

A QUEST FOR SOULS

Comprising all the Sermons Preached and Prayers
Offered in a Series of Gospel Meetings, Held
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Three -

WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?

NIGHT SERVICE, JUNE 12, 1917

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Before reading the Scriptures, I should like to make two remarks - first, a general remark, and then one quite particular with reference to these services. The general remark is, that Christians ought to be the very best of citizens, and in this time of national, and international, and even world testing, Christians should be on the alert constantly to see how they can best serve humanity's interests.

I trust that daily the Christians listening to me to-night are giving themselves to prayer about the World War. Oh, what need for constant and fervent intercession respecting this war! My belief is that we have entered into this war under the highest moral compulsion. We have not entered into it, I must believe, with any lust for revenge, or for gain, but purely, and simply, and solely, to the interest of humanity, at home and the world round, for today and for every after day. Therefore, it behooves every Christian, and every right-thinking citizen as well, who may not be a Christian, to give the most worthy consideration to the personal part that each of us should have with respect to this great conflict. Without ceasing, we should make our appeal to GOD that He may lead us to do His will. And without ceasing, we should seek in every high possible way, to help our sons and brothers, who are going out from every community to the camps to be trained for the great conflict.

And in every way we can, everyone of us, as our noble President has said, "should do his bit," in this testing hour, when every human being in this country is involved, and vitally involved, because of the war. I will venture to add this other word, a word which I said to my own people in Dallas a short time ago, that every man and woman in our land, who can do so, should come with noble response to the appeal that is daily heard, touching the Liberty Bonds. Every man and woman who can do so should re-enforce the Government at this practical point. It is a matter: reasonable, it is a matter righteous, and I believe that it is a matter profoundly and urgently

necessary. It is indeed a high privilege to be the right kind of a citizen. Patriotism is a word of tremendous significance.

Now, a very particular word touching the interests of the meeting. I raise the question with every Christian under the sound of my voice this night: Won't you make it a point, from day to day, to do some definite religious visiting? All about us there are people which are needing, more than words can say, to be spoken to in the right way, concerning personal religion.

Won't you thus dedicate yourself for an hour to-morrow? And if it could not be an hour, for half an hour? and if it could not be half an hour, for ten minutes? And if it could not be ten minutes, for as much as one minute, to speak to some human soul about personal religion? I do not think much of a meeting where its activities are limited to the public services.

I think very much of any meeting, if the people come to it, and humbly and earnestly seek to have their spiritual strength renewed, and light their torches, and then go out to find somebody in need of GOD's guidance and help, and speak to that somebody, and seek to guide that somebody into the right way.

That is a meeting worth while. Oh, I press it upon you! Won't you do some of the right kind of religious visiting every day of these special days set apart for public services? There is a drifting Christian that you ought to see. He began well back yonder, and something came to bewitch him away from the right path. Oh, how he needs the right kind of a talk!

There is somebody whose church membership is not in Fort Worth, but his life or her life is here. The church membership is back yonder in the village church or city church or country church, but the life is here, and the church membership ought to be here, and the activity ought to be here, and the service ought to be here, and the alignment, open and public, for CHRIST, ought to be here.

Do you know such people? Say the right word to them at once. And then, above all that, there are men and women and children all about you, who are going their way without GOD, to whom you ought to speak. My fellow-men, if the religion of JESUS CHRIST is worth a straw, it is worth dying for, and, certainly, it is worth living for. The one without CHRIST is not ready to die, and what is of probably larger consequence - that one is not ready to live - no, not for a day, nor for an hour. Won't you do the right kind of religious visiting between this and the service tomorrow night? God speed you and help you, I pray.

You are ready to listen for a moment, with reverence, I trust, to two passages of Scripture, the first from the ninth chapter of Mark:

"And when He came to His disciples. He saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them."

Arguing with them.

"And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed, and running to Him saluted Him. And He asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of

the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not."

That is what the uproar is about. Your men have failed.

"He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall suffer you? bring him unto Me. And they brought him unto Him: and when He saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And He asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us."

Miserable prayer, wasn't it?

About like many of mine, I am afraid. Think of saying that to GOD, to the Almighty Saviour: "**If Thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us!**" JESUS said, "You have the 'if' wrong place." Mark just what He said:

"Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

That is a glorious prayer.

You do not wonder that Daniel Webster wanted it carved on his gravestone: "**Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.**"

"When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when Jesus was come into the house His disciples asked Him privately, Why could not we cast him out?"

Well, sure enough, why couldn't they? When Jesus sent forth the twelve, one of the powers He gave them was power to cast out unclean spirits, and they succeeded. And later, when He sent forth the seventy, one of the powers He gave them was power against unclean spirits, and they succeeded.

When they came back from one of their tours, one of their reports was: "**Lord, even the devils are subject unto us, through Thy name.**" But they failed this time, utterly. So they asked Him, when alone: "**Why could not we cast him out?**" Mark His answer! Oh, what an answer it is!

"And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

Now you are ready to hear a briefer Scripture, from the eighth chapter of Luke:

"Now it came to pass on a certain day, that He went into a ship with His disciples: and He said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. But as they sailed He fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Master, Master, we perish! Then He arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm. And He said unto them, Where is your faith?"

WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?

"And He said unto them, Where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25).

JESUS said unto His disciples, some 1900 years ago, on the storm-swept water, when they were all affrighted and filled with dismay, **"Where is your faith?"** And JESUS says to a great audience of men and women assembled in Fort Worth, Tuesday evening, June 12, 1917, **"Where is your faith?"** This is a question that needs to be asked very often, and it needs to be faithfully answered when we ask it, for it is about the most vital matter of all, even our faith.

The conquering weapon is faith. **"Without faith it is impossible to please Him."** His Book so tells us. **"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."** We shall not have victory without faith. Of old, GOD's plaintive question to His Israel was: **"How long will it be ere they believe me?"** And that is His question to His Israel this very hour.

O my people, **"how long will it be ere [ye] believe me?"**

The undoing sin of Christians is their unfaith. We are all along saying, and correctly, that the undoing sin of the unbeliever is his unfaith. **"He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,"** and while he remains in that unbelief must continue to be condemned.

Rejection of CHRIST, unbelief toward CHRIST, that is the undoing sin. Even so, the undoing sin for Christians is their unfaith. Of old Israel could not enter the Promised Land because of unbelief, and even to-day, and every day, GOD's people are kept out of many a promised land because of unbelief. We doubt GOD's ability, or we doubt His willingness, or both His ability and willingness, to help us, and we go our way, groping, and floundering, and failing. It is not only a pity, but it is a sin, deep and tragical, if we are not steadily growing in faith. That was a beautiful tribute Paul paid the church at Thessalonica, when he said: **"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly."** It will not only be a misfortune, but it will be a sin, if with you and me our faith is not steadily strengthening and growing.

But now the fact confronts us, as pointed by the text, that our faith may be misplaced. The faith of the disciples on that storm-swept water was evidently misplaced. They were disciples of CHRIST. They were His friends and followers. But their hearts failed, and their faith went down, and they fainted in spirit. Their faith was misplaced.

When is faith misplaced? I shall answer that it is misplaced when it is put in human appearances; and we are all along tempted to put our faith in mere human appearances.

How we are influenced, how we are swayed, how we are lifted up or cast down, by mere appearances! If the weather be fair, if no lowering clouds come to menace, if all goes merry as a wedding bell, our hearts seem hopeful and our faith buoyant. But that is not the test. How is it when the heavens are darkened with clouds? How is it when the loved one gasps, and the sands of time seem running to the end? How is it when crepe is on the door? How is it when the granary seems scant and the crops have no promise? How is it when appearances are all against us? Our faith is misplaced, if our faith is put in mere human appearances. That was a great saying given by a valiant leader, when he said: "Never take counsel of your fears, or of appearances."

Our faith is misplaced, I go on to say, when we put it in human agency. And certainly, we are greatly tempted, and constantly, to put our faith in human agency. But all along, the Scriptures, by telling illustrations and by pungent precepts, would turn us away from putting our faith in mere human agency. The Bible tells us why GOD makes choice, as He does, of such remarkable instrumentalities. He has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the reason is given us there in His Book: "**That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**"

A generation or two removed from us, GOD startled the world by finding a lad yonder in the country place in England, not yet out of his teens, and GOD brought him up to the world's greatest city, to great London, and set him right there in its heart to preach His wonderful Gospel. Before this young man was thirty, royalty was at his feet, and the British Parliament marvelled at his power, and the lines of his testimony and power had gone out to the ends of the earth - Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the most victorious Gospel preacher of all his century, and perhaps of any century since the apostolic times. He was a man uncolleged, and yet GOD said through him to the world about us: "I want you to look at this man and listen to him **that your faith may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**" Our GOD is surprising us all along by His strange choice of human instrumentalities.

There is the humble country boy. He has never been to the city at all. He is following his plow. He goes to the little country church house, in the quiet midsummer meeting. His heart is moved, his conscience probed, his judgment convinced, his will aroused, and he bows down in humble penitence before CHRIST, and he is saved. And then he follows his plow still again and strange impulses stir in his heart, and great thoughts burn in his brain. He is thinking about preaching the Gospel. He is thinking about going out and telling the world what a dear Saviour he has found, and how he would have every man know the same blessed Saviour. The years pass on, several of them, half a dozen, a dozen, and yonder is that country lad in a surging city, rallying the tempted thousands of sinning, beaten and wandering humanity, rallying them around the flag of CHRIST JESUS, the Lord.

Who is he? A plain plowboy, clothed upon with the grace and might of the Spirit of GOD, and in him and through him GOD is saying to the world: "See him now, and listen to him, and remember, your faith is not to stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of GOD!" Oh, how

it gladdens my heart this Tuesday night, to have the faith to believe that somewhere in this broad country, out on the prairies, or out yonder nestling amid the trees, in some little cottage, a mother folds to her heart a tiny baby boy, and when you and I shall be sleeping beneath the roses, and shall be perhaps forgotten, that boy will be going up and down this country, rallying the wavering, sinning thousands around the flag of CHRIST, a child out from some home of poverty and need, and GOD will be saying through him to the world: "See him, now, and listen, **that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**"

But I think that most of all our faith is misplaced because we limit GOD. - That is a striking expression used in one of the Psalms, where the Psalmist said, concerning Israel of old:

"They... limited the Holy One of Israel." They limited God.

Mankind can limit GOD, and does limit Him. At first thought, that seems impossible. The infinite GOD, filling all immensity, without beginning of days or ending of years, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal - at first thought it seems impossible that He could be limited, and yet He can be, and is, limited. Man limits GOD, else man is a mere machine, without any more volition than a tree or a stone. Man can say "No" to GOD, or man can say "Yes" to GOD.

Man can seek GOD's face, and by Divine Grace become GOD's friend, and go GOD's road, and glorify GOD's great name; or man can be rebellious, and offer his protest against God, and turn his back upon GOD, and miss the right way, and come to defeat and failure. Man limits GOD. How does he limit Him? The ways are many.

We can limit GOD even in our very prayers. You have probably heard prayers which had in them a limitation upon GOD.

Full many a time when we pray that prayer "**not my will, but Thine, be done,**" our hearts really mean: "Not Thy will, O GOD, but mine, be done." Ofttimes we are found trying to persuade GOD to come to our notion of things, and accept our view of things, without regard to His wisdom and will. All the while He tells us: "You leave your case to Me, and trust your case to Me, and submit your case to Me, and I will do the wisest and best thing possible for you," and yet full many a time our prayers really mean: "Nevertheless, O Lord, not Thy will be done at all, but mine be done," and in that way we limit Him.

And then we limit GOD by our poor lives. Every life is either a channel or a clog, a channel through which GOD sends His blessing, or a clog to hinder and obstruct such blessing. A human life can be a non-conductor, failing to transmit to others what GOD would send through that life unto others. That is indeed a pathetic picture, where Paul writes one of the New Testament churches, saying: "**For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.**" Paul was writing to a church, and he was saying to that church: "Some of you church members so walk as to become the enemies of the cross of CHRIST." Your attention has been called to that solemn picture in the last book of the Bible, where JESUS stands outside a church, begging to be admitted.

Listen to Him: "**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**" JESUS is there,

outside a church - outside!

His own people have the door closed, and have Him outside, and there He stands on the outside, knocking, and saying:

"Won't you let me enter? for I come to do you good, and not evil at all." "O JESUS, thou art standing, outside the fast closed door!" Can you think of anything more heartbreaking this night than to imagine yourselves keeping JESUS out, keeping JESUS away from some other life, yourself a clog, obstructing, yourself a non-conductor? He wishes to send through you a message of life and grace and hope to others, and you are a non-conductor. Can you imagine anything more serious than that? We limit GOD by our lives. Every Christian whose life is wrong with GOD positively hinders GOD and limits GOD by that much.

But most of all, we limit GOD, I dare say, by our unbelief, our unfaith. Israel could not enter the Promised Land because of unbelief; and you and I are kept out of many a promised land because of unbelief, because of unfaith. JESUS wishes us to believe in Him. The right sort of a man delights to be believed in. You cannot grieve the right sort of a man in any other way quite so deeply as to indicate to him that you do not take him at full face value, as he represents himself to you. The right sort of a man wishes to be believed in, to be taken at his word.

GOD delights to be believed in, and the deepest grief to Him is given Him by our unfaith, our unbelief. We are told here in the Gospels that in one certain community JESUS could do no mighty works because of the unbelief of the people. Unbelief hindered Him. Unbelief fettered Him, even CHRIST JESUS, the Lord. And so He comes to us to-night, saying: "**According to your faith, be it unto you . . . Where is your faith?**" He comes to us to-night saying: "**If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth . . . Where is your faith?**"

We are all along talking about "hard cases." Now, how foolish and unwise and wrong is such talk, when we think of GOD. He asks us: "**Is anything too hard for the Lord?**" That was a mighty question Paul asked when he asked: "**Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?**" Granted a GOD who has all power in Heaven and earth, and who formed the worlds by the word of His power, granted a Being like that, and where is there any difficulty or mystery in such a GOD raising people from death and the grave? So that our talk about "hard cases" in GOD's sight is all out of place and grievous in His holy presence.

I wonder, my fellow Christians, if in these latter days, our faith gets much higher for mankind than for the salvation of the children in the Sunday-school, and the plastic, responsive young people that are all about us.

Where is the faith now that claims the hardened sinner for CHRIST? Where is the faith that claims the old man with the gray about his temples, far down in the afternoon of life - where is the faith that claims that man for GOD?

Where is the faith that claims the man abandoned to sinful and consuming habits?

Where is the faith that claims him for GOD?

Where is the faith that claims the big business man, great and strengthful, masterful and powerful, but preoccupied, living as though this world were all, forgetting that out there a few steps ahead is the judgment and eternity?

Where is the faith that claims him, from all that preoccupation, for CHRIST JESUS and His great salvation?

Where is the faith that claims the very difficult case for the Lord CHRIST?

Oh, how we limit GOD, that we do not go out and claim men, no matter what their hindrances and their limitations and their sins! How we grieve God, if we do not go out and claim them in the name of CHRIST, even the most difficult cases, for the wonders of His grace and His great forgiveness!

May I tell you the most wonderful conversion that I ever witnessed in all my life? Out in the Middle West, where it has been my delight to go many a time, in the out door campmeetings, some years ago I went and found in that particular community some very difficult religious conditions. There were more aged people in that community, unsaved, than I have ever witnessed anywhere in all my life, before or since. The religious conditions of the community were hard and difficult. There had been all sorts of pesky religious debates - how miserable they all are, and how inexcusable! - and the people were set and gritty and hard in their relations toward one another. What a tragedy when that is so! I was there some two or three days, and more and more it dawned upon me how difficult all the conditions were. They told me daily about those white-haired men and women, who went groping life's way, without GOD and without hope.

After some days, they told me about Big Jim, the most difficult sinner, they said, west of Fort Worth, even as far west as El Paso. They so described him physically that I could not miss him if he came to the meeting, and they said: "He will come one time to hear you, and then he will swear at you, and rail at you, and curse out the whole meeting, and the preachers and the churches and everybody, and then he will wait a year and come back a year from now to go over the same performance again." That was their report of him. I stood up to preach one evening and in came Big Jim. I could not miss him, from their description. Yonder he sat, far down the aisle before me, at the rear of the great arbor, nor did he take his eye, it seemed, one time from the minister, while his message was being given.

At the close of the message, I made the call for men and women who would then and there humbly and honestly make surrender of their poor, undone and sinful lives to the forgiving mercy and help of the Divine Saviour, and down every aisle white-haired men and women came.

It was one of those memorable nights, never to be forgotten. Big Jim kept his seat, nor did he seem to move. After awhile, the meeting ended, and the people gathered about me; or gathered in little groups to discuss the wonder that their eyes had witnessed that night. One after another was named who had "come over the line" and made the great surrender that night to JESUS. And then, ever and anon, these talkers would make a passing remark about the presence of Big Jim, and they speculated about his presence, and about the possibility of his coming any more. One said: "No; he will not be back. He will swear at our preacher, and at all the Christian people, nor will he return until next year." but another said: "Yes; he had a different look on him to-night

from what I have ever seen before. I look for him to come again. Never did I see him look as he looked to-night." And on they talked pro and con.

Presently the preacher slipped away from the crowd, for it was late, and wended his way around the hillside to the little cottage, far removed from the camping throngs, where he might have quiet and rest, and as he went around that little mountain side he heard somebody talking. Oh, it was so earnest! The preacher did not mean to be an eavesdropper, and yet he seemed chained in his very tracks. And when he stopped and listened to that strange talk, he discovered in a moment what it was, and that there were two of them, and that they were praying, for one, who spoke for the two, said: "We two, O CHRIST, agree we want Big Jim saved, that the mouths of gainsayers may be stopped in this country. They are saying, O CHRIST, that Big Jim is too much for GOD, that even GOD cannot stop him. They are saying that, and we want the mouths of gainsayers stopped, and the whole land to know that CHRIST is able to save even the chief of sinners; and we two, here on the mountain side, late in the night, give thee Big Jim, believing thy great promise: **'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.'** For the glory of CHRIST, simply and only, we pray You, save Big Jim."

I went quietly on my way. - I do not know who they were, who were thus praying. I never knew. I found my cottage, and the night passed, and the next day came and wore to nightfall, and I was again under the arbor, facing the mass of people. I stood up to preach and looked everywhere, but Big Jim was not present. But just as I began to speak, in he came, at the same place as on the previous night, and then my message seemed to flyaway, and I said: "We will pause and ask GOD to give the preacher what he ought to say. He does not know. He would speak GOD's message, whatever it is, to-night, and this man will lead us in prayer that the preacher may speak what, and as, CHRIST would have His preacher tonight to speak." And the prayer was finished, and then the preacher began again, and told simply and only that story of the prodigal son, the easily influenced, impulsive youth, restless, dissatisfied, who went away from home against the protests of wisdom and love, and took his part of the inheritance, and went down the toboggan slide at a rapid pace, and wasted all his substance in riotous living.

And when his substance was gone, his friends were gone. The hail-fellows-well-met of the other days had fled, and he was down yonder in the swine fields, this lad, feeding the swine, himself eating of the husks wherewith he fed the swine. One day, as the Scriptures tell the story, the young fellow **"came to himself."**

He saw himself as he was. Memory was alert, and the months and the years of his separation from home, came trooping back to his recollection, and the young man said: "I have sinned. I have missed it. This is the way of defeat and death. I will go back to father, and I will confess in his sight and in GOD's sight how I have missed it, and how I have sinned." And then he put that kindling desire into effect, that sublime resolution into action, and he betook himself back the homeward way, and as he came toward the old home, the father saw him, even from afar; the father was waiting, longing to see him; and down the road the father came, and put his arms about the boy, as the boy began his confession, and the father called to a servant:

"Bring the best robe for this boy," and to another: "Kill the fatted calf," and to another: "Bring the ring to put on this boy's finger," emblem of the love that never dies. And there was music,

and there was rejoicing, and there was victory. That was all I said, except that I added: "This story of the prodigal son is simply a picture of the love of GOD, going out after any soul on earth that has wandered away from GOD, which soul GOD wishes to forgive and recover and save, and will so save, if such soul will come to Him." And then I said: "Will the audience remain seated? Without any singing at all, is there some man here tonight, a prodigal, far from Heaven and GOD, who says: 'I want GOD's mercy, and I will honestly yield myself to GOD to get it,' let him come and take my hand."

Would you believe it? Big Jim started. Oh, the sight, the sight, the sight! And presently the men saw him coming, and hundreds of sobbing men stood to their feet, and sobbed aloud, and as he came down the aisle slowly, for it was with difficulty he walked, hundreds of men joined him, and came down with him. And when at last he got to me and took my hand, he said: "Sir, I put you on your sacred honor, will the Great Master save me, if I will give up to Him?" And I said: "Sir, on my sacred honor, I declare that He will, if you will just honestly "surrender your case to Him." And the men put in with voices, scores and scores: "It is so, Jim. We made the surrender and JESUS saved us. You make it, and you will find out for yourself." And then again, waiting a moment, he looked at me, still holding my hand, and said: "I want you to remember, sir, that you are speaking to the worst man out of perdition. Would the Master save a man like that, if he would give up to Him?" I said: "Sir, on my Master's own statement, I declare to you that He will save you, even if you are the chief sinner out of perdition, if you will honestly surrender to Him." And they punctuated my remark with a chorus: "It is so, Jim. Try it and you will find out."

Once again he looked at me and then he said, finally: "Sir, when would the Great Master save me, if I should give up to Him right now?" And I said: "Sir, on His own word, which many of us have proved, our Great Master will save you, and your heart shall know that your sins are forgiven, right now, if right now you will honestly surrender to Him." And then he turned that big bronzed face upward, as if looking for the Master Himself, and he gasped out his prayer, just this: "Lord JESUS, the worst man in the world gives up to you right now."

Oh, I cannot tell the rest! I do not think the angels could tell the rest. I think if the archangel himself should come down from those starry heights, that the words of that angel would be inadequate to tell you the rest. GOD unloosed Big Jim's tongue, and he began to talk, and then the old men kissed him, and the old women kissed him, and the young men kissed him, and the young women kissed him, for the chief of sinners had been saved.

What is there wonderful about such a story? Not a thing on the face of the earth, if you will grant that JESUS CHRIST is divine, and that He came in the flesh to save sinners, and that His divine grace is mightier than any human sin, however long-continued and however heinous. O men and women, you and I limit GOD because of our unfaith with respect to aged and hardened and difficult and preoccupied cases that are all around us.

But there is another word for me to bring you. How may we strengthen our faith? That is what you and I wish to know. How may you and I strengthen our faith? I have two or three simple suggestions.

First, if we would strengthen our faith, we need to make it a matter of prayer. I read you the passage of Scripture telling of a group of men who failed in their faith, and when they got JESUS

alone they said: "Why was it we failed?" Mark His answer: "**This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer.**" If you are not a man of prayer, you are not a man of faith. If you are not a woman of prayer, you are not a woman of faith. The men and women who do not tread the secret path of prayer are men and women spiritless and broken and without faith. If you and I would have conquering faith, then you and I must make it a matter of constant prayer. Once when Jesus gave His disciples a great task to accomplish, they cried back unto Him: "**Lord**, if you expect that of us, **increase our faith.**" And so you and I are to come to Him, saying: "If you expect this, or that, or the other great achievement, even the achievement of winning some poor soul, bedarkened and blinded by sin, away from such dreadful path, to GOD, then increase our faith."

How may our faith be increased? If it is to be increased, then let us plead the promises of GOD. Oh, how great a privilege to plead the promises of GOD! Of old, one had a way of talking to GOD like this: "Do as Thou hast said." And when you and I come to pray, we need to fill our mouths with arguments to GOD, and those arguments are His own promises. "Lord JESUS, here is what Thou hast said, and we plead that. We fill our mouth with Thine own argument, and we plead that before Thy face. Do as Thou hast said. Do as Thou hast said." What if hundreds and hundreds of these men and women before me, should go apart in groups of two, and should say: "Lord JESUS, here is a case, O, so difficult, speaking after the fashion of men, so difficult, so hopeless, but not at all difficult and hopeless if GOD will take charge of the case, and, therefore, we two take up thy promise, where Thou sayest: **'If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven.'** Do as Thou hast said. We plead this promise, and rest on it. Do as Thou hast said."

How are we to strengthen our faith? I have still another word. If we are to strengthen our faith, then we are to seek the guidance and power of GOD's Divine Spirit. In this divinest work of all, the work of winning souls to CHRIST, all along we are to seek the guidance and power of the HOLY SPIRIT. Oh, how wonderful is His guidance, and how marvelous is His power! He does guide His people. There is such a thing as being led of the Spirit of GOD, and in this divinest work of all, the work of winning souls, we shall miss it utterly and be marplots, if we are not guided and empowered by the Spirit of GOD. The Spirit of GOD does teach, guide and empower the servants of JESUS, in this holiest task of all, this work of winning souls to CHRIST. "**When He... is come,**" JESUS has promised it, "**He will guide you into all truth.**" "**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.**" O brothers of mine, you and I, with all humility and earnestness, want to ask GOD to guide us in this work we are in, and to give us His own wisdom and power at every step that we take.

Come, HOLY SPIRIT. heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad a Saviour's love,
And that shall kindle ours.

You and I want the guidance and the power of the Divine Spirit in this heavenly task to which we are these days, please GOD, to put our hands.

Wonderful, how wonderful, is GOD's leadership by His Spirit and His power, when we yield ourselves to Him! How wonderful it is! A few years ago, I was in Minneapolis, that beautiful

city of the Northwest, at one of the Bible conferences for the Northwestern states, speaking there daily for some two weeks, and it was my privilege, while there, to have daily fellowship with that nobly gifted preacher, Wayland Hoyt, one of the first preachers of his generation. I had heard of an incident in his life, and I asked him about it, and he confirmed it. This was the incident:

Dr. Hoyt had prepared with unusual care in the other years a special sermon, hoping to reach one of the first citizens in his city on a certain Sunday night, with that same sermon. This citizen was an outstanding citizen, but not a Christian, and rarely came to church. The wife was a devoted Christian and church member. So at the Sunday morning service Mr. Hoyt signaled quietly to the wife, and sent by her a message to the distinguished husband: "Tell him that I ask specially that he will come to-night. I have prepared a sermon, hoping earnestly to help him. Tell him I ask him to come, I wish him to come." The wife gave the message when she reached home, and the husband went to the telephone - he was a gentleman in every instinct and habit of his life - and took down the receiver and called the minister and gave the minister his grateful thanks for his cordial invitation, saying:

"Certainly, I will be there to-night. How kindly, how considerate of you to be so interested in me. Certainly, I will be there to hear you." But before the nightfall came a blinding storm filled the heavens, and the floods poured out of the clouds, and the people could not gather. Only a little handful hard by the church could gather at all.

The minister made his way to the church and spoke to the little handful, but the one citizen he had thought about and specially prepared for was not there. The minister went home with his heart heavy, and he sat there late and long in his library that Sunday night, and he fell to musing like this: "What a poor out I am making reaching that man!" And then something said to him: "Why don't you imitate your Master and go to the man and preach your sermon to just one man, as JESUS after nightfall preached His sermon on the new birth to Nicodemus, that fine citizen of old? Why don't you walk in the steps of your Master and preach your best sermon to one man?"

And that suggestion fairly boomed like a cannon in his ears and heart. He looked at his watch. It was midnight. He said: "Why, I could not go this late at night." And he sat, still thinking further, and something seemed to say to him, did say to him: "If you knew that that man's house was in danger, or that his family were in danger, you would brave any sort of weather, to help them. Though the storm beat down the avenue, you would breast it, to go and apprise him of the danger. Why won't you be consistent about the biggest, most important thing of all?" And then Dr. Hoyt said he found himself putting on his raincoat. He opened the door and breasted the great storm that still swept down the avenue. Block after block he trudged his way through the blinding storm. He said he found himself talking to himself, saying to himself: "Maybe, the man will say I am crazy. Maybe I am, but GOD knows I am trying to do the consistent thing." Presently he came to the right house, and as he came toward it there was a light in one of the lower rooms, and he came up softly to the door, and knocked gently, not caring to disturb the household at one o'clock in the morning, and in a moment the door opened, and there standing was the citizen, who had not been in bed at all, and out into the storm and the night the big citizen thrust his arms and drew Wayland Hoyt out of the night and out of the storm, and drew him to his heart, and sobbed over him as a mother would sob over her children, saying to him:

"Thank GOD, Mr. Hoyt, He sent you here to teach me how to be saved. I have been there in my

library, reading the Bible and trying to pray. That word you sent me waked me up and stirred my heart. The storm kept me from going to church, but I could not sleep. I have been there reading the Bible and trying to pray, but it is all dark to me. JESUS sent you to teach me." And Wayland Hoyt told me that in five minutes his interested citizen was rejoicing in CHRIST JESUS the Lord. What if Wayland Hoyt had not gone? GOD pity me and you maybe, as time and again your heart ached with a longing inexpressible for some lost lout, but you said: "I am unworthy. I am incompetent. I am unfit." And you deadened your impression, and you went your way, and such soul went his way, and maybe has gone into eternity ere this Tuesday night. Oh, seek the guidance of GOD's Spirit for this task, and then follow Him!

We are going in a moment, for my message is done. I have a question to ask you, and you will answer it candidly. This is the question: Is there somebody in Fort Worth that you wish to be saved? Is there somebody in Fort Worth that you wish to be saved during these meetings, in which our appeal shall be made to men's judgments and men's consciences? I have no respect for any other kind of appeal in the name of CHRIST's holy religion. Bethink you now - is there somebody that you wish to see saved during these midsummer days, set aside for some special meetings to help the people in the highest matters of all?

Every Christian present who says: "Yes; there is one, or there are some, that I wish to see saved, and by my standing I voice my wish, and ask you and ask others present who pray, to join me in prayer for these nameless ones that my heart thinks about, in these closing moments of this service, stand to your feet. Is there some person or persons whom you would see saved during these meetings, for whom you would have us to unite our prayers this night, and from day to day, that light and leading from GOD may be vouchsafed unto them that they may be saved? Does my call apply to others? Every man and woman who says: "That represents my heart's earnest desire," stand to your feet. Many have risen. Many persons are evidently now in your thoughts. the Lord teach us to pray for them as we ought!

THE CLOSING PRAYER

We go now, our Father at the close of this service, appealing to Thee that the truth, by the power of Thy Spirit, may be written in our deepest consciences. O, forgive us for our little faith, for our miserable unfaith. This night we would draw nigh to GOD. We would pay the price for power with GOD and for Him, wherever that would lead us, and whatever that would cost us. Whether by death or by life, we would do GOD's will. Behold the men and women who have risen to their feet to say that they are thinking of one, or thinking of more than one, whom they long to see saved during these midsummer days, in the special daily meetings. O GOD, fit us to speak as we ought to the people all about us concerning JESUS. Would it please Thee for those now praying to pour forth their personal appeal to some soul thought about and prayed for right now? Then let the right person go to such soul and speak GOD's Word, however timidly.

And even though with confession, first of all, for waywardness personal and inconsistency of life, and incongruity of temper, yet may the soul who loves CHRIST and loves the soul of the one thought about and prayed for right now, go to such soul and speak as CHRIST would have the word spoken! To guide such soul out of the darkness and into the light. HOLY SPIRIT Divine, Thou Great Revealer of JESUS, come Thou and teach us and lead us, and enable us hour by hour, in our talk, in our visits, by the use of the phone, by the letter, and in the secret places,

when we bare our very souls before GOD in prayer, to behave ourselves in such a fashion that CHRIST with smiling face shall look on us, and with blessed lips shall say to us: "**I am well pleased.**"

And now, as the people go, may the blessing of GOD, even of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, whom we worship as one GOD, be granted you all and each, to abide with you forevermore. Amen.

~ end of chapter 3 ~
