields for revamping and rethinking our ideas as to a goal. The need is due to a lack of careful, clear, prayerful, honest thinking and study in the presence of tradition and sentimental notions and good sounding, but *not* scriptural teaching. In trying to help a soul over a present and seemingly urgent need, I have had to go back to the real source of the trouble and find what he was really aiming at or what he thought was God's goal for Christian living. To the majority of Christians, both carnal and spiritual, God does not seem to figure largely in the matter. It is usually approached and worked out from man's point of view. Here is tragedy.

May I help you? When I ask Christians about a final goal (not what they are at present doing) but the ultimate for life, most of them cannot give a very clear statement. They are rather hazy in thought when they have to reach so far ahead. The goal is so remote, so vague, unreal and unrelated to the "doings of now" that few have given it clear or serious thought at all. However, after questioning I discover that the goal of life usually vibrates between two points—service or heaven.

Service As A Goal

To the one group the expression of life in service holds the field. I believe I can appreciate why it should be so. Not having a scriptural understanding of the meaning and objective, one would naturally take a very human, limited slant in his think-

ing. These people are usually sanguine, militant, aggressive, fine organizers, excellent executives, missionary, evangelistic, and expressive. Their vision is filled with: "the field is white unto harvest." They are grand workers. Things just must go. Enterprise, achievement, spreading the kingdom, conquest, expansion, and saving the world, keep a burden upon them. Their theme song might well be, "To the work, to the work." And to hear them argue, exhort, and preach (who have not yet escaped this side line) one would almost think man was after all going to out-do God.

And even in circles of more spiritually minded people, Spirit-filled and alive unto God, one will still find a hangover of the old order coloring much of their thinking and movements. Here too, we hear popular slogans which are not wholly true and usually deflect the seeker for truth off upon issues, really of God, but not ultimate, and thus they become a hindrance rather than a help on the way. One so often hears, "Saved to serve" quoted and used almost as a scripture text, and yet it is not really the whole truth. It is correct only in part. It is true we are saved to express the new life and the thoroughly saved soul will normally seek a place of spiritual service and ministry. It is characteristic of the new order. But you see salvation reaches beyond the point of service—on, on, on past this life, and projects itself into another age and to a perfection to be gained. Service is only a means—a God-given means to an end.

Another phrase, very popular but not thoroughly scriptural is, "the baptism is for service." I wonder sometimes who originates these deflecting slogans. Usually the text used is Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." But you see when you read the verse carefully He does not say, "ye shall serve." It is not *do*. But He does say, "ye shall *be*." Usually the word, *witness* is restricted to mean service and ministry. But witness is a larger word than service. It does include service

but that is only part of its significance. Of course the power of the Spirit is back of it all. Remember here that the gifts are for service and they are of course a manifestation of the Spirit. So, service is only a part of the purpose of the fullness of the Spirit. Its ultimate is deeper and fuller as you will see later in this book. It is so much easier to *do* than to *be*. He tells us what we are to be, not so much what to do.

After the bandwagon of spectacular service has rolled by and the blare of trumpets fades away and the dust settles, it is difficult sometimes to get your bearings. Many young Christians, thrilled with the idea of possibility—not yet knowing the word probability—are swept off their feet. However, it is good to know that down underneath it all is “the still small voice.”

Please listen! I am not saying there is no place for Christian ministry and active service. I am not depreciating it because I show it in some of its picturesque trappings. There is a glorious and militant place for it. The new life in Christ does seek expression and it is a normal and logical result of contact with the Christ. All the descriptive qualities mentioned are very commendable. The glorious commission is still good; it has never been revoked—“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19). God does burden souls for the unsaved, missionaries are called and wonderfully blest in their fields. A Spirit-filled and directed service is a great part of the consecrated follower’s life. But when we make service in any form—limited or with world-wide scope—the goal of life, we are wrong. God does not do so. The Bible does not hold out any such scheme as the ultimate for Christian living. Many, upon this discovery, are disappointed and hate to face the truth. Some human programs, beautiful and thrilling, will have to give place to God’s plan. That is hard. Some Christians will have to restate and correct their views and line up with the Scripture, and that is hard too.

May I help you? As you read—it may be patiently—you will find the place which service holds in the Christian experience.

All service is for reactionary purposes. Keep it in its place and let *it* serve you. I mean just that—let service *serve* you.

Heaven As A Goal

Now let us consider the other group I found, who make heaven a goal. They hold in common many of the general characteristics of the other group but are not quite so bound by the service idea. They like the encouragement and hope that heaven offers and have become more interested perhaps in heaven as a kind of a release. They feel keenly the pressure and unsatisfactory results in life as the grind of present situations press upon them. Many in this group have splendid, spiritual qualities. Many have already penetrated beyond the husks of unreality (flesh and nature) and have caught a glimpse of spiritual possibilities. Too many times these souls miss the finest in spiritual living because of limited fields and purposes which entangle the spirit in its holy quest. When asked what their goal for life might be, the answer usually is—heaven. With them heaven holds the field. They still have a hangover of works. Often at the close of an inspiring testimony of God's grace, love and power and a witness of life in them, I have heard them say, "Pray for me that I may hold out to the end and make heaven my home." At once I can hear some of you say, "What is wrong with that?" It is not a moral question of right and wrong. The last part of the testimony was a tell-tale give-away, and showed what was uppermost and aim for them. His aim or goal was to "hold out to the end and make heaven his home." This person is still "holding on." Seemingly he does not rest in the Father's hand. You still feel the quiver of a struggle and effort on his part. Listen, you cannot save yourself. Christ is the Saviour and does the holding. No doubt the person means well. Perhaps he means, "Pray for me that I may be faithful in the task laid out for me, or pray that I may walk in the Spirit and please God." But the way such people speak, you feel the self-effort and pressure in doing what God says *He* will do.

"And make heaven my home" is another phrase so often

used. You do not *earn* heaven, nor is it offered as a final goal for being good. Heaven belongs to a child of God as a part of the general scheme and plan of redemption. We are not redeemed *just to go* to heaven. You do not go there because you "hold out to the end." If you are redeemed you will go there because God has prepared it as a place for saved people. It is His plan and I simply cooperate with Him in faithfulness in life, and heaven is a normal consequence of God's redeeming me. The plan of redemption includes heaven as an item in a redeemed universe functioning to His glory, and redeemed humanity perfectly adjusted to the highest spiritual living and a perfection of His original thought—"Let us make man." Heaven is an integral item in the plan. Christ always spoke of heaven as a place. Yet in one memorable statement He made the kingdom to mean a heart condition. (Luke 17:21)—"For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Heaven is first condition and then location. It is always easier to deal with picture forms, materialistic concepts and symbols than abstract truth. So it is easier and far more comforting to contemplate and visualize heavenly features than to entertain and create heavenly conditions. When Jesus made that statement the Jews, you will remember, were suffering from a "kingdom complex." They continually dragged the heavenly and spiritual truth to the level of human thought and cast it into the mold of a material kingdom. Christ did not say there was *no* material kingdom, but He placed emphasis where it belonged. The kingdom must first be present in heart; location will follow. The heaven within will determine the other. So let us not plan too elaborately on the shape of the mansion, the width of the golden streets and the size of the harps. Let us be sure that the inner heart and life condition is such as may find counterpart in the desired heaven. Heaven is pure grace, it is a part of the great gift of salvation, but a crown (now you strike the question of rewards) is won. A crown is the symbol of authority and power. We qualify for the crown. They are not passed out to make one happy or to add to one's decoration and appearance. One may be given a harp (the symbol of joyful ex-

pression)—all may have a certain sense of appreciation and joy and a harp for telling it. But crowns are symbols of authority and power for which one has qualified.

Did you ever notice in reading church history, when and why this idea of heaven being a goal crept in?

The most glorious pictures of heaven are found in the Revelation. This book is highly symbolic and picturesque in language. It suggests so much by way of a happy release from the tragedy of earth life. When was it written? When the Church was going through most terrific persecution and needed encouragement and stimulant to faith. The whole theme is victory and triumph. It is the Revelation of the Christ. It came just when the persecuted, struggling Church needed a fresh assurance of the ultimate triumph of God in the universe. Not only was it to comfort the early Church but God saw to it that it was incorporated in the canon of Holy Writ. So today, it again sheds light upon a dark world and again encourages the heart of the Christian in faith as it waits the mighty triumph of Christ.

The contrast of the lowly, persecuted Church with the Church triumphant in Christ in the heavenlies, the happy release from the pressure of the present life and the blest hereafter was overpowering to that early group. The whole emphasis shifted and centered upon heaven. Before this the *very* early Church moved under a tremendous impact of truth in the form of *Life*. The early group of believers had neither yet formulated doctrines nor become involved in the mechanism and technique of its administration. They were vitally conscious of *Life*. Redemption was a reality—demonstrated in actual life. The Revelation had not yet been written for the early group who moved under the early Pentecostal experience. What was it that gave the early Church the dynamic power which caused her to blaze her way through the awful odds against her? Do you for a moment think it was alone the baptism and service? It was not the service that carried her through—it was the witnessing, or life willing to be offered to death, that did it. Not all followers, I feel sure,

were so highly gifted, but they *had* to know how to live and that counted. They were not thinking of making heaven a goal; they were too busy *living*. Her emphasis was upon life and upon what God was doing *to* her and *for* her and *in* her more than what she was doing for God. The impact of truth which moved and molded the *early* Church fresh from the Pentecostal experience was that of *life*, and not heaven. We would do well if we could remember that, when so many times we hear of people wanting to recapture the experience of the early Pentecostal Church. As a rule, what they desire is to see the power of God manifest in signs and wonders and supernatural gifts. But let us remember there was something more than merely the outpouring of the Spirit. There was *something* upon which to pour it. I mean by that that there was some tremendous and intensive *living*. Miracles are wrought in the atmosphere of pressure and impossibility. But no one likes such an atmosphere. The Church moved in power not because every member was so filled that the assembly was just a sight of supernatural doings. Gifts were there, no doubt, but it was the pressure that brought the power after all. So when you desire to recapture the early experience don't forget that pressure, suffering, persecution, absolute devotion, were accompanying features. We have not yet suffered. The early Church was not thinking of a delectable harp, but a disciplined heart.

Do not misunderstand me. I do believe in heaven. Why should I not when God has been so good as to give me a little glimpse of the heavenly life? There is a place in our Christian thought and philosophy for a future hope and realization of things intimated by the Spirit. We now need the celestial phase of truth, its uplift, inspiration, mystery and the utter other-world atmosphere. The sublime inspiration and hope of a glorious completed future and continuity of divine life is absolutely needed and given by the Word. But nowhere can we find God making heaven a goal. It is never the ultimate for the Christian in His plan. I know that tradition, sentiment, and so many hymns,

have wrought wonders in this field, but all that has only deflected the soul and sent it out upon avenues diverging from the central goal which God has for it.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

May I help you here in regard not only to the ultimate, but goals involved in the process of attaining or coming into the realization of "all things to the glory of God?" We must ever keep before us the final or supreme goal for *all* living which is *the glory of God*. But there are goals and objectives to be aimed at and realized while we are in the process of becoming. For instance, the goal of perfected Christian character and balanced integrated personality, is right now the desire of God for us and He is working toward that end in the lives of all who will surrender to the necessary discipline and training. Such a goal we will find is the present interest of a consecrated believer. It is not final here and now, but is a requisite part of the great scheme of creation and the heritage of the redemptive process. To separate this goal and make it final would only defeat the supreme purpose. But it relates as a working factor toward the whole. To sit down and concentrate on becoming holy or perfect as an individual, would isolate one and he would lose his sense of proper relation to the other members of the body.

The building of a Christian character and seeking to perfect the personality is indeed highly personal and needs must be. No one else can do it. But it relates itself to more than the one involved. He is a cell, as it were, or as Paul says, a member of the great mystical body, an intelligent factor in the great *over-all kingdom* of God. This perfection must find expression not in an isolated person but in a social order and place in God's kingdom. Some may ask, "Did not Jesus say, 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you'?" (Matt. 6:33) So is not the kingdom the objective?" Yes, for the kingdom of God is, after all, the glory of God. I use the expression, *the glory of God*, since it is more commonly used in both the Old and the New Testaments. Some may

think that if he seeks the kingdom first then Christian character will be added since He says, "all these things shall be added." But look at the context again. He is not talking about character or perfection—that was just the trouble.

The disciples were distressed over the material things and needs. Such things were to be added. Christ was discovering to them a law in the spiritual realm as real and operative as any law in the natural realm. It is the law of spiritual adjustment. When we understand this law and are obedient to it, all temporal and necessary material items fall into perfect order and come in due season. Christian character is not added as a gift might be given. It is built and developed by intelligent cooperation with God as one is obedient to the laws and principles in the new order or realm of the Spirit. So there are goals within goals, and objectives involved in attaining a greater objective. So when we discover that God makes the development of Christian character a goal it does not mean the final glory of God, but a goal set within the general framework of God's glory over all.

In finding the goal we will skip the field of tradition, forget many of the hymns which may have thrilled us but which were not scriptural. First, let us consider Paul's concept and teaching concerning the goal for the Christian. In both Paul's letters and recorded prayers we find clear evidence. If anyone had a right to think along the lines of service none could be more worthy than he. In this field he has no equal. Not only did he see the great need and feel it keenly, but he threw himself into it and spent his life freely for the accomplishment of God's will in most consecrated service. But in no place do we find him laying the emphasis in life upon that department. The theme of Paul's letters is always the redemption and spiritual adjustment of personality. In Paul's philosophy the worker is always greater than his work. The author is always greater than his story; the artist is greater than his picture, and the musician is greater than the fleeting vibration of his music. He has a place for service, of course, but gives it a correct emphasis. Read again the lofty bit

of truth in Ephesians 4:11-13:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect (full-grown) man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

“Till we all come”—we are on our way now; we have not yet arrived, for we are in the process of becoming. Note that he does not say, “Till we all get to heaven.” Whither then do we come? He says, “unto a perfect (or full-grown) man.” Here is something sublime, elevated and worthy of the thought of God, the death of Christ and the ultimate ideal God has for man. Romans 8:29:

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be *conformed* to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are *changed* into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Cor. 3:18).

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (I John 3:2).

All these texts have elevation; they give purpose for the persistency of personality.

Listen to Paul in his own words, Col. 1:28, 29: “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Notice the objective, please. It is neither to make them efficient servants nor to get them to heaven, *but* “That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Here is magnificent perspective in Paul’s thinking and ministry. Of course in the process there were any number of comings and goings, revivals, letters, troubles, blessings and varied experiences along the way, but Paul

is thinking of the final perfection ahead.

In Paul's prayers let us find the burden and inner desire of his heart. What is he *most* concerned over in the lives of his followers—Christians? Right here let us get away from the traditional notions and be honest. Colossians 1:9-11:

“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.”

Also Colossians 1:14-19:

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.”

Ephesians 1:15-20:

“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the

riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.”

Galatians 4:19:

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.”

In none of these prayers do we find the burden to center upon the service of his followers. It is not primarily a burden for external manifestation of power as one would generally think. He prays for the development and maturing of the saints. He longs and prays that they may come into all the fullness of a real experience in God. It is their character he is after—their inner life. Paul's idea of a spiritual life and ministry was not labor and work as the human generally thinks. It was the normal and spontaneous expression of divine life flowing *through* a believer in forms which accomplished God's will in whatever field He chose to order it. It was like fruit which is the perfection of a growth. Service to him was God's will wrought out through him. He was a transmitter. How it would simplify our lives could we but take that attitude. We are reflectors and transmitters. The new life in Christ *will* have expression correctly motivated and executed.

Paul knew that the greatest need then, as it ever will be, was not external demonstrations of power—they will come—but it was the need of a divine, dynamic miracle to be wrought in the inner life of the believer.

If ever anyone had a right to long for heaven and desire to make it a goal, I am certain Paul had a perfect right to do so. The trials, testings and general persecution for truth were enough to overwhelm him. We could scarcely blame him had he made heaven his object of supreme desire. But Paul is not of that type. He *is* rich in sentiment, profound in faith and daring in the

demonstration of his conviction. Paul is at once, not only an idealist but also a realist. He is a philosopher, and I am glad. He could not rest short of the highest concept for creation and the process of life that God could offer. He discovered this vision and objective and it became a life challenge, invitation, conviction, vision and glory.

Listen to him in Philippians 3:12-14, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." What is the prize? Surely not good service—he has that. Not heaven—he knows that he is bound for heaven. He tells us what it is. He says he has not already attained it.—Of course not, but he is pressing on, still in the process of becoming what?—perfect. It is a perfection or completeness he is discussing. Had he not been laid hold of by Christ for the very selfsame thing? He says so. It is the objective which Christ has for him, and therefore his also. And what a field the perfection covers! With some it means limitless service; for others a perfection of fellowship and heart life in Him; to others still, knowledge and understanding of the infinite purposes of God; and to others, the complete satisfaction the heart may give to God. Paul had a consciousness deep at the root of his being that he had been created for, called to, and was being shaped for some point of completeness in the final universe—holy and complete and to the glory of God.

Now let us see what Christ says in regard to the goal. No safer place could be found for teaching than what we call, *The Sermon on the Mount*. Here we find the manifesto of the Kingdom. Remember that Christ also said there was one phase of the kingdom of heaven which was within us. If that be true, and the kingdom of heaven has come into the heart of a believer,

then we should find the principles and laws of the same operating. Also remember the ideal standards, principles and requirements for the fine, clear-cut, superb character, are all for Christians. These ideals and standards are not to be taken from their setting and place of application, and saddled over upon the unregenerated, natural life of an unbeliever. Here is where endless confusion and tragic defeat have marred the patterns of civilization—Christian, so-called. See chapt. 6 for fuller discussion of this point.

Here Christ sets forth the ideal as it is to be found and demonstrated under the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. I know that some like to project this ideal life of a Christian to some millennial age. That is all very good, but it has its *first* application right *here* and *now*. It is for the Christian and not for the sinner. We cannot go into detail as he stresses the idea of human personality. He is ever after *man*. He loves the latent possibilities in the broken, needy life. Man was originally made for God and he is not at home or contented until contact is made afresh and the new creation life started. Christ knew that and therefore lays stress upon the sacredness and value of a human being—a man. He builds up a most wonderful ethical and moral ideal for him. He draws back the curtain of human limitations and impotency and lets us see what a real man is. Of course Christ is after all The Sermon on the Mount personified. He was the actual demonstration, at once beautiful and tragic in full sweep of what may be demonstrated in a life once surrendered to the high calling of “becoming.”

He lifts the life from the natural and usual standards of living (the old law), to a plane of spirituality, gleaming with the flashes of truth. He holds up this concept to a full-orbed, glowing reality of perfection. Watch Him lift life from the shadowy and uncertain plane of mere conduct—the deed—to the higher and more certain field of motivation. In the life of the yielded Christian it is not so much the actual deed, but in the new order it is the *motive* that counts. The sweep of His teaching is com-

prehensive; it touches upon the personal relations to God, to himself, and to his neighbor. It touches all the manifestations of life, be it religious, social, civic, or personal. The requirements for its realization seem absolutely impossible. *They are!* They are supposed to be—to an *unbeliever*. Christ is *not* showing us the pattern and product of perfected flesh. It is not a natural man trying to be good. No, He makes the standards high and wants them exactly as they are and He *means* exactly what He says.

The Christian life is a supernatural life. That is, above the laws and limitations of the natural man and cannot be perfectly expressed by him. When one seeks out some of the ideals, teaching and principles, and tries (O so hard) in his own power of will and good endeavor (disciplined flesh and energy of the old creation) to get some result, I feel sorry for him. He usually gets what I call, "a colossal Adamic ruin." Christ is the center of the new ideal and life. *He* lives it through the surrendered life of a believer. "Christ *in* you the hope of glory." "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Then, as a climax to this lofty, sublime scheme and design for living, He makes the astounding statement or command, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:42). In view of all that has preceded and in the face of the needy, perishing world, He does *not* say, *do* anything, as far as service is concerned. He does say, "Be." This little word is full of potential qualities, it suggests growth, development and a coming into new forms. It is so much easier to *do* than to *be*. Here we find that the goal toward which God is working is the consummation, completion, perfection of an ideal—even a perfected Christian life.

First it is begun in the individual, then lived out collectively in the body called the Church. No doubt some will take issue with me at the idea of individual salvation and personal religion

and contact with God and really knowing Him. With many today the idea of personal salvation is quite outmoded. But as long as it is not outmoded by God's Word I am not worried. The Word still teaches it and the world is crowded with healthy, revolutionizing testimonies as wonderful as those in Scripture.

Let us look at the text again—"Be ye perfect." As a rule the idea of being and the process of becoming suggested by the word, *be*, are thrown into eclipse by the word, *perfect*. That is the word that causes trouble. Here is where many stumble. What a lot of controversy and difference of opinion that word has caused!

I shall not at this time discuss the moral content of this word, but will help you concerning that in chapter 8—"I Ought—Responsibility." Here I simply want you to notice the word, *be*, as being of greater significance in the plan, than *do*. "Be" at once involves a process of growth, maturing and flowering eventually into a full blown ideal. "Be ye therefore perfect." With this before us, life takes on a new and fresh meaning; it lifts it to a place of dignity and deep spiritual value. It is exactly worthy of the new creation. It is becoming the kind of God we have and links life even here and now to a sublime and majestic sweep of living. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Let us remember that the new creation (a real impartation of the divine nature) holds vast potential powers not wholly realized in the present manifestation of life. Here, someone who is not willing to venture his element of faith, will say, "Ah! too idealistic, ethereal, romantic and fantastic." I am always sorry for such a person whether he be a carnal Christian or unbeliever who limits his field of truth to the censorship of sense perception, scientific deductions and natural reasoning.

"Be ye perfect" calls for discipline, trial, control, testing, surrender, renunciation, restraint and teaching. These are all quite common working words in the vocabulary of an overcomer.

One who makes a business of living will learn where to place emphasis and make correct evaluations of situations. He will not only like the "process of becoming" but he will love the thrill of Christian adventure into fields of glorious possibility. The flesh will never fully understand, let alone enjoy, these words. And what a tragic time some have, in trying to explain them, fit them into a system of living, avoiding them or escaping them! To the one who is not yielded in will to God, all these suggested experiences are like a hand full of sore thumbs, always sticking out and getting hurt. A spiritually minded person of faith with perspective of vision and thought will relate them properly.

When once we can discern this goal it provokes faith, courage and confidence in the heart of the believer. Now we have something really worthwhile, glorious and inviting. Are there still some who think that personal salvation and dedication of life to so glorious an ideal, is an outmoded form of Christian thought? Do some still think it to be an escape mechanism from the reality of life, or from some frustrated and disillusioned ego? Do not think it does not call forth the noblest there is in one. It not only calls forth all there is in the conscious dedicated soul, but that *plus* the most intelligent and spiritual cooperation with the Holy Ghost who indwells the believer and who will interpret life and *build a man*.

CHAPTER 5

NATURE AND CHARACTER

Since we have found the present goal of Christian living to be the perfecting of personality and the building of character, it will be wise to keep in mind the difference between nature and character. In the Christian experience, the divine nature of which we are partakers, is purely grace—it is a gift. Salvation is not earned, won or bought—it is a gift of God. The new life of which we are conscious when we come to a knowledge of Christ as a personal Saviour, is called a new creation and we are spoken of as new creatures in Christ. “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Cor. 5:17).

This new nature holds all the potential properties for a noble and beautiful character but they are not yet developed. That is why in the initial stage we are called babes. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (I Peter 2:2). “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen” (II Peter 3:18). We are then but babes, but holding and embracing the hope and the truth of a maturity and perfection for which God has made ample provision and toward which He continually works. The nature is a gift—we merely accept it by faith and look to God for life to develop it.

Character is the result of growth and at once involves a process. It is built and is shaped and evolved under the power of choice granted the individual. The new nature is subjected to all the natural or normal processes of life—good, bad and indifferent. As we meet life we continually exercise our power of choice and react to all the stimuli life affords. By proper choosing and living we build a desirable, strong Christian character; or by poor choosing and aimless living our characters are weak,

slipshod, or even debased. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, but Christian character is never imputed. It is the result of a personal building process. I may accept Christ in a moment and thrill at the joy of it, but I cannot build a Christian character in a moment. It is begun here and occupies my attention as long as I live.

The gift of salvation gives you life, but it does not *qualify* you for a spiritual ministry, either here or in the age to come. We qualify for that here. So do not confuse these two factors with which we will be continually dealing.

Since this is the way God is working with us we see at once that life is really a "process of becoming." To more clearly understand this teaching as it relates to life in the spirit or the maturing of a Christian life, we might compare it with features common in the natural life. There is an analogy between the two lives which sheds light and encouragement as we grow.

In the natural life one is conscious of growth and the building of a personality, the shaping of a character. This, I say, is common all about us among those who make no claim at all to a Christian experience. It is just plain, natural living.

Man recognizes the fact that at birth he is given a human nature and a "fundament of being." I know no better expression for this. For really all the fundamental material for his life process is given then. He holds the potential elements for a personality. But we could not say of a little babe, "he has such a sweet personality." Why? Simply because the babe has not *lived* long enough to build or evolve one. He will have to be subjected to life, its joys, sorrows, pain, defeats, victories and all the multitude of experiences and vicissitudes. His personality will be a record or sum total of all his reactions to them. He gathers these reacting effects into a personalized whole. He is an individual as a babe and will be an individual in the end, but he will then be a personalized individual. All of us are individuals and very much the same fundamentally in all departments but our personalities

differ according to our personal acts and reactions and choices we make. So man, even outside the Christian experience is busy building. While we are thinking of man purely in the natural sense of the word let us go a bit further.

In the process of becoming, we find one taking certain characteristic steps. These furnish the material for the next few chapters. These steps are sometimes called *the ladder of St. Augustine*. He uses as rungs in the ladder the basic facts: I am; I know; I can; I ought; and, I will. But in my study I include the fact of, *I know*, in the realization, *I am*, and will use these four fundamental facts of life as topics for teaching what I believe helpful to those interested in this vital subject—*becoming*.

Briefly stated, these steps are four.

1. They start with the fact of being—I AM. This expresses potentiality.
2. The next is logical in sequence. Since *I am*—I CAN. This covers the field of possibility.
3. Instantly the fact of doing or action discovers to us the question of moral concern and the question of right and wrong. Here is the sense—I OUGHT. That is responsibility.
4. One does not rest here. Right or wrong call for decisions, so one is at once made to exercise his God-given power of choice. I WILL is finality.

So in these four steps: I am; I can; I ought; I will; we will trace some of God's dealings, provisions and victories which He has for those who desire (and really mean it) a spiritual life and Christian character, developed under the light of His Word and the personal supervision of the Holy Spirit.

THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

In ancient Christian Carthage there was seen
A teacher loved, revered—St. Augustine.
His words of wisdom fell on listening ears.
They still come ringing o'er the changing years.
"The storm-tossed souls of men shall never rest
Until they rest in Thee; O Heavenly Guest."
This rule he made, while still in early youth,
To help him to exemplify God's truth.
His rule abides, it keeps his memory green,
'Tis called the ladder of St. Augustine.
"I am," "I know," "I can," "I ought," "I will,"
His fivefold formula gives power still.
"I am," I say, and to my being there is lent
A consciousness of mission heaven sent.
"I know," I say, and to me comes the power
To choose for good or ill, as once in Eden's bower.
"I can," I say, co-worker I am sent
To work with God for human betterment.
"I ought," I say, here conscience speaks her word,
Within my breast that monitor is heard.
"I will," I say, and now I rise in pride
To live for Christ whatever may betide.
And thus my song of Augustine is sung,
E'en so he climbed faith's ladder rung by rung.
In self-same manner we of present day
May scale this ladder on our heavenly way.

By Pliny A. Wiley

CHAPTER 6

I AM—POTENTIALITY

To make the Christian experience simple in apprehension God keeps before us the everyday events and customs of life. Just as a person, in order to start a life in the natural and receive the requirements of living, must have a birth, so must the one who desires to have a Christian, spiritual experience. All the gifts and powers of the natural man belong to the realm of nature and can adapt themselves to their earthly, natural realm only. They do not function in the same way or capacity in the new realm into which a person is born when he becomes a new creature in Christ. This new life and its development call forth a new nature which qualifies for it and adapts itself to it. The natural life moves under a certain law spoken of by Paul in Romans 8:2 as "the law of sin and death." The new life moves under a new law: "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." So in the very beginning of the "process of becoming" or the development of Christian character, may I help you?

Get it settled once and for all—are you born again? Or are you trying to be good, do good and make heaven your home, all in the energy and power of a nature which cannot meet the demands of the new life? The apparatus of the old life, no matter how educated, cultured, refined, drilled and trained, can never carry you through. To live the Christian life and enter into the heavenly life hereafter, requires a nature quite other than the natural man can produce. So Christ says (and I say after Him) "Ye must be born again." John 3:5, 6—"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

In the first step of this new life—conversion we call it—we become possessors of a new life, a new nature, and are called,

“new creatures in Christ Jesus.” In the natural, when a person is born, we say he is given “a fundament of being.” In the new life, Christ is given, the Christ of God, the Mystery of the Ages, the ideal and perfected Man, the Redeemer, the Saviour is given. That does not mean that in the first step all His manifold characteristics and personal charms and various moods and manifestations are all fully realized and appreciated. I mean we get the one Christ. He is not divided. But we need to make room and meet conditions for His revelation and unfolding.

Right here it will be well to remember that in the new creation we walk by faith and not by sight. The old life moves under the natural laws given for that field—sense perception, natural reasoning and scientific deductions—but in the new life it is faith that moves out and on and *dares* when human reason and natural limitations cloud the vision and drag the life down to the natural level.

The realm of truth and field of divine revelation hold many rational realities which cannot be demonstrated. Someone has so aptly said, “God thinks beyond geometry and wills existence beyond our cornfields.” In this life even, there are many things, necessary to the best in life, which must be taken or seized by belief (faith) if they are ever taken at all. We are justified when we have a strong distrust for human knowledge when it operates in fields outside its own. The natural realm—broad and unlimited—is its real field. Here science deals with matter and teaches us how to adapt ourselves more helpfully to the material order of daily living. Science deals with the material side of life and has no spiritual qualities for adaptation in the realm of the spirit. Therefore it can never speak with any real authority about spiritual truth. The whole Christian concept is based on revealed, spiritual truth, and such being so, it claims the right to speak on spiritual matters with authority. All the vital truths of our faith are given us by revelation rather than by reason. However, religious truth is reasonable, but it is not true that man can reach this religious truth by the use of reason alone.

The whole revelation concerning God, His nature and purpose, the plan for humanity etc. are things we could never know had not God revealed the same by His Spirit.

The Bible is not a text book on science. However, there is nothing there revealed concerning the natural phenomena which is contrary to true science. There is no quarrel between true science and revelation; the difficulty comes when one tries to reconcile only partial testimony or bits of scientific data with the completed truth as in the revelation given by God. When science pushes her research far enough and *completes* her findings and testimony there is no contradiction. They are one. When religion and science firmly stay within their own fields, each contributes to the enrichment of the other and both show forth the glory of God.

The element of faith is much like the sixth sense. It is God-given and is to be recognized. In the Christian experience there are doctrines and truths which we hold and rejoice in that are wholly spiritually discerned. That is, faith and the power of the Holy Spirit make as real (and more real) to the inner consciousness of man, truths which quite elude the most subtle reasoning and defy natural communication. Here is where people who have little faith and have a strong scientific bent have a sad time.

It is as if I had a beautiful rose before me and kept saying, "O how sweet it smells! Just smell it." And my questioning friend would answer, "Yes, I suppose you think so, but I don't smell it. Just make a picture of the smell of it and I will believe it. Here is a pencil and paper; put it down in *fact form*, then I will believe it." "O," I say, "but you can't do that; this is an odor or fragrance. If you want to use the optic nerve to discern it, you are quite wrong. You must use your olfactory nerve, or nose, if you please, and not your eyes, to enjoy it. Play the game honestly and as directions require and you will enjoy the fragrance too." "O well," says my friend, "you always did have an imagination and seemed rather impracticable, romantic and

flighty. I am honest and a realist and would like to smell the rose too, but since you cannot demonstrate it in picture form so that I may see, I will not believe." And so my poor dear friend passes by the joy of the sweet rose and the delightful fragrance because he will not use the faculty God has already given him. I cannot change the divine law and mechanics to meet his unwillingness, so he is left still wondering if there really is anything in this after all.

So as we start off in the first step, *I am*, remember that faith figures largely now and the sense life has to stay in its proper field and background. The Word of God is truth, the ultimate and final for us. We will believe that—whatever comes or goes. Here let us encourage ourselves with a few verses which teach us a line of identification.

May I help you? So many seem to know little of this fundamental truth. You must get some things settled in the beginning and abide by these facts or you will be swept off your feet by the contradictory emotions, reactions, disappointments, fresh revelations of self and a thousand and one other items and experiences we are bound to meet in this holy quest, this glorious adventure in "becoming."

"*I am* crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

"But by the grace of God *I am* what *I am*: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Cor. 15:10).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

Paul, I believe, is teaching us a precious lesson as to our faith and power to reckon. God looks upon us in the new crea-

tion as "being dead to sin and alive unto God," therefore we are to abide by what He *says* and not by what we *feel*. As long as there is no conscious failure or sin and we are abiding in Him and walking in His will we are to *count* or *reckon* ourselves just what He says we are. But man has lived so long under the power of sense perception, feelings and moods which cater to the natural life, he does only with difficulty maintain such a position. He finally learns that feelings are deceptive, fleeting and fluctuating. So in time he becomes weaned from these as far as depending upon them as a stimuli to believe or stand. The time God takes in weaning one from dependence upon emotional stimulus depends upon the person and his willingness to let go and trust God. Some seem never to learn this elementary lesson very well and consequently all along the Christian life there is difficulty.

Since the baptism of the Holy Spirit is usually accompanied by such pronounced emotional features it is hard for one thus anointed to learn this lesson. Some who have been in the experience for years seemingly know so little. They are still moving around and trying to do things in the flow of an emotional uplift. Or they are trying to keep up the emotional momentum of a past experience. Where the inspiration of the Spirit stops, the flesh begins (of course religiously and piously). This sort of procedure to one who can see through it, is tragic and painful. Not knowing what it is all about, the poor soul is fearful of backsliding and "losing the anointing" if he does not keep up some such emotional stir, and so allows himself to drop down to a religious performance which is really pitiful. When a soul who begins to see through this snare, is honest enough to own up and desires deliverance it is hopeful. Many of them (on the side) come to me. They are afraid others will think they are backslidden and will not understand them, so they come to me for a quiet, confidential talk. When I find one who is so tired (and figuratively speaking, his tongue hangs out) I am hopeful and rejoice. I see that he is near the exhaustion point of religious flesh and can probably be helped.

The process of weaning and spiritual adjustment is *not* pleasant, but it does yield delightful spiritual fruit to those who are willing to pay the price. Some, of rather an extensive emotional range and who have no teaching, suffer greatly.

May I help you here? Usually a crisis in Christian living, some definite experience or revelation is accompanied by an emotional reaction. This is an *accompanying feature* belonging to the experience and is of God. But remember, the emotional blessing is *not* the experience; the experience has to do with some definite dealing involving the will, surrender, confession or stand taken. The feeling and emotional uplift is so delightful and overwhelming that it is mistaken for the actual experience and the soul tries so hard to maintain the mood and forgets the essential which has to do with his will. Do not get into this snare. Let feelings come and let them go as they please, you just maintain the position you took which made the feelings possible. Learn to do this and God will bring you to a place where you are quite independent of your reactions and emotional status.

You may suffer dryness or a lack of spiritual feeling and God may test you in weaning you, but *do not* go back and try to stir up the emotions and try, O so hard, to recapture the old emotional mood. Some do this very thing and have a fine display of psychic phenomena. (It is sad that there is not much clear teaching along this line.) To do thus is not faith. When the Holy Spirit sees good to warm the heart and even give it a divine and heavenly visitation recorded in your emotional faculties, that is glorious. Enjoy His presence and all He may see good to bless you with, but *never* try (by even seemingly good technique) to recapture the uplift after it has served. Such a performance either in a Christian life or in an assembly has wrought untold havoc and sent many an honest, hungry soul from God and the lovely truth. There are churches where they do not think there is any power of God present or that souls are refreshed or fed unless they can bring the meeting up to a sort

of climax of emotional vibration. They call this the anointing. How horrible and blasphemous! Such practice is most deadening to true spirituality. It keeps the keen edge of spiritual sensibility dulled down to almost an insensibility to true Holy Spirit movements. The absence of emotional manifestation is not a sign of sin, backsliding or failure. God may in His disciplinary measures see good to wean one for a long time from the department of sense and teach the soul to walk and count by faith. In the beginning, as a rule, God allows one to enjoy and work in the realm of conscious blessing—feelings, joys, peace, etc. but in time He brings the honest soul out. That does not mean that he is never blest again. No! No, he is often, very often blest, but the soul is not dependent upon the frame or mood. He accepts the blessing as it comes and lets it go when it has served its purpose. He simply moves on in God and does not think about being blest or not being blest.

Do not depend upon your emotional states, even when God-given, *stand by faith* upon the everlasting Word. Remember to look at yourself as God sees you—a new creature in Christ Jesus. As you do this the Holy Spirit has opportunity to unfold to you the potential qualities of the new life. How one is refreshed in the inner man by the sublime revelation! It is like a treasure long hidden and now brought to light. Instead of busying yourself too much with externalities which only in the end distract and deflect the soul, meditate upon the fundamental fact—"I am." You will thus garrison your heart with strength and faith. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). It is the Word of God concerning the new *I am* which reacts in faith. It builds for the coming tests and the storm of conflicting reports.

May I help you here? Settle in your own heart as many of the fundamental facts of your new life in Christ as you can. Use them as definite, positive media in refreshing your heart and flooding your inner consciousness as rain refreshes the thirsty earth. "Think on these things."

In the new creation a fuller revelation of "I am" brings one to a clearer understanding of what I mean by self-consciousness. Again may I help you? Do not confuse body-consciousness with self-consciousness. One becomes body-conscious through sense perception. His five senses report from the outer world and he becomes body-conscious. Animals are all body-conscious but they are not self-conscious. They lack the soul quality for this. Man is a trinity. Through the body he is world-conscious; through the soul he is self-conscious and through the spirit he is God-conscious. One may know *about* God and move all around in the realm of natural knowledge concerning God and may behold His manifestations but he does not know God by these media. Only as the Holy Spirit contacts the human spirit and uses the same does man know God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). ". . . The world by wisdom knew not God . . ." (I Cor. 1:21).

By self-consciousness I mean a consciousness of entity, and that in particular. That is, he is able to lift himself up from all surrounding impedimenta and distinguish his being and its relationship and possibilities from any and all other things. A fine horse is not so qualified. He cannot say, "I am a horse; I weigh so many hundred pounds; I can draw so many hundred pounds; my speed is thus." No, all such reasoning and self-conscious data are out of his line. He abides under the structural law of a lower creation. This element of self-consciousness is characteristic of human personality, and is a part of the divine stamp. Animals are not persons and so do not have it.

As in the natural relations it takes the babe some time to come to self-consciousness, so does it in the spiritual life. This truth of personal discovery and identification in the natural order is beautifully expressed by Tennyson in his poem:

IN MEMORIAM

The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "This is I:"

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I," and "me,"
And finds, "I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
And thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.

Thus the babe comes or grows into a fuller and fuller consciousness of his true relations, obligations, and place in life. So is it in the spiritual life. God has so many babes who are truly born but are still "against the circle of the breast." It is a beautiful and necessary place to be, but tragic if a soul remains a babe for forty or seventy years. The fatal thing here is that one can study, learn, preach, teach, serve, build churches and wear one's self ragged "helping God" and still remain a babe. The process of discovery as to true identity is *costly*. The natural man shrinks from the discovery of self. The new man, or life, when truly built by the Spirit, rests upon the wreckage of the old. I do not mean that the old is the foundation—rather the old is wrecked at the base of the new. Who wants to be wrecked that he may be built? No one who still sees life through the vision of material sense and this world estimate, desires it. But one who sees *past* and unto the ultimate, welcomes the discovery and "process of becoming."

Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-part pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never
Grudge the throel

Robert Browning

The spirit-taught heart will understand this language. God is bringing spiritually minded people into a clearer self-consciousness that it may be swallowed up in a Christ-consciousness. The Holy Spirit longs to bring the heart into deeper and fuller knowledge and understanding of the character and nature of this new creation—a new life-consciousness. Here we learn to discriminate, to evaluate and make proper choices which end in spiritual life and fruitage. Only as the child learns to relate and adjust himself properly to the many phases of life, does he live. So only does one who will suffer the pains of spiritual adjustment, live in the new creation.

CHAPTER 7

I CAN—POSSIBILITY

A discovery of "I am," or being, with even the slightest sense of the power hidden therein, brings us to the second step—*I can*. Here is the revelation of possibility. The first vocation of personality is expression. So in the new life one naturally desires to act or do. Since I am, I can. Let us refresh our hearts with a few texts which suggest possibility:

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

The new life, throbbing and pulsating in the heart of a Christian, motivated by a love for the Lord, seeks expression. That is quite normal and correct. Usually the feeling of what can be done is not commensurate with the real task, but the young Christian does not know that. He is flushed and nearly overwhelmed with the idea of service and *all* the new and grand things he can do.

May I help you? Too often the usual procedure is for one to tackle the task as well as to attempt to live the new life in the power of his own natural strength and spirit. Since he is not doing anything wicked (as his code of ethics would state) he feels justified in the exercise and use of his "will power" and natural gifts.

Of course this meets with failure and defeat. And God allows it to be so. There is also a discovery of the duality of nature. He finds he is still in the natural, the man he was born and yet the new life is there and he is a new creature also. His dif-

ficulty is trying to carry over into the new state, the technique and apparatus of the old life. They are good and proper where they belong. Since it is not wicked or vile, as he counts it, it *must* be good and so should serve. But there is a revelation yet to come to him. The new life cannot be lived under the power of the old spirit, the human or the natural. He must discover that the old self-life, its spirit, strong will, good endeavor and self-discipline are the mechanics, as it were, of the natural life and cannot carry the soul to a victorious life or accomplish the spiritual ministry which God desires of that soul. There must be a divine intervention and equipment. And we find this very clearly stated in the Word.

Do you not remember Christ's teaching in the manifesto of the kingdom life? He leads the soul through the ideal revelation and then, as a climax, gives the dynamic for its realization. It would have been perfectly cruel and senseless for Christ to establish an order and preach the ideal and then leave the poor soul struggling with an old, broken down life and spirit, to make the life He desires a reality. He is not so cruel and mocking. He gives freely the dynamic for the life.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13).

"And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be *endued with power from on high*" (Luke 24:49).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

We need the inner re-enforcement of our moral nature with this heavenly dynamic. I am not now speaking of the new birth—the reception of the new life. I am speaking of the necessary *power* to make the new life a reality. The natural man

is barren of this power—it is a divine gift. No doubt most of you who read this book are familiar with teaching concerning the necessity of the power of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life—first to live and then to serve.

May I help you further? Usually the teaching concerning the power of the Holy Spirit has centered upon one phase of the new life, that of service. No doubt that is due to the fact that *to do* is much easier than *to be*. The gift of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power was not so much that they might *do* supernatural things as it was the dynamic of the new life. It was and is the power of God for *living*.

The outpouring at Pentecost did so much that was revolutionizing and corrective. The whole kingdom complex which they had developed and which rested upon a materialistic concept of life, passed into eclipse after this heavenly visitation of power. Nowhere, after Pentecost, do we find them asking for or mentioning the kingdom. Their attention had been marvelously shifted from a material hope to a new life and outlook. Instead of sharing, as they had hoped, in a material kingdom, they had become the vehicles of a new regime or order. They were the charter members of the Church—a mystery hidden until this hour. The gift of the Holy Spirit was not so much for the service to be rendered (it did that), but it was to be the dynamic of the new order. It was this element of life, triumphant and victorious, in the face of evil, pressure, persecution and the threatening of life, that characterized the early Church. They were aware of the revolutionizing, centralizing and focusing power of the Holy Spirit in such fashion that it became a *living* testimony to the whole world. The escape mechanisms which were showing themselves because of disappointed hearts totally disappeared. But what did happen?

We find their discordant and unrelated elements, hazy or partial concepts of truth, were wonderfully focused and related to one divine Person—their living Lord, the Christ. They were conscious of life and a personal living contact by way of the

Holy Spirit to a Person—this made the new life an actual possibility. They *lived*.

Let us look at Luke 9:1: “Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.” According to this word they were already familiar with service and had power for the same. He was not talking about receiving power to go out and do things for Him. Too long the emphasis has been upon the thought of service rather than upon the word, *witness*. The mighty baptism at Pentecost was to give them power to be or to become a witness. Service is only one phase of witnessing. Christ, according to Rev. 1:5, is called “the faithful witness;” and again in Rev. 3:14 “the faithful and true witness.” That is, He had come from God to a lost, sinful and perishing world as a true and faithful witness of God in the midst of all the loss, ruin and failure. He had faithfully done all that was required of the faithful witness and was now going home. But God will never be without a witness in the world so now Christ places His Church, the Mystical Body, as a witness to Him as He had been the Great Witness for God. And as the whole manifestation of His witnessing had been under the dynamic of the Holy Ghost SO the new order, the Church, His Mystical Body, is to function under the same power. His whole life (not only the signs and miracles) was a glorious and most complete and satisfying witness.

Let us look a little more carefully at this word, *witness*. It is from a Greek word, *martus*, meaning *martyr*. How suggestive! A martyr is one who by his death bears witness to the truth of the Gospel, one put to death for his religion. This does not necessarily mean the actual, physical death of the body. It may include that. The early Church composed of spirit filled and baptized members became a witness to Christ in the world, but not all suffered actual physical death. However, the real meaning force and deeper spiritual significance of the word still holds good. To really become a witness to Him and fulfill the

meaning of the word we will come to understand that witness still means death. We die that we might live and thus become witnesses to Him. The whole life is a witnessing or process of divine manifestation of Christ through the human instrument. This witnessing life is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore He gives us this wonderful word as encouragement, lest we faint when we become conscious of human limitations. I like to think of the natural life, as a martyr, dying out to all things, that there be a clear witness of Christ to the world. We may serve and do, O so much, teaching, talking, preaching, coming and going and have quite a manifestation of service, but not very much witnessing of Jesus' life, where we have died and passed out of the picture. The truth as it is in Christ will slay the natural and even the good natural religious man, if he will let it. That is why truth is such a dangerous thing—the truth sets us free and lets Christ live in us.

It was the general testimony of their changed lives from helplessness and despair, to a radiant display of courage and living contact with a risen Lord that moved the unbeliever and skeptic. I do not suppose that all of them possessed supernatural gifts, but all could *live* the Spirit-filled life.

I was amused at a conversation which I overheard at a camp meeting one day. A Christian who was zealous for all Christians to enjoy the Spirit-filled life, was arguing the point with a Christian farmer. He kept saying to the farmer, "You need the baptism for service, brother, for service." But the farmer had no call for service upon him and he kept saying, "Yes, but I am not called to any special service of public ministry. I am only a plain farmer and see but few people and have but little contact with others." And so they reasoned together. The one wanted to be true to a slogan: "The baptism is for service," and hence revolved about that point. Had he been taught the Word and not a slogan, he might have helped the farmer to a place of seeking. He should have known that the

gifts are for service—of course operated by the Holy Spirit. He might have helped the farmer to see that the gift of the Holy Spirit in such a baptism was not only for gifted service but for *life to be demonstrated in the pattern of a farmer*. The farmer needed the fullness of the Spirit to correctly *live* the Christian life—not to do miracles, but to live and become by that “an epistle read and known of all men.”

So that slogan, instead of helping, was a direct hindrance. Use God’s Word and plan and line up with His purpose and you will be safe in ministering life and light to needy people. The too close association of the baptism with service, has hindered so many needy people who have no direct call to any special service and yet were so needy of power to live. The Christian life cannot be lived in victory without the power of the Spirit. We need to be baptized, immersed, submerged and swallowed up with the dynamic personality and power of the Third Member of the Trinity. All Christians need the baptism, whether farmer, housewife, preacher or teacher. “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” (Acts 19:2)

May I help you with another matter closely connected with the fact—*I can*—? There are two words we must all learn the meaning of, as they relate to this new life as it is lived in the power of the Spirit. They are *possibility* and *probability*. As a rule, the impact of truth as to possibility now opening to the young Christian, comes with terrific force. It floods the inner consciousness of the believer and if he is not careful, he is swung from the correct pivoting of his inner life. In other words, he loses the norm of his being in regard to prayer, its purpose and range, and also phases of expression in service. His vision is lifted and filled with the glorious opportunities to prove God and show to the unbelieving world *what* God can do. This glorious uplift and sense of possibility nearly overwhelms some. He is inclined to think others, who to him appear to be asleep or backslidden, have never tapped the resources of divine power. There is a subtle spiritual pride here, but God

cannot yet deal tactfully with it. He will later on. God answers prayer for such a person and he is wonderfully encouraged and quite bold in the problems he tackles and difficulties he *dares* to handle. You see he is moving under one concept of truth—the phase of possibility. He does not yet know modification or limitation. Anything short of an immediate and complete victory is a form of defeat and failure. To keep his courage up he quotes all the promises which hold any thought of victory. He just *must* have the answer to his prayers; God must come through and honor his faith and keep His Word. When things do not move to suit him, he claims more vigorously the “precious promises” and tackles some most impossible situations. Of course he feels perfectly justified since he quotes the promises and is swinging (free of any human impedimenta or reason) out into the field of glorious possibility. Such sanguine temperaments have a difficult time. They feel they must justify God, keep His glory shone up, prove the Bible and convince and convert the unbelieving world. They must show that God is right (only usually there is a subtle form of showing *they* are right). All such performances move under the impact of a revelation of possibility without its counter balance of God’s probability. There is always the other side of a truth.

May I help you? Remember this simple fact: All things which are possible are not always probable. That is, in God’s divine plan and will it may not be expedient or to His glory to do many things He is *able* to do. It is not always a question: “Is God able?” but, “Is it God’s will and purpose?”

Do you not remember that choice verse in I John 5:14—“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing, *according to his will*, he heareth us”? Here is the divine censorship of our prayers. We may pray long, inclusive, far-reaching prayers, touching all phases of life—and *think* they are to His glory—but they must all be boiled down and pass the censorship of “His will.” His will is the highest, most costly and inclusive prayer we can make. So there is the word, *prob-*

able, also to be learned. I am certain that we all know that He is *able*, but now the question is, is this probable?

Some will at once say, "Do you mean that God answers only prayers which are according to His will?" No, I am not saying that. He does let people go on and on praying and having their own way, and they do get and have plenty, but that does not prove that it is all to His glory and His will. God does send leanness sometimes and lets people have what they want. What a tragedy! The world is full of that. I am talking about Spirit-filled Christians who seek to glorify God and do His will. When our prayer is in accord with His will, He hears and makes *all* things work to His glory and our good. But when not according to His will, the flesh is satisfied for the time being, but there is no spiritual progress, no glory to God, and no development of the inner man.

One has to be brave and stand the criticism of other Christians who do not yet know this truth. It takes more grace to stand still and get God's Word and stand on it, than to make a great display of words and outward demonstration. But as one has said, "Keep on keeping on" and God will teach and show you the way through. Learn to interpret God's dealings and plans. Get God's Word or thought as it relates to a situation, and then stand. Do not mind the noise of battle and confusion; the dust will settle in time. You will be counted a backslider, indifferent, no lover of souls, lacking in the aggressive side of your ministry, and lacking in power. But one who is centered in God does not worry and he is not *trying to prove* anything. He abides, and God does the rest.

You may think it difficult, but let me tell you where the hard place is. Let such aggressive souls battle on, claiming all sorts of promises, putting God to the test and proving their point when God has no idea of answering, since the whole matter is not in His plan. Finally God does not answer. They try harder; they make use of all the known technique (scriptural or otherwise) but to no effect. God seemingly has left them and

the whole matter collapses. Then, O then listen, to *all* the concocted excuses and reasons for the failure. Then follows the usual procedure of blaming everybody from the pastor to the weakest babe in the church. It is pitiful. The reaction in hearts thus entangled is appalling and disastrous. Some lose what faith they did have; weak ones are completely overwhelmed, and the faith of all receives a sad and perplexing shock. Excuse themselves as they may, and blame as they may, they must finally admit that they are on the wrong track and God is not in the matter. Why all this failure and confusion? The answer is simple. They are like soldiers going to battle at their own orders. "Who goeth a warfare any time at *his own charges*?" (I Cor. 9:7) God was not in the matter over which they had made such an ado. It was the eager soul swung out under the power of "possibility" without a divine command under the "probability" of God's plan. The *natural, religious* mind can think up some of the most amazing schemes, plans and patterns for God to flow into. Such schemes are a natural religious output and not a plan born of the Spirit. That which is born of the flesh (even a religious pattern) is still flesh. The whole affair which has ended in such total and unexplained defeat could have been avoided had the people been taught to *first* know if God is in the *desire* and if it is to His glory and in His will.

Paul learned this lesson in two phases of his wonderful life. One is in relation to his personal life concerning the messenger of Satan to buffet him and torment him. Naturally he sought deliverance. He might well have used such a promise as, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil." He might not have used this exact word but surely the equivalent for he had most successful dealings with such messengers before, and of course might have thought the procedure in this case would be the same. Even though there was a great *possibility* in God's plan to destroy the trouble, it did not necessarily mean that Paul was right in claiming the power for deliverance. He tries three times in

prayer, as he had done many times, but *no deliverance*. Finally, when he got to God about the difficulty, he found the entire matter was contingent upon the will of God for Paul's life, and another promise was to garrison his troubled mind and heart—"My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:9). It was possible God could have destroyed the work of Satan, but He just did not do so. He gave grace instead. Paul also learned that all things which are possible under certain circumstances are not always probable.

In the case of his ministry he had to learn the same lesson. There was the divine commission given by Jesus Himself: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19, 20).

Paul was zealous for Christ's kingdom and desired to reach everyone. So why not go up to Bithynia? Surely Bithynia is a part at least of the whole world. So why not go up? So up he goes, only to be forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia—"but the Spirit suffered them not" (Acts 16:7). This is a fine place for Paul to claim the power of God to meet the command to go. Well, he might have tried it and battled on in Bithynia against God. And some would no doubt think the devil was withstanding them. But Paul meets God and finds His plan and lets Bithynia rest with God. He turns in the will of God, to go *away* from Bithynia to *Troas*, and the miracle happens. God is glorified by the Christian message turning to girdle the globe from East to West. And as the sun travels the ordered path for giving natural light, so truth, the Christian faith, was to follow God's ordained plan and will, and *not* Paul's good, noble, religious, natural plan to help the people in Bithynia. God got light to Bithynia in His own time and way. And Paul was learning, growing, and coming into spiritual discipline and power by the things which he suffered.

So when meditating upon the glories of "I can," do so under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit who will open to you not only the *possibilities* designed for your life, but will also lead you on and into the *probabilities* of His plan.

CHAPTER 8

I OUGHT—RESPONSIBILITY

Let us consider the following texts:

“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Rom. 15:1).

“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (Jas. 3:10).

“For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you” (II Thess. 3:7).

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip” (Heb. 2:1).

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness” (II Peter 3:11).

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (I John 3:16).

We must always remember that one of the fundamental features of personality is conscience. Man is not only a person—he is a moral person. Not only is he conscious of personal identity (self-consciousness) but also of the moral background of conscience and moral demand. No animal of the highest development has this quality. It is one distinctive mark of human personality. When a man commits a crime the real moral distress which overtakes him is not just because of external conditions (associational mechanism). This is the event which provokes the distress. He is not so much afraid of the external law. But in moral distress he *does* fear the inner, spiritual tri-

bunal. Many cases are known where one has freely offered himself up to the outer court and desired a confession of the crime in order to escape, if possible, the awful condemnation *within*. He would rather suffer most severe external penalty than to endure that searching, impliable sense that says in his soul, "You did wrong; you did wrong."

This brings us to the question of right and wrong. This notion is a personal intuition and is born in the individual, a part of the fundament of being, the normal equipment of life. He knows that right and wrong are absolutely antagonistic and that he *ought* to do the right. What is conscience? Here is Webster's definition: "Sense of right and wrong; a faculty passing judgment on one's self; the moral sense. Conviction of right and wrong." Did you ever notice that conscience never tells us *what* is right or wrong? Did you notice in the definition he does not say, conscience is the monitor in the soul telling us *what* is right and what is wrong? That is a popular definition which is both misleading and wrong. If you say it is a monitor in the soul telling us we ought to do the right, then you are correct. It is that. The conscience says, "You ought to do right; you ought to do right." It passes moral judgment, but does not determine the moral question *what* is right and what is wrong. This may seem a bit strange to one who has never made a study of this subject. The question of the moral content in life, that is, the moral standard accepted by a person is naturally a varying thing. It may be determined by powerful influences belonging to his historic background and environment; at other times determined by long and careful religious searchings and findings, or by practical tests in determining duty. A simple survey of history will disclose the variety of moral standards maintained by different people at different times. The conscience in the case of each one kept saying, "You ought to do right." And so in the presence of what he held as a moral standard for conscience, he made the various decisions and passed judgment. All were in good conscience and all with most varying results.

Paul, for instance, says concerning his conscience, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." "And herein do I exercise myself, to have *always* a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man." And yet he was a murderer and persecuted unto death the early Christians. He did it most conscientiously. He did what his notion of right and wrong held. To his way of thinking, his idea of right was to defend Jehovah and the Jewish faith from the Christian influence. To him this was a noble task. He thought he was doing Jehovah a great favor, by murdering. (He was zealous). Surely his conscience did not tell him to murder. His conscience told him he ought to do right. His standard of *what* was right and wrong determined the murdering.

A Hindu mother is deeply religious and conscientious. She seeks to do all in her power to meet the standard of what to her is right or wrong. She is loyal to her conscience which says, "Do right." But you see what a perverse standard she has. It results in her throwing her babe—her own flesh and blood—to the crocodiles or drowns it in the river. Do not say she is not honest or loyal to her conscience—she is. Her conscience—God-given—kept saying, "You ought to do right; you ought to do right." Her whole historic background of religious teaching, faith and tradition determined *what* of moral concern was right and she acted accordingly. So a person may be completely misled if he depends upon the conscience alone to direct him.

The question arises—Can conscience itself be improved by education? It is not so much a question of conscience as it is the moral standard upon which conscience is to pass judgment. This chapter will not permit me to get at any teaching concerning that. Only allow me to say by way of answer—No, not directly. History is too clear a discovery to that question. Our country is filled with schools, colleges, libraries, science, inventions, art, literature and all manner of cultural schemes, and yet the country knows only too little of *moral* concern. Do not deceive yourself in thinking that civilization and morality are

by any means interchangeable words. There is no serious question but that the modern man is losing the delicate sense of moral obligation.

The fact that in psychology and psychiatry one is able to analyze, classify and define much that years ago seemed vague is no sign that he has *done away* with the matter. To be able to describe and analyze the emotional reactions of different people in what is known as conversion does not dismiss the necessity of conversion. Many psychologists who should know better are caught in this deception and glibly toss over to the field of superstition and outmoded Christian thought, many of the most essential elements of the Christian experience. Do not be so easily deceived and think it is a mark of learning and profound understanding.

No one ever knew the fundamental laws, rules and principles of applied psychology or laws of psychiatry better than Christ, the Master Teacher. Yet, with all His knowledge of hidden workings of the human heart and its reactions, He never discarded the fundamental and essential elements of the Christian experience.

One teacher has wittingly said, "Many a man feels himself discharged from responsibility when once he can describe himself."

In regard to the question of ethics and moral concern, may I help you? The whole idea of ethics and moral concern has been a question of major concern in the study of philosophy as well as religion. I believe we have found *in Christ* the true basis and fullness of this question safely answered. He dominates in the field of ethics and moral concern. We are safe in restricting our search for light on ethics to the living Word. The sublime and authoritative teachings of Christ are very sure. He is truth. Take any question of moral concern and settle it in His presence. The morality He offers is absolute and not relative. It is grounded in the very nature and character of God.

His revelation concerning morality and ethics is not true just because He said thus and so. He spoke it because it *is* true and is a part of the moral law governing the universe. A relative moral scale is not adequate. It shifts and is subject to social customs and traditions. Here we find a morality based upon love which is adequate for every department of life. Christ is the center and dominating force.

The marvel of His teaching is that He not only discloses to us *what* is right or what is wrong in human relationships, but He produces the dynamic for its demonstration. Other spiritual leaders and reformers have for ages established codes of ethics and some of them are remarkable in their humane and ethical scope and form. But none have furnished the power for the execution. Here Christ stands unique as a leader. He furnishes the wherewithal for living.

In this connection I want to help you with a word used concerning the question of the ideal character on page 38. Let us consider the word "perfect" as given in the text: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Usually the thought of perfection as suggested here is eclipsed by the thought of *doing*. However, the question is not one of *doing* but of *being*. The word *perfect* as used here comes from the Greek word, *teleios*, meaning, "ended," "complete." Jesus is not placing any special moral content in the word as much as He is giving them the idea of a completeness, or perfectly rounded out thought for their ultimate being. He is speaking of the completeness or the perfection of an ideal character. The same word is used in Matt. 19:21; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:28; and 4:12; I John 4:18.

Since the thought is that of completeness, carrying through to its proper or desired end, it does not follow that the moral content is eliminated. Not at all. What it is saying is—a completeness or perfection, finishing in all departments—moral issues included.

So here we are again with this rather troublesome word. Christian perfection has been taught as a doctrine for many years. And it has caused much misunderstanding and even divisions in the Church and no end of heartaches and even loss of faith. The trouble with that school is that they make a grave mistake in restricting the idea of perfection to one manifestation and thus limit it to love. A perfection in love as they say, and meaning as a rule, motivation and heart life. But Christ does not do so. He deliberately says, "Be ye perfect." I think one reason for the difficulty with the doctrine of Christian perfection is that it is limited to this life. Since it is thus limited it hides away in motivation and says, "perfect in love." They leave little room for conduct in daily life. It is somehow excused from the large range of living by retreating to the idea of "live in the heart and motives". There are many Christians who claim purity of heart in love, and God has blest the ministry of the Word through such instruments, and yet in conduct and character there has been great imperfection. Christ surely must have meant a perfection that moves on from motivation to conduct and finally to a perfect character.

May I help you? I believe of course, in immortality—the persistence of personality. So at once I see the possibility of ages of growth and development. Why not? We must not confine the "process of becoming" to the limited outlines of the present manifestation of life. Do not restrict the glorious scope of eternity to playing on a harp or walking on golden streets. To do so, I am certain, is wonderful. But to me they are dim compared with the sublime reality and divine truth: I am born from above; I am alive in Christ; I live now in a period of intensive discipline; my days are filled with the conscious presence and love of a living, risen Lord. I shall slip away from the present shadows into a perfect adaptation to a new order and I shall continue the unfolding of potential qualities of life hidden in the inner recesses of my being. "I shall be like Him for I shall see Him as He is."

Do not be careless in saying that since one cannot attain the fullness of perfection here and now he need not bother with training or discipline. That is foolish. Listen! There are openings in the inner life and crises reached in the spiritual life here and now by personal, conscious decisions, never to be offered in the age to come. It is *here* and *now* only that these deeper, spiritual communications are made and cultivated. There are no second chances. It is here and now that we determine the ultimate.

May I relate an incident in my experience to show you how hungry hearts are for truth and for a bit of teaching which gives meaning to life and purpose for living? In one of my teaching meetings I noticed one evening a group of five fine looking young men had come in and had taken seats near the front of the church. They listened most attentively and some took notes. I was lecturing along the line of truth as to possibilities for a soul which would *dare* to venture upon that which God held out as spiritual reality and destiny. At the close of the service they crowded up around me and began to ask me most intelligent and hopeful questions. They were so surprised that the Bible held out anything more than salvation and serving the church and getting to heaven. They were so refreshing and interesting to deal with and the form of questions most gratifying. They did not ask me where Cain got his wife or why God let lightening strike a Christian's barn. The next night there were nine of them and they followed me in teaching every night through the week. I found in conversing and dealing with them that they were all Harvard graduates and doing postgraduate work. I was in Boston, so they were near. Some were Episcopalians, some Congregationalists, some Methodists and others from other churches and they knew only the simplest bits of truth, *but* they were hungry. The opening of truth concerning the Christian life and "process of becoming" fascinated them. We had lunch together three times and had most delightful visits and free discussions. Since then I have been able to send spiritual literature to them and I trust they

are moving on with God and building *life* for Him.

I speak of this incident to show you how truth appeals to young people who are awake to life and desire something to give meaning and objective, purpose and design to life. God has seen good to open the Word and give us glimpses of glorious possibilities which make appeal not only to souls of limited powers but to those of educational range. There are hungry people everywhere—in the slums and in the universities alike. The heart was made for God whether it rests in a tavern or in a class of philosophy. *All* need Him. Just the simple facts as to what a Christian really *is* and may become, was like a revelation to those young men. If you are a preacher or teacher, or Christian worker, why not give the hungry sheep some food? Ask God to open to you, yourself, some light as to the potential possibilities in “I am” or “I ought” and let Him stimulate the faith and heart hunger in His people for LIFE and so bring comfort and light to those outside of Christ, and open the way to the Christian’s rightful inheritance.

That is why the Holy Spirit is so patient, careful, and desires to give every soul the opportunity and privilege of entering into the “more abundant life.” He continually desires to arouse the soul (too often slumbering or preoccupied), into a definite consciousness of and awareness to the spiritual significance of life. The new creation is made for the highest and best that God has in spiritual living. Christ has died to open a way for the redeemed soul to move on and into and unto a completeness designed by God. Ample provision has been made; the power of His Spirit is for us. Much light has been given to some and with it mighty responsibility.

In the face of the rich holdings of deeper and more efficient Christian living, one must bring all his faculties to play. Down in the heart is this thing called conscience, saying, “I ought, I ought.” May the grace of God be given to any troubled soul to meet the moral demands laid bare by the faithful Spirit.

CHAPTER 9

I WILL—FINALITY

A proper sense of the fitness of a matter with knowledge on our part of possibility to correct or help, brings us to the fourth step: "*I will*" or "*I will not.*" All these other steps have been necessary to bring us to finality in the matter which is in our power to decide. One may successfully step through the other three stages and be able to boldly make positive statement, but utterly fail at the fourth. Moral grace and courage are needed to hold one in the place where he really lives—the will.

May I help you here? In the study of personality we must consider three fundamental elements which characterize it. They do *not* define it; they are elements: the intellect, the emotions and the will. Often great stress and emphasis are laid upon the power of our intellect, and in many cases it is mistaken for the real or essential point in man's entire scheme. The intellect is like a hand that reaches out and gathers material and places it before us—facts, truths, data and events upon which one is to pass choice. The mind is the means for its gathering and displaying. This chapter does not permit me to move over this interesting field. Here we find the creative, constructive, elevating and liberating uses of the intellectual life. Also the degrading, destructive, and ruinous power. In some, the intellect is limited; in others it amounts to genius. But one's character is not formed on the basis of this power. God does not condemn nor compliment man in the natural for the limitation or fine capacity of intellect. Do not condemn yourself if limited, or develop a superiority complex because you found an extra quality in your measure of gray matter. Just accept it as it is and work from that point, using it as a means only. It has its place, God recognizes it and ample provision is made for its purposes. But God does not judge a man in the matter of moral or spiritual quality by how much or how little he knows.

Also we must consider the emotional life as part of our human nature. Some are limited and stoical and almost barren of emotional power. Others have a range that is extreme and amazing in expression. It is the field upon which God and man work whenever the intellectual powers have functioned to lay before one the data for choice. Here a stimulant is often used to arouse the soul to a keen consciousness of privilege or duty. It is the place of atmosphere. In the natural life, one familiar with the laws of psychology knows the realm as a seat of vital importance for developing consequences. Jesus made continual use of the emotional life. He knew its legitimate and proper use and did not abuse it but acknowledged it. And He has ever sought to redeem it from the subtle snares of the flesh. In dealing with souls, He did not make direct or dogmatic attack upon the intellect as an avenue. He used that, but His primary appeal was to the emotional life. He was always correcting man, freeing and cleansing him in this department. He gave gracious and abundant supply of correct and heavenly portions for the deep hunger innate in man for adequate emotional expression. Did you ever notice in His teaching He does not waste time to argue? He does not dictate or prove points in the usual style of human methods. He takes for granted that people are intelligent on the basic matters. He does not try to prove there is a God. He takes it for granted they are intelligent enough to know and believe that already. He uses such terms as God, devil, heaven, hell, life, death and all human, natural concepts, and does not define, analyze or *prove* any of them. He uses them all as first class working material for His message.

There were no racial class lines with Jesus. He spoke to *all* men as man. We have surface distinctions—money, education, social position, etc. but they were too much on the surface for Him. He deals with the fundamentals of the human—the common understanding of life, the primary features of conscience and the basic emotions of the human heart. *Here* all men are alike. Not that all are in quality the same. It is the logical and safe place of approach. How wonderfully wise He is! There is

a sane and scriptural place for the emotions in our spiritual life. But do not slip here and misjudge your quality and depth of spiritual life by the emotional reaction you may express. The emotional life can be one of the most deceptive elements in your Christian experience. That is why, as you grow in grace and move through cycles of spiritual evolution, you *learn* not to rely upon them or pay much attention to them. Your emotional life is not where God is judging you. He is looking beyond that, for He knows too well how fluctuating and deceptive emotions are.

It is in the *will* that we live. The vital, telling quality of the person is in his *power of will*—what he wills and *how*. The intellect gathers and displays the data, and appeal is made to the person and here the emotional life is touched. One may know, see clearly and be convinced in mind that a certain question or matter is the *truth*. He may give mental assent to it and thrill even at the thought. The emotions may be aroused and stimulated as he contemplates and weighs the matter, and he may sense the power of the truth and be deeply moved, and yet *absolutely fail* in his will to say “Yes” or “No.” Here the Holy Spirit brings conviction to play upon the heart and God makes appeal in *all* possible forms and terms He can. But it rests wholly with the person as to *his* decision. *Here* is where God looks when He desires to know *what* we are.

He does not mind how much we know *about* truth, the Christ and the revelation of life He brings, or how much we may philosophize about it, preach it, teach it, and admire it if it merely rests in our thought range. He waits for us to *do* something with the truth in the realm of choice—something He cannot do for us. It is *what* we are choosing about the matter that counts. It does not matter how much we may know about truth or feel about it—we must *choose* to let it work in life and build us into men and women He desires. Thus you can see the will is at once the most valuable and most dangerous thing we have.

Knowing this and its strange power, God is continually seeking the surrender of our wills to His wisdom and power. In this surrender the will is not lost or destroyed, nor is personality made less. It is strengthened. The will thus surrendered to God becomes *safe*, and as the will of God is continually chosen in place of our own, one is conscious of fuller spiritual revelation, power and life.

The motto in the life of Jesus was to do the will of God, His Father. (Psa. 40:7, 8) It was meat and drink to Him even unto the end. The highest prayer he prayed, most costly and far-reaching, was, "Thy will be done." "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." In dealing with hearts and lives and especially young people who are waking to the subtle power of the will, I find them in trouble, doubt, unrest and fear. Sometimes the dissatisfaction and unrest is due to a simple fact: they have never absolutely surrendered to the supreme good—*God's will*. Desiring their own wills here and there, and in this matter or that, (not necessarily evil), but in things *less* than the best, they find an inner division and conflict. This warfare is cruel and costly, and consumes the energy and attention of the soul until the person is not a positive factor for good, but a painful, restless and distracted, divided heart.

When the heart refuses to surrender to the will of God in moral matters, automatically it fills with shadows and darkness. Too many times I find the difficulty is not a lack of knowledge or even conviction. But it is a matter wholly *within* the power of the person—it is an unsundered will.

Self-will is the root sin of the world. From this central tap-root of sin spring all the multitudinous ramifications of sin in every known form. But self-will is at the root. Why not then get at the root of the matter and get some first and necessary issues settled? Are you still self-willed? Or have you surrendered your will absolutely (in all matters) to God? Do not dodge now and

in a weak, self-defending way say, "I do not know the will of God or understand the things He might ask." Where you do not know the full will of God, you can *safely* trust Him and He is faithful to let you know His will. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

Are you willing to be made willing? With many young people who with the light of morning shining upon their faces are contemplating the glorious possibilities of a career and life, there is a haunting fear when they face the will of God lest He will spoil life for them. Of course this is due to a lack of knowledge and love for Him. They do not understand His desire. It is the enemy who comes to spoil a life. "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). One cannot possibly lose in a full surrender to the will of God. One will, of course, suffer the loss (in the natural) of any or all features, good or doubtful, if they interfere with the *best* in God's plan for him. Here is where the difficulty rests sometimes. In surrendering to God's will for a deeper and fuller fellowship in spiritual understanding, it is not always a question of morals or sin, but the surrender of what to the natural heart seems good, commendable and lawful. It is often the good or better in life which becomes the deadly enemy to the *BEST*. Learn to see through and past the present and *your* natural conceptions to the ultimate or end which Christ holds for your life. Make choice not only in the presence of the "here and now" but in the light of God's *best* for ages ahead.

This question was wonderfully illustrated in the dealings I had with a fine Christian minister who was seeking light and truth. He was a preacher with splendid cultural background and educational qualities, Rev.—B.A., M.A., B.D., Ph.D. What I enjoyed in my fellowship with him was the fact that he had successfully passed through the fine schooling without being ensnared and spoiled. He passed successfully the usual eclipse

of reason, doubt and perplexity generally encountered in educational life. He came out with his faith not blurred, but shining and clear. Being sincerely hungry and honest he was free to open his heart to me. He had discovered that in his fields of research in science, philosophy, psychology, theology and kindred studies he had not found full satisfaction he craved. He knew my life, teaching, and general philosophy of a Christian life. He honored me by listening to me speak. He warmed to the truth as time and time again the Holy Spirit made clear the teaching of Christ concerning an adequate philosophy of life as found in His Word. He had followed my vision of truth for years.

Finally he had a long heart-to-heart talk with me. It did not take long after going over his apparent difficulties, inner divisions and restlessness to find the whole difficulty was simple. It was merely a matter of a *price* to pay. He was free to own his mental convictions and *conversion* to the truth. He knew the truth and acknowledged that—that was very clear. He owned the emotional appeal the Holy Spirit made by the hunger and deep desire. *But*—Oh the word “but,” so wrecking at times!—if he were to actually surrender to the whole will of God and embrace truth as he knew it to be, it would involve a complete revolution in his life. This he feared and dreaded. His faith could not carry him beyond the consciousness of the immediate local present life. Should he yield *fully* to God’s will his ministry would be changed: that is, his message would have a deeper and fuller spiritual tone and also demands. His fellowship in the church would be changed. He would not be able to climb up to certain social positions he desired. None of these things were in themselves bad, but they were tragic hindrances.

The story of Jesus and the rich young man is enacted every day. Finally he said, “You are right. You have the truth. It is wonderful and beautiful. I wish I too held it as you. But *I can’t pay the price.*” Those tragic words still ring in my ears. Here was a soul making a decision which carried consequences into ages to come. He was making a choice. The power of his spiritual life

did not depend upon how much he knew (he is a gifted Christian minister) but in his *will* he took a step which will make an eternal difference in his destiny. He did not lose his soul. It was not a matter of salvation. He chose to live on a lower level of Christian life than God offered him. Of course he will continue to serve and go to heaven but he has *lost* the best in this life and in the life to come because he *refused* God's best for something less. He did not bring his will completely gathered up to a *supreme* surrender to God's will.

Do not deceive yourself. You, too, are facing some decision. We continually do. Life is a series of choices. The whole Christian experience is a series of crises in which we learn to make a proper spiritual choice. The decision opens up vistas of spiritual possibilities to be explored, attained and incorporated into life. Learn to make a good choice; do not fear the consequences. If made for God and His will you *cannot* lose.

How strange and yet how true it is that we are what we choose to be. *Desire* governs. Look out for the desires and those to which you surrender your choice. We become what we *desire* and choose. It is a fixed law so do not quarrel with it or pray God to change it. As you sit now reading this message and as I sit at my desk writing it we are now the sum total (*quantum*) of all the many choices we have made. Mine are all registered in my life. They are reflected in the trinity of my personality and being. So are yours.

When I have made a good choice (God's will) there is marked upon me a certain quality of strength. I take on spiritual life and power in that act. When I have chosen for self (either in wrong doing or in a decision to feed the self-life in less disagreeable forms) I have just so far lost out. The image is blurred and marred and defaced. By the will one surrenders to life or by the will to defeat.

Your choices are reflected upon your immortal spirit where there is being etched an image. Is it the image of the Christ or

the image of a defeated, deformed self? The will is where we live. Surrender it to God and live in Him. How aptly Tennyson has said the truth:

Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

Motives issue in conduct, conduct issues in character, and character into destiny.