4-1953

The Texas Herald, V. 4, No. 4, April 1953

J. A. Dennis

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/txherald

Part of the Christian Denominations and Sects Commons, and the Christianity Commons

Recommended Citation

http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/txherald/41

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Historical Pentecostal Periodicals at Digital Showcase. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Texas Herald by an authorized administrator of Digital Showcase. For more information, please contact mroberts@oru.edu.
WHAT CAN PRAYING DO?

GOD'S LITTLE SPLINTER

I'm just a little splinter in God's cathedral grand
Yet He has guided me over sea and over land.
Loving everybody, hating every sin, praying that
Each child of God will find His light within!

WORRY! WHY WORRY?

Worry! Why worry? What can worrying do?
It never stops a trouble from overtaking you.
It gives you indigestion and sleepless hours at night,
And fills with gloom the days, however fair and bright,
It puts a frown upon the face, a grumble in one's tone,
It makes you unfit to live with others and unfit to live alone!
Worry! Why worry? What can worrying do?
It never stops a trouble from overtaking you.

Pray! Why pray? What can praying do?
Prayer can really alter things; it makes life anew.
It's good for the digestion, gives perfect sleep at night,
And on the very gloomiest days sheds rays of golden light.
It puts a smile upon your face, a love note in your tone,
It makes you fit to live with others and fit to live alone.
Pray! Why pray? What can praying do?
It can bring GOD down from Heaven to love and work through YOU!
THE HOUSE OF PRAYER

April 15th marked the close of two years ministry of the House of Prayer in Austin. April 12th ended one full of radio programs, "Words of Life."

During these two years we have endeavored not only to preach His Word in all its fullness, but to witness to the truth that God heals the sick today, God baptizes with His Holy Spirit today, and God provides our every need if we are wholly His.

God is a good God. He has been especially good to us these two years. At the House of Prayer, in the Texas Herald, and on the Words of Life program, no one has been asked for money, only God; we have bought nothing on time; we have accepted no loans; we have trusted and waited upon God for our every need. And He has supplied that need. We thank all of you who have helped, with your prayers and your gifts. And especially do we thank God for propelling us to that His Word is true.

Now, we feel led to close the House of Prayer and discontinue the Words of Life program, at least for the summer. We feel impressed to quit TALKING for a while, get alone with God and LISTEN to Him more closely, to know His will for us in the days ahead and for the power to do His will.

We plan to accept some speaking invitations, attend some camps and revival campaigns, and to be in quiet retreat for a time.

God willing, we plan to reopen the House of Prayer in the fall, probably at a new location.

The Texas Herald will continue. We thank you for your generous gifts to its ministry, and for the testimonies to its blessing the lives of those who read it.

We will be happy to hear from any of you who care to write us. Please address us, Box 2156 Capitol Station, Austin, Texas.

The Lord Bless you,

Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Dennis

FEAR NOT

Most everyone in the world today lives in the shadow of fear. High and low, rich and poor, black and white, Christian or pagan, people are afraid.

We fear danger, accidents, sickness, poverty, loss of jobs, insecurity. We fear depression, Communism, war. We fear robbers and thieves and hi-jackers. We fear ridicule, public opinion, loss of friends. But most of all we fear Death, which is the father of all lesser fears.

The spectre of death casts its shadow over our lives from the cradle to the grave. Why are we afraid? Because we have sinned. Because we do not fully know and fully trust God.

It is understandable why non-Christians should live in fear, because the wages of sin is death. But fear is no coat for a Christian to wear. Jesus repeatedly commanded "Fear not!" "Why are ye fearful?" "Where is your faith?"

John said, 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear.' (I John 4: 18)

Christians do not need to be afraid. In fact, it is a sin to be afraid. If your life is ruled by fear, then you are not fully Christian. You need to fall on your knees and ask God to forgive your fears and give you His gift of faith.

The Bible promises Divine Protection, against harm, evil, accident, enemies, pre-mature death; just as much as it promises Salvation, forgiveness for sin, healing, Divine health, the Holy Spirit, guidance, the supply of our every needs, or eternal life in Heaven.

If you are afraid it is because you do not know the Word of God or, knowing it, you have not CLAIMED the Divine Protection. The Holy Word promises to all who trust and obey God.

The outstanding passage on protection in the Bible is found in the Ninety-first Psalm. Let's read it again:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." (Psalm 91)

"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." (Psalm 91)

Do you DWELL in the secret place of the most high? Do you LIVE in Him? Not just a Sunday visit with Him, but LIVE in Him? If so, then He is your fortress. In a fortress you are safe. The enemy cannot get in to harm you.

And what protection does this Psalm promise to those who DWELL in Him?

First, He promises to deliver them from the snare of the fowler. The devil is continually setting traps and snares for the unwary feet of God's children. But God will deliver you from the devil's tricks. He also promises to deliver you from the noisome pestilence. Do you suffer from some pestilence, some disease? He promises deliverance and protection from all such diseases, if you live in Him, believe His promises, and CLAIM His protection.

Like a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, so the Father longs to gather His children under His everlasting arms, if the children will only run to Him at the first sign of danger and stay in His keeping. The mother hen furnishes protection, guidance, warmth, shelter and food to her chickens.

Are you afraid at night? Of robbers, of the dark, of unknown fears? You need not be, if you will claim His promise, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night."

Are you afraid of accidents, of speeding cars, of train wrecks? He promises that you shall not fear for the "arrow that flieth by
The devil is the serpent. Jesus offers protection against the devil and all his demons. And NOTHING, by ANY MEANS shall hurt you! Could anything be more sweeping and wonderful than that? Hallelujah! Paul said:

"In all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." (Rom. 8: 37)

Why does God promise all this protection to His children?

"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high because he hath known my name."

Have you set your love upon Him? Do you “love God with all your heart and soul and strength and mind,” which Jesus said was the first and great commandment? (Mark 12: 30) John says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4: 18)

Do you “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness”? If you do, then you can claim His promised care. (Matt. 6: 33)

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him."

Again and again in this Psalm, God repeats the divine promise of His protecting care, so there will be no doubt in your heart, so you will believe Him and trust Him.

"With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."

If you are wholly His you can claim a normal span of life and thus rid yourself of all fear of a premature death by sickness or accident or foul play, and you can truly see in your own experience, the Lord’s salvation.

How do you claim this Divine Protection?

First, you must believe it. To strengthen your faith and to rid yourself of the sin of unbelief, read this 91st Psalm at least once a day. Not only read it, study it and meditate upon it, pray over each verse, each promise; ask God to make it real to you; look up references to companion promises in the New Testament, from the lips of Jesus and Paul.

Second, you must bring yourself under the conditions of this promise. You must ABIDE—not just visit, but ABIDE—live, in His presence, daily, hourly, at work, at play, reading, writing, talking; all must be in His service—to His glory.

Third, you must Die, die to self, to live for Christ. Death is the father of all lesser fears. Death and fear are caused by the devil. When you die to self, are crucified with Christ, and can say with Paul, “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) When you can say that, all fear of death is gone, and with that fear go most all the lesser fears that torment you.

Peter says, “Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?” (1 Peter 3: 13)

When the disciples were terrified by the storm that threatened to capsize their boat on the sea of Galilee, Jesus rebuked the wind and sea and also rebuked the disciples, saying, “Why are ye fearful; O ye of little faith?” (Matt. 8: 26)

Why are YOU fearful? Do you believe God’s Word? Do you belong to Him? Do you believe He is able to protect you from any and all harm? Do you ABIDE in Him and does He abide in you? Then you can lay down at night with peace in your heart, knowing that God and His angels are on the job and that “He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” (Ps. 121: 4) And you can say:

“I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.” (Ps. 4: 8)

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Tim. 1: 7)
MIRACLES

(Fifth in a Series on Miracles)

Are miracles contrary to God’s laws, the laws of nature? To work a “miracle” of healing, or guidance or of provision, must God break the great laws by which He rules the universe, the sun, moon and stars in their courses, the earth in its orbit, the growth of grass and trees and men?

God has created the heavens and the earth and man. He made all these things for man’s benefit. He made them to work, day and night, year in and year out, after God breaks the great rules of the universe, the sun, moon and stars for man’s benefit. He made them to work, or it will be ruined. But he doesn’t fully understand.

So, while you are busy with your newspaper the boy plays with his train. It purrs around and around and he is content. But before long, the purring stops and later you hear a wail of complaint: “Daddy, this old train’s no good. It won’t go!”

When you go to see what the trouble is, you discover that your son, ignorant of the limited capacity of the train has decided to ship himself by freight, and the over-load has caused the car coupling to pull out and smashed off a wheel. The train is wrecked. It won’t go. He has broken the laws of its intention and its limits.

What do you do? Do you angrily tell your son that, since he has disobeyed you and caused the train to break down, there is nothing you can do about it, that you’ll just have to throw the whole system into the ash can?

Or do you sit down and patiently replace the wheel, straighten out the coupling, set the train going again and repeat your warning instructions to your son, hoping that he will soon learn how to operate the train?

You do the latter, of course. Have the laws of electricity, of the train been broken? Yes, but not beyond repair, and only temporarily. The electric wires of the home are able to absorb the minor shorting that the train’s accident has caused, and the train, as well as the lights, will still work.

Is it any more unreasonable to suppose that God can do similar things with the human body which is His creation as well as the electric train.

So then, when a man who was born into this world with a perfect body, a body created to live and grow by certain very rigid rules of eating and drinking, thinking and loving, working and sleeping; when that man breaks the laws of God in his body; when he drinks, smokes, overeats, under-eats, over-sleeps, under-prays, and ceases to study and obey God’s Word and God’s laws; and when that body, created in the image and likeness of God, breaks down and its organs refuse to work any longer; and that man sees his mistakes and comes to his Father as a little child and cries out, “Oh, God, forgive me for tampering with this marvelous body you’ve given me, forgive me for breaking your laws of health, your laws of love, your laws of obedience and prayer; forgive me and fix me up so my body will work again!”

Must God stand aside as the skeptics say He must, and say: “No, son, I told you how to keep it working. I gave you a Book of Rules for living, but you disobeyed. Now there is nothing left to do but throw you in the ash can and let them haul you away.”

Is that all God can do and yet you can fix up your little boy’s toy and make it work again though he, too, has disobeyed and broken one of God’s fundamental laws, the law of power, the law of electricity? Do you say that is all God can do?

If you do, then you don’t know God and you don’t know His power and His love. God can also take that child of His in His arms and say, “Look here, son, let me see what is the matter with my little boy. Don’t you know you must obey your Father? But let’s see if I can fix it. Yes, it doesn’t seem to be damaged beyond repair. Now, if you just wait a minute and help me, I’ll soon have you going as good as new again. And this time please try to remember and obey what I tell you so you won’t have this trouble again.”

Jesus said to the woman taken in sin: “Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.” (John 8:11)

But you say that isn’t fair, that’s cheating on the rules and on those who do obey the rules. I don’t know whether it is unfair or more than fair, but I know it is loving and God is love. And I know God does it, is doing it wherever He can find one of His children in trouble and where that child will run to Him in faith and love and repentance and say: “Father, fix me up this time and I won’t disobey you anymore!”

God has always done that. He did it for Moses and Elijah and Elisha; He did it at the hands of Jesus and Peter and Paul. He did it at the hands of St. Francis and Wesley and Wigglesworth. And He’s still doing it today.

Thank God we have a God who is bigger than anything He created and is able to fix up anything He made, if the owner will let Him.

Break one of His own laws? He doesn’t have to break any of His own laws. What was the purpose of the little boy’s train? Wasn’t it made to run around the track? And could it run around the track after the little boy had ignorantly or wilfully broken it by breaking the rules of its power?

What was the purpose of Dad’s fixing it up? So it could fulfill its original purpose and run around the track again.

What is God’s purpose for your body? Is it not made for life and health—not sickness and death? Can you fulfill that purpose when you are broken down in health and lying on a bed or spending your days in a wheelchair? What does God do when He breaks your body? He restores you to your natural health so that His original purpose for your life can be accomplished; so you can live and serve Him and obey Him and witness for Him. That’s His purpose for you—just not that you might spend so many selfish years on this earth, eating and drinking and spending your substance in riotous living—but to serve Him, to glorify Him, to witness for Him, to tell others about Him.

And, whenever you come back to the Heavenly Father with a sincere prayer in your heart of repentance and a sincere will to get up and serve God when He heals you and break His rules no more; God is always anxious to heal you, more anxious than you are to be healed.

Jesus Christ cried out, “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.” (Matt. 9: 37-38)

God is advertising for workers in His vineyard, He’s calling for laborers for His harvest, He’s desperately in need of help in His kingdom. And He is glad to take you up and fix you up so you can be of service to Him if you come with that sincere purpose in your heart.

Don’t come begging God to heal your stomach so you can enjoy your beer more, don’t come begging God to heal your throat until you’re ready to give up those deadly cigarettes that cause your throat trouble. Don’t come begging God to heal your arthritis or cancer until you’re ready to give up that resentment and anger and hate that caused them. But come telling God you’re sorry for your sins and the mistakes that are at the root of your trouble. Tell Him when He heals you you’ll serve and witness and work for Him the rest of your life, and tell Him you love Him and He’ll heal you.

And you’ll run again, like the little boy’s train, and God’s laws will none of them be broken—just hold up a little bit so that His one big law can be fulfilled; the law of

(Turn to Page 8)
Church? What should it do, for what should it stand, what should it offer, and what deciding those questions, as many arc dissatisfied with the present program of the church. convert to take the place of those who

"the to 'interest' members and non-members in studies and studies and never graduates, and Christianity and the doctrine of the church lo. these many years, gaining a few young to those who have heard the same sermons, brief. the church is a student body that drop out through death or indifference. In

On all your church, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. As Christ looks at a serene and static church today, feebly protesting the horrors of the modern world, with no clear conception of what to do about it; hopelessly entangled in a compromise with both business and government; looking to business for its livelihood and to government for its sanction; I wonder if He is not again impelled to cry out, "How long shall I suffer you?" (Mark 9:10) "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" (Luke 6:46)

What was Paul's conception of the Church? Why did he travel from place to place at the risk of his life to establish churches? What was their relation to the Kingdom of Heaven?

Before we answer these questions we must go back to the Founder of the church, Jesus Christ. Do not the legalists of today err, who insist that since the church was not founded until Pentecost, we cannot learn about it from Jesus? but must look only to events following Pentecost, especially to Paul, to learn the true pattern of the church? After all, whose church is it? And who founded it?

"On this rock I will build my church" Matt. 16:18

If Christ's church, what kind of church will it be? May we not well look at His life, consider His teachings, catch His spirit a little more than we do, to see what kind of church His church would be?

And Christ did not leave us groping in the dark. He left us a pattern, a miniature example of His church. He, with the twelve, were the pattern for the church. True, it was not fully organized or formerly launched until Pentecost, when the disciples caught the Spirit of the Founder, but for three years they were the Church de Facto, with Jesus, by precept and example, showing them what the church should be when instituted.

The church, as portrayed by Christ, had four vital functions. First, it was a place of worship. Jesus put the stamp of His approval upon formal worship services by attending the services of His day.

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." (Luke 4:16)

Jesus knew that formality of worship was not enough unless the spirit of worship was present in the heart of the worshippers. "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

The disciples continued the worship program in Christ's church.

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people, And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved (Acts. 2: 46-47)

Paul recognized the place of worship in the Church. He attended worship services whether on the last or the first day of the week, whether indoors or out on the banks of a river. (Acts 13: 14-16; 16:13; 20:7)

The second function of Christ's church as demonstrated by Himself and the disciples, was fellowship. There was a merging of personalities, a losing of individualities in the group spirit. (John 17: 22-23; John 13: 34-35)

"Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love;"
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."
—John Fawcett

After Pentecost the disciples enjoyed this fellowship.

"And the multitude that believed were of one heart and one soul." (Acts 4:32)

The Master's prayer for them had been answered—-they were one. That is fellowship, the kind that our churches rarely know.

To Paul, fellowship was also an integral purpose of the church. (II Cor. 6:14; Phil. 1:3-9)

The third purpose of Christ's church was preaching and teaching.

"And He opened His mouth and taught them." (Matt. 5:2) "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." (Matt. 28:19)

The first church continued to teach.

"And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42)

Paul placed much emphasis on teaching. (Rom. 12:6-7; I Cor. 4:17; Col. 1:28; Col. 3:16; II Tim. 2:24) He believed in preaching.

"It please God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (I Cor. 1:21)

But would Paul approve the rich splendor of some men of today who live in mansions, draw large salaries and drive chauffeured cars, and dare call themselves "ministers" (servants, or those who minister)? Do these words of Paul never trouble them: "laboring night and day," "not burdening others.

The disciples followed their Master in this respect; they were servants; they put others first. (Acts 4:32-35; 11:29)

Paul gave his life in serving others, and taught his followers to do likewise. (Gal. 5:13-14; Rom. 12:9-15)

The Church, then, according to the commands of Christ and the pattern demonstrated by Him and the disciples and followed by Paul, is a gathering together of a group of believers in Jesus for worshipping God, fellowship with one another, teaching their brethren the Christian duties and preaching the gospel to outsiders, and in serving each other and mankind.

The church was not the Kingdom. It was formed for the purpose of spreading the gospel of the Kingdom, and to help folks live as Citizens of that Kingdom. The weekly worship service including the Communion or breaking of bread, reminded them constantly of their Heavenly King who had died for them, and was an occasion of renewing their pledge of allegiance to Him.

Its preaching and teaching functions included informing and interesting others in the Kingdom as well as instructing its citizens as to their privileges and duties.

Its fellowship was the answer to the basic hunger of man for company with those of like minds, kindred spirits, mutual hopes, those who love him better than themselves.

"Forsooth, brothers, fellowship is heaven, and the lack of fellowship is hell; fellowship is life and the lack of fellowship is death; and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them. Therefore, I bid you not dwell in hell, but in heaven—upon earth, which is a part of heaven and forsooth no foul part."—William Morris

The early Christians needed this fellowship, this comfort, this encouragement, this inspiration, in order to meet the ridicule, ostracism and persecution which was their daily experience. And this persecution in turn drew them closer together in their common cause, their common suffering. Those who have shared pleasures are friends but only those who have suffered together for a great cause really know fellowship.

"They cannot heal who have not suffered much,
For only sorrow sorrow understands;
They will not come for healing at our touch.
Who have not seen the scars upon our hands."
—Author Unknown

The church's main purpose to which the others contributed and made possible, was the sharing of the benefits of the Kingdom with the world. This was summed up in the command of the Great Commission.

The purpose, then, of the Church was to build the Kingdom, strengthen the Kingdom, extend the Kingdom, until God should rule the world.

Is the church today building the Kingdom? Hardly. The church is trying desperately to build the church, forgetting Christ's warning that "He that saveth his life shall lose it." A afraid of losing its life in the hope of saving it in the Kingdom. A afraid to lose its denominational identity, to find it again in a larger life together. A afraid to give up its wealth and prestige and become a servant for Christ.

Laymen are integrally a part of the world that the Kingdom plainly was meant to supercede, the world of business and government, hence they seem bound and helpless to push a program that might endanger their places in business and society, their profits or their political security.

Ministers likewise are bound to the status quo, for should they dare proclaim anything radically different they might find themselves among the unemployed. They, like the unjust steward in Christ's parable (Luke 16:1-12) consider, "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed" and so must, like him become an accomplice in covering up the true debt the Master laid upon each of us.

Men inside and outside the church are beginning to wonder if Jesus meant what He said about some things that are vital to this earth, or if He only dealt his metaphors, speaking "spiritually," and of life in Heaven. If the latter, then Christ as an example is a deceit and His dream of building the Kingdom here a delusion.

Where have we missed the way? One thing we should remember is that the church is here to serve and not to be served. She has a duty to the people of the community rather than that they have a duty to support the church. Christ came "not to be ministered unto but to minister." (Mark 10:45)

The church today has gone to seed on Sunday Services at the expense of weekday service; on preaching and teaching Christian theory rather than demonstrating honesty, loving, unselfish Christian living.

Then we have tried too long to do things in our own strength and in our own way. Theology, higher criticism, psychology, comparison with worldly methods, have failed and left us a sterile church. We have lost the Holy Spirit.
No! In God's name, No! If we do we're lost as Russia is lost unless she changes. Christ is the only solution, the only hope for the world, the only answer! His program the only program that will save the church or civilization. His methods are the only methods that will save His church. The church is the only means of building His Kingdom!

But the church must be reborn or fall. A house divided against itself cannot stand; nor can a church half Christian and half pagan long endure. Great forces in the world would make it pagan. As an aftermath of war, dictatorship or semi-dictatorship prevails in most countries. This means the tightening up on all liberties including religious liberty. Sooner or later the church, which continues to compromise and accept shackles, will either rebel, or acquiesce to the point where it ceases to be Christ's church. And then, because Christ's church will never die, will arise a new nucleus, a Gideon's band, a seed, that will defy any authority except Christ's and will stand over again the hard and dangerous battle for truth that the early disciples staged. Most good comes out of suffering, It will take suffering to bring into life this new church. We have indeed become soft in America, especially soft are we Christians when we think of facing danger or ridicule or jail for our faith. But it will come to that again. And on the ashes of the shaken down, divided church that has failed humanity and the world, will arise a new church of Jesus Christ, an all-the-way-with-Him Church, a world-wide Church that knows no national boundaries, no denominational divisions, no race distinction, no creed or ritual except the love and humility and suffering of Jesus.

Oh, Church of Christ, Awake!

"Come out from among them and be ye separate." (II Cor. 6:17)

We have the answer the world is seeking, waiting for, fighting for. To the church has been entrusted the keys of the Kingdom. "Whosoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16:19)

We have the answer, locked up in the church! We take the keys, open the sanctuary doors on Sunday, let folks in for a glimpse of the Christ, and then carefully shut and lock the doors and go our respective ways.

"Ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." (Luke 11:52)

Dare we longer keep silent on the vital issues of life, to save our jobs, our respectable reputations, our prestige, our pride, yea, even our lives? If we do Christ will repudiate us just as He did the Pharisees and lawyers, the religious leaders of His day, because they put the church before the needs of men, and will give His program to a nucleus who dare to be what His church should be, and then we start the long hard climb upward again, with the few true Christians persecuted, not only by the world, but by organized religion itself, as in Paul's day.

Do you say this can never happen, that we're His Church? I wonder.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7: 20)

What, then, to do?

The Church must confess her sins and begin to be Christ's Church. She must call her leaders to heart searching prayer and repentance. She must prayerfully examine her program and ask of each item, "Would Christ be doing this if He were here?"

She must lose her differences and become One in building the Kingdom.

She must drop her race prejudice and demand that her members recognize that God is no respecter of persons.

The Church must break with the State, in America as elsewhere, and cease being an accomplice in war.

The Church must break with business and seek first the Kingdom rather than wealth and position and power.

The Church must give up the delusion that the United States is a "Christian" Nation and that to be a good American is all that is required of a follower of Christ. We have adopted "Americanism" as our standard of conduct rather than Christ-like-ness.

The Church must return to the high standard of Jesus on the questions of conduct, divorce and money, and urge these standards upon her members.

The Church neds to wake up to the fact that it is not necessary to be a college graduate or a theologian to be a Christian, or a power in His Kingdom. Theologians often fiddle with fine phrases while the world burns. They quibble over intricate interpretations and overlook simple commands that a twelve year old can understand.

Education can be a great aid in teaching the theory of Christianity, but is not a requisite of demonstrating how one lives who has Christ in his heart. Christianity to be real must be caught rather than taught, and people learn by seeing much more than by being told.

Jesus passed up the theologians of His day to choose unlearned fishermen as the leaders in His Church. He didn't need men of wisdom, He had all the wisdom necessary for the movement. He did not need men filled with their own importance or crammed with contemporary learning. He needed only simple, child-like men who would forget self and obey Him.

"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not in no wise enter therein." (Luke 18:17)

PAGE SEVEN
The Church has set apart the ministry as the sole guardians of the Truth, a separate hierarchy, similar to that of priests, elders and scribes of Jesus’ day, based on schooling, degrees, titles, rather than on the Spirit of Christ in their hearts.

The true leader in any church is the one who lives nearest like Christ; the real minister is the one who best serves his fellows, “not for filthy lucre” but because he loves them.

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (John 13:35)

The Church must next call her members to self-examining prayer. Each must ask his God, “At what points am I failing to live as Jesus would have me live?” This must be done in private prayer, then in prayer groups, where failures can be confessed and loving advice sought.

Individuals and groups must prayerfully scrutinize their vocations, beginning each with his own. “Is my job Christian?” “Is this work building or serving the Kingdom, or helping mankind?” “Is it something Jesus would do or approve?” “What about my working with a person outside the Church, etc.?”

Next the Church must examine the life of the community State and Nation. Where is it not in accord with His Kingdom? I

Why is it that Charles Sheldon’s book, “In His Steps” has sold more copies than any other book but the Bible? Is it because it gives a picture of what the world secretly longs to see happen in the church: the doing exactly what Jesus would do? Why should it be thought a thing incredible for modern church members to act the way the characters in that book are made to act? It is no more than every one who calls himself a Christian has pledged himself to do. When you and I stood before His altar and accepted Christ as our Saviour and Example we then and there pledged that the rest of our lives we would follow “In His Steps.”

When this is done by a church group in real life, things will happen very much as they happened in that simple but great book. Sheldon’s imaginative account is at best but a weak copy of the Book of Acts of the Apostles where Paul and the disciples, by taking Jesus’ words at their face value and following them literally, “turned the world upside down.”

Second, a church that would really be His Church would search the New Testament individually and in groups to find the answer to each question raised regarding the church program or the lives of its members. First Christ’s words and actions would be studied for that answer, then the practice of the first church, then the life and writings of Paul.

His Church would be much in prayer, individually and in groups.

Then there would be group discussion of each problem. Not arguing; humbly seeking, not opinions but a group vision of His will.

How would this program affect the services in the church? It would probably mean a Sunday morning service similar to the present one. But the vital breath of reality would permeate the whole service. Each lesson would of necessity be geared to the question, “How does this apply to me, John Doe, and my pledge to do only what He would do?” Sunday School class periods would be the most part be used to prayerfully find the answers to the problems that faced the members in the week that had passed or the week ahead.

It would bring the minister’s sermon down from the clouds of wordy theory, to an humble and simple facing of facts, a sense of awful responsibility for the day by day decisions of the group before him, as he attempts to lead them to the correct answer to the question, “What would Jesus do, in my place?”

It would most likely change the Sunday night service entirely. The evening could be devoted to prayer and a forum or round table discussion of individual, group and community problems that must be faced in the light of His word.

It would surely mean a fellowship of prayer some night during the week as the group met to strengthen the faith of those working with their bare hands, perhaps facing prison or death, to discover the Kingdom; those unemployed or sick and dead because of sin.

The Church would search the New Testament for that answer, then the practice of the first church, then the life and teachings of Paul.

It would mean a sharing of resources with those unemployed or sick or destitute, either in the local group or in other places, all above one’s actual needs being available to others.

Do you say that is not far different from the present church program? No, only as different as an imitation stone from the genuine diamond, only as different as the photograph of a man from that man in the living flesh. We have the form, the shell, the outline; but the life, the reality has gone out of it. Why? Because we have refused to face the hard facts, have compromised whenever a costly decision arose, have refused to face the Cross of self-surrender, self-crucifixion.

In Christ’s Church, the members would be approaching the ways of the early disciples. They met for worship, the breaking of bread and the studying of His word, and for preaching and prayer. They then went out and lived as citizens of the Kingdom, fearlessly, unselfishly, loving, serving, resisting tyranny and injustice and sin.

Meeting opposition, as we would today, they met often to testify of their experiences and to comfort and inspire one another. In prayer together their strength and courage were renewed to go forth again as Citizens of the Kingdom.

They were meeting the realities of every day life: occupation, property, laws, treatment of neighbors and enemies, law suits, threats, arrests—in the light of “What would Jesus do? What would He want me to do or say?”

When the church begins to do these things, Christianity will again be a reality with us; a vital, living, dangerous, but glorious reality, as it was in the days of Paul and the first disciples, and again the Lord will be adding to the church daily.

It will demand and get the best of men for it will demand their all. Differences will melt away in prayer and denominations will be driven together for mutual protection.

Many members will drop out as they find this way too hard, too strict, requiring too much surrender, but the remaining few will be the stronger for their going.

Business interests and governments will oppose the rising strength of this virile church that laughs at danger and rejoices in persecution, for it will threaten all authority which is contrary to Christ’s Way. Once more His followers will begin turning the world upside down to build the Kingdom of Heaven.

If we do these things we will again be Christ’s Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

And, Christian minister, it all must wait on you; your complete surrender, your self-crucifixion, your breaking with the ways of men so that you can show men the Way of God. Are you ready to give up your comfortable parsonage if necessary, your car, your place of prestige and popularity in the community, and face ridicule, persecution, poverty, working with your bare hands, perhaps facing prison or death, to follow Christ literally and show men the Way? When you are, His Kingdom will begin to come and you will know the joy and fellowship of His suffering as did Paul.

(Continued Next Month)

MIRACLES
(From Page 4)

Great Love.

Jesus said: “The Son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” (Luke 9: 56)

God didn’t put us here with no recourse for our sins, no repair shop for our accidents. He made His Son the Great Physician to bind up and to heal and to make alive again, that which has been broken and sick and dead because of sin.
Today I want to study with you the immortal story of the Prodigal Son as told by Jesus and recorded in Luke, the 15th chapter:

"A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself unto the citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And I am no more worthy to be called thy servant. "And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no longer worthy to be called thy son. "But the father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it: and let us eat, and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." (Luke 15:11-24)

All men are prodigals, but not all have gotten sufficiently tired of living with the hogs and eating the husks of life to come home to the Father, own up to their mistakes and ask to be taken back into the Family of God. We are all prodigals, or have been. You may not have gone off into a far country and spent all your substance in riotous, sinfulness, you may never have gotten drunk in your life, you may always have been a respectable and respected member of society or the church. But just the same, "all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God." (Rom. 3:23)

Everyone of us has received from the Father, our inheritance: this body, this mind, this soul, these talents, and we have gone on our own wilful way, doing things our way, spending this energy and these talents in the way we thought best, being independent, breaking loose from the Father's parental authority, to do as we pleased. That's what the prodigal son did. He wanted to be independent. He wanted to get out on his own, to do as he pleased, to have a good time, to be his own boss.

Friends, there is really just ONE sin in all the world and that is putting OUR ideas and OUR ways up against the commands and the ways of God. All sin comes under this category.

The prodigal thought he was having a good time for a while. He was independent, he was away from the watchful eye and the disapproval of his father, he had money, he had himself a time.

But, as usual, that soon ended. His money was soon gone, his fair-weather friends deserted him, and soon he was hungry and in desperate condition, so desperate that he was forced to take the most low-down job that any Jew could imagine: herding a bunch of hogs, and living on the husks that the swine ate. He couldn't have gotten any lower down, he was worse than in the gutter. He was in the hog pen!

That's what the devil does to God's children whenever we give him a chance. He robs us of our birthright, robs us of our health and our manhood, robs us of our friends, robs us of our opportunities in life, robs us and leaves us lying with the hogs, our bellies full of husks.

I have seen the Devil do this to fine men and women, through his devil's brew: luring them down the lane he discovered that, sure enough, it was the long-lost boy come home. He ran to the tired, starved boy and "fell on his neck and kissed him" and brought his son proudly to the house.

Yes, no matter how far you have wandered away from God, He is patiently, anxiously waiting for you to come home and confess your sins, and He is willing to forgive and welcome you back.

"The father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand; and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." It is significant in this parable which Jesus told to show us God's love and forgiveness when we go astray, that the Father didn't take the good things of His household and carry them into the far country and put them on the prodigal while he was still in the hog pen.

(From To Page 12)
WHAT GOD HATH JOINED

We have been asked this question: Is it ever right for a Christian to get a divorce and then to marry someone else? With the help of God and His Word, I want to answer that question.

This is an important question. It is of tremendous importance in the United States and in the church of Jesus Christ. Jesus had a lot to say on this question, and so did Paul. It would pay us to listen to them and to obey, rather than to listen to some man, whether he be a lawyer, a psychiatrist, or a minister. Many ministers have pussy-footed and compromised on this question and have, along with some lawyers, become accomplices in the sin of divorce and adultery.

America is fast becoming a land of free love, of legalized adultery. Beginning in Hollywood and spreading into every little village; divorce, broken homes, homeless children, are an ever-growing tragedy. It has been said that one out of every five marriages in America go on the rocks. Drink, fast living, finances, and many other things are given as the causes. But the church is also to blame. It has not stood boldly on God's Word, it has not always taught or practiced God's Way. His Divine plan of one woman for one man, that God instituted in the Garden of Eden, and which Satan has broken up. Even as the Devil caused Adam and Eve to be cast out of their Garden of Eden, so does he today break up happy homes and turn what was meant to be a heaven on earth, into the torments of hell.

But what does God's Word say about this question? Listen:

"And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? Tempering him. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away."

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh, so that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10:2-9)

This scripture is crystal clear. There are no ifs, ands or buts; no maybe so's, and no loopholes. "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery." And what is the punishment for adultery? Turn with me to Galatians 5:19-21:

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variances, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21)

Many people, and many ministers too, take refuge in what they think is a loophole given in Matthew's version of Christ's words. In Matthew 5:32, Jesus says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery." They argue that if one partner is untrue to the marriage vows, that excuses the other, and is a just Bible reason for divorce. They overlook two things here and thus fall into error.

First, they confuse fornication with adultery. Fornication is the co-habitation of a man and a woman before marriage. Adultery is the unlawful co-habitation of a married person with someone besides his or her own spouse.

Deuteronomy 24:1, in the law of Moses, gives the key to the interpretation of this verse in Matthew which we just read. It reads:

"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it comes to pass that she find no favor in his eyes, because he has found some uncleanness in her; then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house." This law permitted a man who had married a wife and found that she was not clean, that she was not a virgin, to give her a divorce. This was the course contemplated by Joseph the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

"When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost . . . Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife." (Matt. 1:18-20; 24)

The Bible, then, allows a person coming to the marriage and finding the other person not clean, not chaste, not a virgin, to have the marriage annulled or get a divorce. But this says nothing about the right of divorce for adultery, which is unfaithfulness AFTER their marriage.

The second fallacy of many people who argue for their right to divorce and marry, is that the verse relied on, quoted from Matthew, makes no provision for the so-called "innocent party" to re-marry, as many ministers and laymen contend.

You will note that this passage does not say that "Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery, UNLESS she was the INNOCENT party to divorce." It says "WHOSOEVER shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Period.

Another argument for getting around Jesus' plain teaching on this matter of divorce is widely used by ministers and men and women. It is their interpretation of this passage. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10:9)

They argue that many folks today find their mates in honky tonsks, dance halls, road side parks, and that God hath nothing to do with bringing them together, and therefore this verse does not apply to them and they are free to get a divorce whenever they feel like it.

It is true that marriages which begin in a bar-room have much less chance of success and happiness than those whose romances begin in a church or Christian young people's society, but this verse cannot be so easily explained away. This verse must be taken in connection with the verses that preceded it. The word "therefore" ties it to them. Let's read them again.

But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, THEREFORE, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10:6-9)

Verse 9, the "What therefore God hath joined together," refers to verses 6 & 7: "From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, THEREFORE, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10:6-7)

God ordained from the beginning that one man should have one woman. He so instituted marriage in the Garden of Eden when He made of Adam's rib a helpmeet for Him. He made only ONE Eve for ONE Adam.

So, God hath joined together a man and a woman by instituting the relationship of
marriage and by it making them one flesh. And God says, “let not man put asunder what I have ordained to be one, one flesh, one man and one woman.”

If one wants his marriage to last or be happy, let him choose with more care the one he picks for his mate, to become one with him. Many marriages break up because of the loose teachings on divorce, because of their easy assurance that if they don’t like the one they choose, they can quickly divorce him or her and get another. This is contrary to God’s will and His Word.

Another fallacy in the arguments of many ministers and laymen on this question of divorce is that nowhere in the New Testament does either Jesus or Paul make provision for a divorced person to re-marry, no matter whether they are the one guilty of fornication or adultery, or whether they are the so-called “innocent party.” Let’s examine again the Scriptures:

“Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.” (Mark 10:11-12)

Here Jesus doesn’t make any special provision for anyone, whether the sinner or the sinned against, to re-marry. According to this scripture, the so-called “innocent party” to a broken marriage, commits adultery if he or she marries someone else, and so is guilty of the same sin that the original sinner committed: the sin of adultery.

Paul is equally clear and emphatic on this point. Listen:

“And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain un-married, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.” (1 Cor. 7:10-11)

“But the husband put out his wife, and married another, if she depart, let her be married; but if not, let her remain as she is, or be reconciled to her husband.” (Rom. 12:14)

But you say, “What am I going to do? I can’t live with this husband of mine. He drinks and he runs around with other women. Is it right to live with him while he does that?”

Certainly not. If you continue to live with him while he is unfaithful, you are condemning his sin. What can you do? You can separate yourself from him until he repent and straightens up and is ready to be a true husband. There is no Scripture which forbids a separation. Why do you want a divorce, rather than a separation, if it is not so that you can marry someone else, which is a sin?

No marriage situation is hopeless if you believe in God and will trust Him to work it out. I have seen what seemed like hopeless marriages saved when the situation was honestly surrendered to God, with the determination to do His will, obey His Word, and take whatever consequences their folly might bring upon them. Here is what God’s Word says to do:

“If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean: but now are they holy. But If the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?” (1 Cor. 7:12-16)

You will also note the Paul’s words, “But if the unbelieving depart, let him DEPART.” But he doesn’t say divorce him. Let him depart until he is ready to come back and be a Christian husband.

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

“But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughers ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Pet. 3: 1-7)

Friends, thousands of men and women in the church today are guilty of this sin of adultery, the sin of divorce and re-marriage. Except you repent you will have to answer at the judgment bar of God. And many a divorce lawyer and many a compromising minister who has re-married these divorcees will be standing at that same bar of judgment to give an account of themselves to God as accomplices in the ever spreading sin of adultery by divorce and re-marriage.

Putting an easy divorce law on the statute books doesn’t alter the laws of God. You can run to Reno and get rid of your wife or husband, but you can’t run away from God or the consequences of your sin.

And to you who are not yet married, may I say, “look before you leap” so that after “leaping” you may be able to stand, “and having done all, to stand.” (Eph. 6: 13)

“From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” (Mark 10: 6-9)
They have their own ideas about Christianity, about God, about the church, about Heaven and about Hell. And they wouldn’t take what the Bible says about any question, if it was contrary to their own ideas or their own interests.

Occasionally they get sick or in trouble and run to a man of God who believes in prayer, and ask him to “Say a prayer” for them. They want to be healed of some disease, they want the Holy Ghost, they want guidance, they want God to increase their finances. But they want these things on their own terms.

These prayers are seldom answered because they have never really returned to the Father. They are still in the far country of their own wilful independence and disobedience. They are still living with the forbidden swine eating and the dry husks of their lifeless religion. And God doesn’t hand out His best robe for them to proudly wear in their independence, or hand over His signet ring of authority for them to wave boastfully in their own domain; nor does He furnish the shoes and the fatted calf for them to enjoy in their own sweet way.

No! God reserves His best gifts for those who are fed up with their own ways and who come home on bended knees and beg the Father to forgive them and take them in. And what are these gifts that the Father lavished on his returned son? First, the best robe, representing Salvation and the righteousness of Christ.

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” (Isa. 61: 10)

Man’s righteousness can never save him. It takes the righteousness and the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” (Isa. 64: 6)

So the Father, when the prodigal returns in repentance, covers up his filthy rags of self-righteousness with the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness and “remembers our sin no more.”

Next, “put a ring on his hand.” In olden days a king would give his prime minister a signet ring bearing the King’s seal. Whatever writing or decree the officer would seal with an impression of that ring, was accepted as from the King, himself. This signet ring which God gives His returned prodigals is the seal of authority, the assurance that they are “no more servants, but friends,” for they have received the “spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father.” (Rom. 8: 14-17)

“And shoes on his feet.” God promises guidance to His sons and daughters, and strength to walk “in his steps.” (I Pet. 2: 21)

“And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” (Isa. 30: 21)

“My word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Ps. 119: 105)

“Bring hither the fatted calf” The Father promises to supply all our needs if we are His obedient children.

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. 6: 33)

“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4: 19)

Are you a prodigal son or a prodigal daughter, either a hog-pen variety or a respectable, religious variety of independence, of self-will, of disobedience to God? He is looking down the lane this evening, longing to see you come home, fall on your knees and ask Him to forgive you.

If you will come, He will put His arms around you and kiss the tears away. He will wrap you in His robe of Salvation and the spotless blood-washed righteousness of Christ. He will give you His signet ring of authority to live and act as His own. He will give you guidance and strength to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and He will supply your every need.

You want them while still living in the far country of your own disobedience, away from God.

You can’t have them that way. You must come home to get them. And if you refuse to come home, humble yourself and ask for the Father’s mercy, you can remain in the hog-pen and live and die on the husks that, after all, you have chosen.

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I hear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” (Rom. 10: 1-3)