

# GOSPEL SERMONS

as

Sam P. Jones

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## SERMON EIGHT

### HOW TO LEAD A CHRISTIAN LIFE

We invite your attention to several verses in the first chapter of the Second Epistle General of Peter.

**“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and to virtue.”**

Let us notice two or three of these verses as we go along:

**“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.”**

Did you ever face this fact in your religions experience, that there may be a thousand reasons why some men do not succeed at law; that there may be a thousand reasons why some men fail in merchandising; that there may be a thousand reasons why some men fail in agriculture; but do you ever meet this fact, that there is no reason in Heaven or Earth or Hell why any man should fail to be an earnest, faithful, Christian man? There are reasons why men fail in every other profession and every other calling, but there are no reasons why any man should fail in being a successful Christian.

**“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.”**

If I am not a successful, happy, earnest Christian, it is not the devil's fault; it is not the fault of the grace of God; it is not the fault of this Bible; it is not the fault of anything without; but my trouble lies deep within. **“All things that pertain to life and godliness.”**

### THE SOURCE OF GOODNESS

Let us face this fact a moment. If I am a good man, I am a good man on purpose. If I am not a good man I am purposely not a good man. Nobody ever was religious by accident. The grace of God never made any man religious. The Bible never made any man religious. Preaching never made any man religious. These are all grand instrumentalities in the hands of God, but no man was, and no man ever will be religious until he settles it once uncompromisingly and forever:

“I will be religious, whether I am anything else or not. If I fail in everything else, I will succeed in this. If I don't do anything else, I will do this.”

Like the great one who succeeded in the highest sense — Paul. He said: **“One thing I do.”**

Suppose I succeed. I am a success for all worlds. Suppose I fail in this and succeed in everything else — like Cornelius Vanderbilt, the richest man that ever bade America “good-bye” and stepped into eternity. He turned to his oldest boy and passed \$75,000,000 into his hands; \$25,000,000 additional he turned over to the rest of his heirs, and, then in his last moments, turned to his Christian wife and asked her: “Wife, please sing,

Come, ye sinners, poor and needy;  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore.”

The richest man that America ever produced asking his wife to sing the song of a beggar!

The next verse reads:

**“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”**

### **PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE**

What does that mean — **“Being made partakers of the divine nature?”**

Here is, perhaps, one of the plainest, clearest statements of the beginning of a Christian life.

**“Being made partaken of the divine nature.”**

Now, here's a man who has been, perhaps, intemperate at times, worldly-minded, covetous, wicked, wayward, godless, and now here is a pivotal moment in his life. Perhaps it is the death of his precious wife; perhaps it is the burial of one of his sweet children; perhaps it was an earnest sermon; but some time, something, somewhere touched his heart and touched his conscience, and he says to himself: “I believe I'll decide upon a better life. I ought to be good. I'm sorry I'm bad. I would give the rest of my days to nobler, better things.”

He eschews evil and learns to do good, and on and on he walks away from evil and walks into good, and may be six months later there is a happy, joyous Christian experience brought about. When was that man made a partaker of the divine nature? It was in that moment way back yonder, when he said: “I am wrong. I ought to get right”

That moment, way back yonder, when he said, “I'm bad; I'm sorry I am. I have offended God and lived in sin. I would seek the favor of God and live in righteousness.”

It was way back there that that man was made partaker of the divine nature, and he yielded and responded and fostered and nursed that divine touch until, by and by, it budded and blossomed into a glorious religious experience.

**“A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”**

I used to think that if God couldn't get all the heart he wouldn't take any. I made a mistake there. Brother if you will surrender God an inch of space in your heart to-night, God will occupy that space, and God will do for a man and do in a man just in proportion as God can get hand room and foot room to work. And God will work that space so well and the fruitage will be so glorious, that if we will surrender every space and every place, God will go on with the conquest until he shall possess the whole. Or, if you draw the line anyway and say to God, “Thus far shalt thou go and no farther,” then God will surrender to you the space he already occupied, and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

**“According as his divine power hath . . . made us partaken of the divine nature.”**

Is there a man here to-night, twenty or thirty or forty years old that down in his conscience feels like “I am bad. I am sorry of it, I ought to be good. I want to be good?” The good spirit of all grace has touched that man's heart. And now, brother, you foster and cherish and nurse and perpetuate that desire in your soul until it shall spring up and develop into a burning, hungering, and thirsting after righteousness. Don't despise the day of small things. A great many in the church and a great many out of the church are waiting for some wonderful transformation. They are waiting for some wonderful something to possess them. A great many of us are alike. We would want such an experience as that of Paul, for instance.

### **GOD NEVER WASTES POWDER**

Well, Paul was a wonderful man. He was big gun and God used big ammunition and big guns on big game, understand that Paul — it took the biggest cannon of Heaven loaded to its muzzle to bring him down, and it brought him down to surrender. And there's many a little fellow in this country wanting God to shoot off that same gun at him. And if God did, it wouldn't leave a greasy spot of you, you poor little fellow. God is too merciful to turn such guns loose on your sort. God never shoots cannon-balls at snow-birds. Don't forget that.

Fancy a snow-bird perched on the twig of a persimmon bush and saying, “I'll never move until a cannonball hits me” — and that will be his last move.

**“According as his divine power hath given as all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called as to glory and virtue.”**

**“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.”**

Oh, brother! How divine the truth that God always promises to help a man to be good if he wants to be good. And my theology at last, brother, is in but two sentences. God cannot arbitrarily make any man a good man.

If he could we would all be good, for he wills that we should all be moral. The devil cannot arbitrarily make any man a bad man. If he could we would all be bad. My theology is trapped in these two declarations. If you want to be good, say so, and God will help you. If you want to be bad, say so, and the devil will help you. I needn't tell you that you know that.

## **FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES**

**“Exceeding great and precious promises.”**

Promises that come down to me, and reach out to me, and overshadow me, and that are like a great granite rock under my feet as I walk on the promises of God. There is no bankrupting the soul that carries in its consciousness the promises of God. Now, brother, let us take a sensible view of this. Let's you and I not wait for anything; but let's you and I decide to-night. “Yes, I want to be good, and I decide to be good.” And that isn't all. “I believe God will help me, and I'm going to start out on that line to-night.”

The greatest curse of men is, they are going to be good after awhile. “I'll be good next year”, and so on. Well, if you and I are ever going to be good it is time we begun.

And if we are never going to be good let's say so and settle it forever. Now beside a start like this he says:

**“And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge. And to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.**

**“For, if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**“But he that lacketh these things . . .”**

Listen! —

**“He that lacketh these things is blind and can not see afar off.”**

## **NEAR-SIGHTED CHRISTIANS**

You see the seeming contradictory senses in which these words are put —

**“Is blind and can not see afar off.”**

He can see all around him. He can see stocks and bonds and money, and worldly goods and fruits. Ah me! He is what you might call a near-sighted Christian. He can see everything about him; he can see the profits and losses of each day's business; he can see his mansion and see his town property and see his railroad interests, and so on, right about him, but he:

**“Is blind and can not see afar off.”**

Ah, me, brother! It is these long-sighted fellows that win. This one that looked ahead into eternity and can say, “My treasure is laid up at the right hand of God, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal.”

You can tell a near-sighted man. Nothing out of the range of his sight excites him or moves him. That man standing by you there — you see a cyclone coming, but he stands there without a motion of his body. These men that cannot see into eternity and cannot see beyond, they are never excited. They call these other men “religious enthusiasts.” And I declare to you to-night, we have got a great many near-sighted Methodists and Baptists and Presbyterians and Episcopalians, and so forth in this city.

That father there can see his boy going in business and can see him succeed in business, but how about your boy's soul and eternity? Can't see anything there. That mother can see her daughter projected into society and see her marry well, and see her move off to herself and start well in life, but how about your daughter's eternal interests? Can't see anything there. Oh, the near-sighted people of this world.

They are . . . **“Blind and can not see afar off.”**

### **FORGETFUL BACKSLIDERS**

And listen: **“And have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins.”**

There is not an old backslider in this town but what when you see him down will say, “I sort of doubt whether I ever was religious or not I don't think I ever was a Christian.”

Forgets, you see! There is not a miserable backslidden person in this community to-night, but what when you bring him square to the issue, he'll tell you, “Well, I thought I was converted then, and I thought I enjoyed religion, but I think now I was mistaken.” *“Think now I was mistaken!”* Haven't you heard that all around? *“I am afraid I was mistaken.”* Poor fellow! He has got into things that have so engrossed him and so taken up his time, he has forgotten all about how good God was to him, and how God blessed him, and how had he lived for months, and may be years.

**“Blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from their old sins.”**

I don't know what you'll do with all this sort unless you turn them over to us Methodists. We believe in that sort. I want to tell you of another thing right along at this point. There are ten, there are twenty warnings in the word of God to Christian people, lest they fail, lest they go back — there are twenty warnings to Christian people to hold fast their profession of faith, to where there is one call to the sinner to come to repentance. And now what do you say? It looks like there is danger along that line.

## THE MATTER OF DILIGENCE

**“Now, giving all diligence.”**

Oh, me! A religious life is a pious life; it is an earnest life; it is an energetic life; it is a life in which every man ought to lay aside every weakness and the sin that doth so easily beset him, and run with patience the race set before him.

An energetic, an enthusiastic life! Ah, me! A life like Paul, when once convinced and when once he swore his allegiance to Christ, from that moment until he passed out of the world he was a grand rolling ball of fire all through his life and all through earth.

Oh, brother,

**“Giving all diligence.”**

I can tell when a man is in earnest. If you let me watch the first three months of that young lawyer's life after he has just chosen the profession of law — if you let me watch the first three months of his life after he makes his profession, chooses his profession — I don't need any tongue of the prophet to tell you whether he means business or not. I see that young fellow choosing the profession of law, and instead of poring over Blackstone and Greenleaf and all the law books, I see him now spending his evenings with the girls and loitering around the street; I don't need any tongue of the prophet to say that fellow will never get but one case and the sheriff will get his client.

I see a young fellow starting out to be a doctor. Let me watch him three months. I see him loitering away his time and spending his evenings in parties, and paying no attention to physiology and anatomy and hygiene, and so forth. I turn around and I can see what you will be. You will have but one patient, and the undertaker will get him next day, and that will wind up your practice.

## MINISTERIAL AIR-GUNS

I see a preacher starting out and proposes to be a preacher; never looks in a book, never thinks, never studies; he is going to open his mouth and let the Lord fill it. Well, the Lord does fill a fellow's mouth as soon as he opens it, but He fills it with air. And there's many an old air-gun going through this country professing to be a preacher. I have listened at some men preaching an hour, and they didn't say one thing in the hour; and I got perfectly interested seeing how the fellow could dodge every idea in the universe and talk an hour. I just watched him.

I see a farmer the first three months of the year, instead of cleaning out his fence corners and repairing his fences and turning his land and being just as energetic and active in January as he is in May, instead of that he is loitering around doing nothing. I don't need any tongue of the prophet to tell how he will come out farming. I have seen him down South. I have watched him, and I have told him before he started in how he would come out, too.

Said I, "I'll tell you what will happen to you. You'll buy your corn from the West; you put in forty acres to the old mule," and, said I, "before the year is out the grass will have your cotton and the birds will have your wheat and the buzzards will have your mule and the sheriff will have you; and that's about where you'll wind up." Didn't mean anything — that's the trouble.

### **DOING ONE'S BEST**

But, on the other hand, when I see a young lawyer poring over his books day after day, and night after night, he burns the midnight oil, and I see the blood fading from his cheek, and his eyes growing brighter every day, I don't need the tongue of the prophet to tell you there will be one day a judge of the Supreme Court; that there will be one day one of the finest lawyers that America ever produced. And so on.

You let me watch a fellow the first three months after he joins the church, I can tell you whether he means business or not I see him begin to lay out of his prayer meetings and begin to neglect his duty, and begin to think that he has got more religion than he wants, and he'll run the rule of subtraction or division through it instead of the rule of addition, and I know just about where he'll land at. You are there now.

When I see a man come into the Church of God Almighty and he feels like, "I'm going to take every chance for the good world, I'm going to get all the good out of everything that comes my way or comes within a mile of me or ten miles of me," and I see him do his best and at his place, and he is drawing in from all sources in heaven and earth, and I see that man as he begins to move forward in his church and begins to be one of the pillars in church — I don't mean p-i-l-l-o-w-s — you got a great many of this sort of pillars in your churches in this town, good old cases for others to crawl in and lay their heads on and go to sleep, that sort of pillows! Downy fellows!

### **FINDING FAULT WITH THE CHURCH**

**"Giving all diligence."**

I will tell you what surprises me sometimes. See old Brother A go down Monday morning to his business, and he puts all his blood and energy and money and muscles and tact into his business from Monday morning until Saturday night, and all the energies of soul and body are bent on pushing his business forward, and he is taking every turn, and using every means, to push his business forward, and then comes to his neglected church on Sunday morning and takes his seat and sits there as quiet as the dead, and when the service is over he goes around into the study, and says to the preacher: "What in the world's the matter with the church? I can't see to save my life. She's not moving any."

And if that old fellow runs his business three months like he does the church, the sheriff would wind him up, and settle him in bankruptcy. Talk about a man running his business like we do our churches in this country! Ah, me! There is not a man in this house that does not know his business will go into bankruptcy and ruin if he devotes no more time to it than we devote to the church of God.

## DISPROPORTIONATE TALENT

I'll tell you what I have got a contempt for in the highest sense — a fellow that is a first-class lawyer and a tenth-rate Christian; he is the best lawyer in town, but the worst member of his church. Now, sir, that sort of a fellow isn't worth killing in any country in heaven or earth. I tell you another fellow that I have got a contempt for. It is this fellow: He is the best merchant in St. Louis, and he is about a fifteenth-rate Baptist. There is another fellow — the best doctor in St. Louis, and as a Presbyterian he is the dearest failure in the town. Now, if a fellow is no account anywhere, the Lord can sort of put up with his being no account in the church; but if he is a first-class anything out of the church, God wants him to be a first-class everything in the church, don't you see? Isn't it strange, brethren — now, I don't single out any class in this world and say aught against them — but isn't it strange how few really pious lawyers we have in this country? Isn't it strange? It takes less earnest effort to be a first-class Christian than it does to be a first-class lawyer, and I'd rather be one first-class Christian than to be every first-class lawyer in the universe.

You take the physicians of the community. One of my old brethren — a physician once — he belonged to my church, and I got after him about not coming out, and he said that he tried his best to get there, but he could not. “Well,” said I, “I'll tell you, old fellow, if Heaven was a sickly country, I don't believe I'd want to go there.”

“Well,” he said, “Why?”

“Well, I am afraid there is going to be very few doctors there.”

I don't know what in the world's the matter, but there are so few doctors that are pious; but when you do find one that is thoroughly pious he is one of the best men on the face of the earth.

## THE CHRISTIANITY OF PROFESSIONAL MEN

What's the matter with our professional men? Have they grown too big to be religious? Have they grown up to where the Bible is considered their mothers and their little children's book? What is the matter? Oh, sir, listen to me to-night. The grandest lawyers this world ever produced were the men who loved and lived by this blessed book I am preaching from to-night. The best physicians, and the grandest in the science in which they worked, were men who read this book and loved this book, and when they came to die, they said: “Wife, put the Bible under my head, and let it be my blessed pillow upon which I shall breathe my last.”

I don't want any better evidence of the upstart than a fellow that gets too big to like the Bible, and I declare to you that it has reached the point in this country now, if a fellow has much to say about the Bible and the faith of this book, they will ridicule him; they will say he is a fool that believes everything — they will say that. Oh, my brethren, when I see a Newton, as he comes down from his observatory, just now numbering and counting the stars as he swept his telescope across the skies, and I see Newton lay down his telescope and walk down into his closet and kneel down and pray to God, and walk out and say to his wife:

“Precious wife, I get closer to God on my knees in the closet than I was just now in my observatory, as I was counting and numbering the stars!”

The little fellow got too much sense to believe the Bible! A big head in a man is a heap worse than it is in a horse. A horse will die in about a week, but the poor fellow lives on in the way of all the country, one of these knowing fellows.

### **THE LORD LIKES THEM**

The Lord likes one of these fellows who says, “I don't know much.” A man who drops down on his knees every morning when he first wakes up and says, “Lord God, go with me this day. I am poor and weak and miserable, and ignorant and blind. Oh, Lord! I would not risk myself out of this room and out of my yard to-day unless you go with me. Take my hand, precious Father, and lead me, because I know not the way.” The Lord likes one of these men that feels in his heart, “I haven't got sense enough to go to my front gate and back unless the God of Heaven will go with me.” That is my sort.

**“Besides this giving all diligence, add unto your faith, virtue.”**

I like this rule of addition. I like it. I want more and more, and still there is more to follow.

I want to be larger to-day, and better to-day, and grander to-day than yesterday. And the biggest reason in the world why. I'd rather live ten years longer in this life than to die to-morrow — the biggest reason after all is the fact that in the next ten years, if God lets me live, I intend to eliminate much that is evil about me, and I intend to grow and develop into a grander Christian man than I claim to be to-night. My highest wish for a longer period of life is that before the day of crystallization, God may eliminate from me all that is evil, and develop me into all that is good.

### **THE SEVEN GRACES**

**“Add unto your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience”** — enough to keep a man pious. You will find that evil here is broad and deep as you look out.

**“Add unto your faith, virtue.”**

You take these seven graces before us to-night. Now, six thousand years ago God said **“Let there be light, and there was light,”** but this world enjoyed its rays for thousands of years before any philosopher analyzed it and told us what pure, white light was. After a while the philosopher stepped to the front and he told us that pure, white, physical light was the symmetrical blending of the seven primary colors we find in the rainbow — red and white and orange and green, etc. That the seventh is pure, white, physical light Jesus Christ said to his church:

**“Ye are the light of the world.”**

They did not understand Him. But Peter studied the question and stepped forth as the great philosopher in spiritual things and tells us that pure, white, spiritual light is the symmetrical blending of the seven primary Christian graces — faith and courage and knowledge and temperance and brotherly kindness and charity. The seven graces will shed forth a light that will indeed light the whole world.

### ARCHITECTS FOR ETERNITY

Now, brother, let us change the figure a moment and look at it in this way: We are building for eternity. Every man ought to look well to the foundation. Jesus Christ is the great foundation upon which we rest all our hope and all our experience and all for time and eternity. Christ is the great bedrock, and faith in him as we build this spiritual temple, faith in Christ, is the first rock put down. Are we build this temple without the sound of a hammer. We build this temple out of divine material and according to divine direction, and the first rock I putdown —the bedrock — is faith: **“Without faith it is impossible to please God.” “He that believeth shall be saved.”**

I may say that my heart rests upon this old book; I may say that I believe this book; I may say that I inherited a faith from my father and mother in this blessed book; I may say there is not a single utterance of God that I doubt in my heart to-night. Call me a dupe and call me a fool, but tell them, when you tell them I am a dupe and a fool, tell them I am a happy dupe and I am a joyful fool.

Faith in my Bible? I believe this book; I believe this book, and this book has blessed thousands of men before I was born, and the best men on whom I lean every day, they whisper back in my ear “That blessed book is a lamp to my feet and a light unto my path.”

This blessed book has never misled a human step and never misdirected a human life; this book, with its moral so pure and with its Christ so ennobling and elevating to the race — I believe, I believe!

### RELIGIOUS BELIEF

I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord; I believe in the Holy Ghost; in the Church of God.

I believe — I believe there is power in God and virtue in the blood of Christ, and truth in the Holy Ghost; and, brethren, if I didn't believe that book, and believe God was its Author, and God was with me, I'd close this book and close my mouth and leave this town on the first train that left for my home. I believe my Bible; and when the Christian people of this town believe this book we are going to take this book and conquer the whole city. I believe, I believe in God, as He is the father of all men, preserver of all life, inspirer of all that is good. I believe in God, and now to this faith in God and faith in the right, what is the next rock we lay down? See how this will fit: **“Add unto your faith, virtue.”**

Virtue — courage. Now, don't you see that if a man believes he is right, the very next thing he

wants is a courage that dares to do right and dares to be true? I want to say at this point that I am not talking about physical courage. I am afraid that Christian people are sometimes physical cowards. I do not want a man to be a physical coward, but above all things deliver me from a moral coward. I want to tell you that I have searched this book from Genesis to Revelation and I find that God never did choose a man to do a great work for him but that that man was game from head to foot. God despises a coward.

### **MORAL COURAGE**

Moral courage! Physical courage is not much. Physical courage will march me right up into the blazing mouth of a cannon without shaking a muscle in my body, but that is not much. I have known generals and colonels and majors and captains and privates in this last war that never had a muscle quiver in front of a cannon. Yet these same men after coming home from the war would quake and wince and whine in the presence of public opinion. Afraid of that! Afraid of that!

And I will tell you another thing a fellow needs is courage. There are a great many things in this world that stand looking a fellow in the face and shake their fist at him, and if he ain't got the grit he will run, no doubt about it And I say to-night every man that walks out before this world and would make it purer and better, that man shall, like his Lord, have his Gethsemane, and his Pilate's bar, and his Judas Iscariot and his Simon Peter and his cross.

I tell you another thing. I would rather face every cannon in America to-night as far as I am personally concerned, than to face the opinion of the elite society of St. Louis. The hollow, miserable, heartless, godless old wretch that society is. Why, you can get on the street cars of this town, so I have been told, that are filled with theater-going, dancing, godless members of the church and Sam Jones is their text from the time you step on until you step off.

Some say he is a brute. Some say he is as ignorant as a Southern duck. Some say he is a vicious man. Some say one thing, and some another thing, and they shell the woods for a fellow. It is like the barking of a "fise" dog after a fast train — you can bear the little fellow bark, but you cannot see him.

Right is right, and stand to it, and when the last storm of passion has swept over, God is with you. That is more than can be against you, and that is all that you need. You attack the ball-rooms in this town and every dancing, worldly member of the church, and sinner, too, turns his guns right loose upon you.

### **PERSONAL TO SAM JONES**

And I will tell you another thing. I want to say this to encourage you — good Christian brethren that need just a little more backbone — when they tell you Jones is low-bred, don't you believe them, for it is a lie! When they tell you that Jones is ignorant, you tell them that won't do; that Jones will go into a class with any of them to-morrow, and let a professor examine them on any subject. What do you say to that?

And when they tell you that Jones came from bad stock, you tell them that a purer, nobler

woman God never made than my mother, and that a better, purer man God never let live than my precious father, I am from as good stock as God ever made. I want to tell you right now that I never was in society. I reckon that one reason for this is that I have been poor all my life, and they would have objected to me on that account. They would never have let me in, anyhow. They would have known that I would have told on them, and they don't want any tales told out of school. I have found that out. But I did not mean to say anything about society now. We shall take that up later. We will shake it, till it is ready to be turned loose when we get through with it.

There are things in your city day after day and night after night that are enough to make a thousand mothers and fathers in this town call a halt, and say: "You had better stop right here. This thing has gone far enough." I tell you, mothers and fathers, if you will open your eyes and look around you a little you will call "Halt! Halt! Halt! I will shoot you down if you take another step." And I know when a man begins to talk about these things, I know how little Miss Finicky and old brother Finicky and the whole devil's crowd will sit upon him. I have been around before.

### **PREACHING LIKE HIS MASTER**

Courage! Courage! Jesus Christ, the great exemplar in Christianity, he preached his own gospel, and when he did, do you recollect that on one occasion a vast multitude turned their backs on him and walked off in disgust, and Jesus turned to his disciples and said: "**Will ye also go away?**" And Simon Peter said: "**Lord to whom shall we go? For thou has the words of eternal life.**"

I do not believe I ever preached the gospel as plainly as my Master preached it, for I have never had a congregation to "rush out" on me, and if ever I preach to a St. Louis' congregation and see the people jump up and run out of the house, I will jump up too and "holler," "Glory to God! I am preaching like my Master now." But that would not be any joke on me. Everywhere I have ever worked, God bless you, they would say you people in St. Louis were so mean you would not hear Sam Jones. They would brag on me and cuss you. That is about the way the thing would go.

Courage that dares to be right and dares to be true. If a thing is wrong, fight it! Fight it! If it is right, stand up for it, if every man on earth is against you. Stand and fight and fight and fight, and when you go down and think you are alone, I tell you that when the din and smoke of the battle has blown away and you open your eyes you will find God and the angels and good men standing around you.

Courage, brother! Now what does this mean? One time Peter's courage failed him, and of all the times in the world it was the time that Peter's courage ought to have held good. Yonder his Lord, defenseless and alone, given over to his enemies, stood before the cruel crowd, and they spat upon him and buffeted him and platted a crown of thorns and pressed it on his temple until the blood ran down his cheeks. And Peter stood there looking at it, no doubt, until his very blood boiled. And there was the Son of God and the Son of Man without a friend in the world he came to redeem.

There Peter stood out in the distance, and when the fatal moment came the people approached him and said: **“You are one of his disciples,”** and Peter answered: **“No, I am not one of his disciples.”** And then again they approached him and said: **“You are one of his disciples.”** He said: **“No, I am not one of his disciples.”** And again, a little girl approached him and said: **“You are one of his disciples,”** and Peter cursed and swore with an oath and said: **“I do not know him.”**

### **WHAT A GRAND OCCASION**

Brother, I do not object to the way God's word is written, but I have wished a thousand times that when my Master stood there, without a friend in the world, and they approached Peter, I have wished that Peter had rushed up by the Son of God and said: “I am one of his disciples and I will die by his aide.” If he had done that I believe that God would have rushed every angel in heaven down to Peter's side and not have suffered a hair of his head to be touched. And we have forsaken our Master when he did not have a friend in the world!

Courage! Courage! I tell you, this sickly sentimentalism that we have that God's people are a peaceful, quiet and get-out-the-devil's-way sort of people is a mistake. Down in my State I have been preaching prohibition, and in Georgia I have gone into those counties where prohibition was being fought the hardest and said: “Brethren of the church, take a stand and hold it. Do not let a barkeeper that has not got more than three gallons of whisky, and that bought on credit, come out on the square on election day with an old rusty pistol in his hand that hasn't been loaded since the war, and curse two or three times and talk loud and run every member of the church out of town. God have mercy on you pusillanimous wretches,” said I, “Hold your ground and tell them that if they can die for their infernal traffic you can die for those precious children.” And I said: “Go on and God's approval will rest with you.”

### **THE POWER OF COURAGE**

There was a day when one of God's armies was battling with the enemies of God. Joshua, the commander, was fighting with all the ransomed powers at his back, and the enemy was being beaten down in front of the ranks of God's hosts. But Joshua looked up and saw that the sun was going down, and he looked up and said: “Oh, God, if you will give me two or three hours more sunshine I'll put this army to flight and will win a victory that shall make thine armies famous forever.” And God turned and told the sun to go back or the dial, and “don't you move an inch until Joshua routes this army root and branch and sweeps it almost from the face of the earth.”

And I tell you God will make the sun stand still in the heavens and the moon not move in the Valley of Ajalon, if God's people ever have the courage to stand up and dare to be right and dare to be true. Well, what if you do get killed in the right? It is just a nigh cut to Heaven if you are all right. Don't you see? Getting scared and running from Heaven! What do you think of that? Well, I never made much of a practice of being afraid of folks before I had religion, and, thank God, I am not now afraid of the universe if I am in the right. Sometimes I am afraid I ain't exactly right, but if God says “Go it,” I know I am not afraid.

Courage that dares to do right. Add to your faith the courage of your convictions. I have told

them all over the country, these cotton-string backbone fellows in the Church of God, with a little old slack-twisted cotton string run up the back, and two or three ribs knit to it on one side, who call themselves Christians, you know. God bless you, I want to be about 95 per cent backbone. That makes good proportion for a man that proposes to do anything.

Afraid! Afraid! Afraid! Afraid of nothing but the wrong. I will do the right and trust in God. I will stand up for the right and do the right.

**“And to courage add knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience.”**

### CONCLUDING WORDS

I wish I had time to run over all these words, but my hour is out and I will just close with this last thought:

**“And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.”**

Now as the first rock we lay down faith in God. The next rock is courage that dares to execute what we know is right. The next rock is knowledge. You want to know how to do it. The next is temperance. You want a regulating force, and the next is patience, toward God and all mankind. The next is godliness; the next brotherly kindness, and then charity, the keystone we drop into the arch and the building is finished, and God stoops down and puts one hand under it and the other on the top and transplants that mansion to the beautiful streets of the city of God. And there is my **“house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”**

God help us to build on that platform, and build upon that line, and by and by we shall be transplanted in our eternal home. The fact is that when you begin right and go on right, your house is not really moved. God just runs the streets of the New Jerusalem right along in front of where you build, and your house is forever on the streets of the city of God, and it is there to stay forever and ever. God bless you all.

And now I want every man in this house, earnest brother hear me, every man that would build on this pattern as a Christian man, whether you are in the church or not, will you conscientiously stand up with me and say, “Sir, I tell you in response to the truth you have preached, I want to build on that pattern, and, God helping me, I will do it.”

Now, every person here that feels that way, stand up. Let us see how many men would build on that platform. (All in the hall rose and Mr. Jones dismissed them with the benediction).

**~ end of chapter 8 ~**

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