

SERVICE FOR THE KING

BY

A. B. SIMPSON

CONTENTS

1. Power for Service	3
2. Motives to Service	10
3. Instruments of Service	17
4. Personal Responsibility	25
5. Partnership With God	33
6. Words for Discouraged Workers	39
7. Finishing Our Work	46

CHAPTER ONE

POWER FOR SERVICE

“That ye may know the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe.” - Ephesians 1:19

I. Man is born the most impotent creature on the face of the earth. The young brute grows into its prime while the infant is still a helpless child. And morally, he is still more weak. His own passions are stronger than he. Every temptation bears him away, and every surrounding influence controls and moulds him. Spiritually he is still more weak; not only impotent, but dead. Slowly he learns this humbling truth, and only by many a futile effort and painful fall. This is the meaning of Abraham's falsehood, and David's double crime, Job's long siege of suffering and Peter's sad denial. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail." The strongest, the most self-confident, are the most impotent of all. And true strength and safety come when at last we learn our utter insufficiency and accept the simple paradox: "When I am weak, then I am strong."

II. But over against man's weakness stands the revelation of God's power.

This is His first manifestation; and He comes in the mighty forces and forms of Creation and Providence. So He appears to Abraham as El Shaddai, "the Almighty God." So He comes in the redemption of Israel, crushing before a little rod the mightiest empire on earth, dividing the Red Sea and the Jordan and leading His people between the parted waves; marching before them in the pillar of cloud of His awful presence; leveling the walls of Jericho by a trumpet blast, and routing the Canaanite hosts at Beth-horon by the artillery of heaven while the orbs of nature stood still at His servant's word; delivering His people again and again from their outnumbering and overpowering foes; holding nations as the drop of a bucket and the small dust of the balance; weighing the mountains in scales and handling them as man would handle the little ounce weights of the druggist's counter; taking up the isles as a very little thing; carrying the government of the universe on a single shoulder, and asking as He points to the traces of His power in earth and heaven and all the past history of man: "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" This is the first lesson of His teaching: "Power belongeth unto God." And this power He puts at our service. "I am your God," He says, "All that is in Me belongs to obedient faith." There are two great potencies in the universe - God and the believer. "With God all things are possible." "All things are possible to him that believeth." It is very wonderful that God should thus harness His omnipotence to a human life and put the reins in the hands of humble faith. Wonderful that He should say to a worm: "I am the Almighty God. Take me, possess me, use me. I am thy God."

III. The Power of God is manifested in Christ.

He is called "the power and the wisdom of God." His life was a constant embodiment of divine power; power over Satan in the wilderness and on the cross, whom he left a conquered and disarmed foe; power over demoniacal possession in human souls; power over disease in every form; power over nature in storm and tempest and in the multiplied bread which fed the five thousand on the hills of Galilee; power over death

itself in the resurrection of others, and most signally of all in His own resurrection and ascension.

This is the special exhibition of His power which the apostle here emphasises “The exceeding greatness of His power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places, far above all might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but that which is to come.” Here is a power that sets all the laws of nature at defiance, sets aside all the ordinary operations and extraordinary forces of the material world and puts its feet on all power, law and dominion. Far above all the forces of the present world, far above the mightier powers astronomy reveals, far above all heavens, indeed, and all the beings that govern their myriad worlds, far above all the rulers of the greater world of spirits even to the throne of sovereign power and universal pre-eminence, has that wondrous Man ascended, and ascended in our name, as “Head over all things the Church, which is His Body.”

So that all this marvellous power is possessed in common with us, and may be shared with the weakest of His members. The least of them can be no less or lower than His feet, yet “He has put all things under His feet,” and in Him we may put our feet on the neck of every foe.

O, have we known “the power of His resurrection,” and in it “the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe,” and have we taken this Jesus as made unto us “the power of God?” Surely of Him shall men say: “In the Lord have I righteousness and strength.” Surely this was what the overcoming apostle meant when he said: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

IV. The Gospel is the Power of God to everyone that believeth.

This divine power, inherent in God and manifested in Christ, is offered to us in the Gospel. It is not only peace, but also power. It is in itself God’s mighty instrument for saving men. It has power to break man’s pride and reveal man’s sin, and win man’s confidence and change man’s destiny. It has proved stronger than the philosophy of Greece, or the strength of Rome, or the pride of Judaism. It is power. The weakness of God, it is stronger than men. But it also brings power. It offers man the strength of God, and it confers it. It brings in one hand pardon for all the past, and for the future the power of a new, faithful and Almighty Friend. He who fully receives it may live a life of victory and effectiveness. Have we found its power?

V. The Holy Ghost is the Great Agent in imparting this power.

“Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” He is the Spirit of power. Not only does He give the newborn soul power to receive Christ and turn from sin, but He also enters the consecrated heart as a personal guest and guide. The gift of the Holy Ghost is a distinct experience from regeneration. It is one thing for me to build a house, and another to go and reside in it personally. In regeneration the Holy Spirit builds the house. In consecration He enters it as a personal guest and makes it His permanent abode, directing and using the whole being as it is offered to Him. His coming brings power:

1. Power for the Spirit of Sonship. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe in His name, which were born not of men nor of the will of the flesh or of man, but of God." We are sons of God by second birth. But there is more than this - even power to enter into - to know and claim and enjoy our lofty sonship. There are high born heirs who do not know their birthright. And so, "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father." Then we know what is the hope our calling, and walk worthy of God as dear children.

2. Power over Sin. "The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

This is the power that sanctifies. Holiness is not a condition wrought in us. It is simply the Holy One in us ruling, filling - "the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus" controlling with the power and uniformity of a law. This, and this alone, can give power over sin. This battle is too great for man. It must be the Lord's.

3. Power for the Passive Virtues of Christian Character. "Strengthened according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." This is the victory over self, and it is the secret of power over others. The first battlefield is the heart and the home, and he who would have power to do must first receive power to endure, yea, even "with joyfulness." Nor is there a mightier evidence of the power of God than just such triumphs over temper and provocation, nor a stronger testimony and service for Jesus than the sweetness of the subdued and quiet spirit which has so learned Christ.

4. Power for Deeper Christian Experiences. "Strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints the height and depth, and length and breadth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God." These words describe the highest possibilities of Christian life, an experience exceeding abundantly over all we are able to ask or think." But this we can not enter until we are first "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." We could not bear such a blessing in our natural strength. We have not capacity to receive it. Our being must be enlarged; our spirit must be raised to a mightier manhood. Our understanding must grasp more clearly, and our faith appropriate more firmly the things that are freely given us of God. Thus we need power to take more power. And just as the sea wave that washes in and fills the little basin on the beach, washes a larger, deeper basin by its force, and leaves larger room for the next wave, so the Holy Spirit enlarges our heart to receive still more of Himself.

5. Power to Resist Temptation. "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places; wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." How large a place temptation has in every Christian life! And the nearer we get to God the more severely it presses

us. The “principalities and powers” of evil are “in heavenly places.” And we have no power to resist them. We must have His power or fall. Nay, we must have Himself for our power and our overcomer or we shall be overcome. “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”

Happy they who have learned the secret of strength and victory. In all these things they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them. Hence few know much of what temptation or victory means until they have the Life of Power.

6. Power for Aggressive Conflict against Satan. “Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” This was Christ’s commission to the seventy, and it is His message to every true worker in the great harvest field to which He sent them forth saying, “Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He would send other labourers into His harvest.” Therefore this prayer is for all true servants. It is power over all the power of the enemy. This is not for our defense against temptation merely. This is aggressive war. This is power to cast out demons and destroy the works of the devil. Thus the Holy Ghost came to the apostles. Filled with the Holy Ghost, Saul said to Elymas: “O, full of all subtlety and malignity, thou child of the Devil, thou cease not to prevent the right ways of the Lord?” And God’s judgment upon him. Thus he flung from his hand the viper, and thus he triumphed over all the power of the enemy, and cried as he pressed on: “The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom.” We need this power in the conflict still and we may have it. So good Pastor Blumhardt prayed all night long by the side of a wild demoniac, and ere the dawning light had broken, the victim arose, shouting, “Jesus is Victor!” and went forth to a life of blessed liberty and service.

7. Power for Service and Testimony. “Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto Me.” “Ye are witnesses of these things, and behold I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” “Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be forever and ever. Amen.”

The Apostle Paul devotes a whole chapter, 1 Corinthians 12, especially to explain and illustrate the gifts of the Holy Spirit for service. He begins by declaring our absolute dependence upon the Holy Ghost even for power to bear the simplest testimony to Jesus Christ. He then shows the diversity of the Spirit’s gifts, but declares that to every one some manifestation of this divine power is given for improvement and service. He specifies the various gifts of knowledge, wisdom, faith, miracles, healing, prophecy, tongues, discerning of spirits, and clearly intimates that they may all be expected in the Church of Christ through the whole Christian age. These charismata, or spiritual gifts, were clearly recognised in the early Church and designed to be zealously sought, cherished and cultivated. Service for Christ was understood not as the exercise of our

natural powers and talents, but the use of the special gifts of the Great Paraclete. The wisdom of nature was regarded as foolishness with God, and Christ was received as wisdom and utterance. The talents and the pounds were not natural endowments, but spiritual endowments. Our good works were declared to be “prepared for us that we should walk in them,” so that the weakest and humblest saint could minister “according to the proportion of faith,” and as of the ability which God gave.” Indolence, timidity and unfruitfulness were left without excuse. In themselves all were equally insufficient even to think anything as of themselves and all had equal claims to His all-sufficiency, and equal right to say: “I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.”

This power reached out alike in every direction of Christian life and service. It was as necessary for a deacon in administering the finances of a church, of a private member in giving his means to God, as to an apostle to his ministry, or a saint on his knees. Every service for the Lord must be in the Holy Spirit and in the strength of Jesus, or it could not be acceptable to God. He only is acceptable to the Father, and only His life and work in us can be accepted above. All our service, therefore, is simply partnership with Christ. It is Christ working in us His work. This was His promise when He went away. “He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto the Father.”

That does not mean that we shall do the works that He used to do, but that we shall do the works He is still to do, the works that He is now carrying on in His resurrection life as our Living Head, through us, the members of His body. He is the power; we are the executioners of that power. Our works are but the complement of “all which Jesus began both to do and to teach.”

This power, therefore, can never exalt the possessor into self-importance. It is not his power at all, but simply Christ in him. It differs entirely from mere human power. It is not oratorical power or personal magnetism, that subtle influence which some possess in a marked degree. It is not intellectual power or logical force, the power of persuading other minds. It is not sympathetic power, the exquisite capacity to move human sympathy, kindle feeling, excite emotion and sway human hearts at will. It is not even moral power, the power to rouse the conscience, to alarm the guilty soul, to persuade men to reformation of life and conduct. All this may be merely natural. Spiritual power is far deeper and higher. It is the power of God. It brings men to feel the presence and the fear of God. It leads men to know God, to love God, to obey God, to be like God, to receive God. It is God in man leading man to God.

Some elements in this gift of power are:

1. Knowledge of the Word of God, especially the plan of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit carries the truth with great vividness and power to the mind and enables us so to see and reveal Jesus that the sinner can not but accept Him.
2. Wisdom and tact that is holy and divinely taught discrimination and fitness of appeal, counsel and exhortation. This is “the word in season to him that is weary,” with “which He openeth our ear to hear as the learned.” This is “the word of wisdom,” and “the word spoken in season,” so good and wholesome. This is the power to know and speak the Lord’s own message, one sentence of which is worth a volume of our well-meaning opinions and ideas.

3. Faith. This is indispensable to all power. "We believe and therefore speak," must be true of every man who would speak with the power of God. We must have the same faith for our message and our work as for our own souls. The men of power in apostolic times were the men of faith. "Full of faith and power," "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," are their brief biographies. This is no common faith. The faith of effectual service is the very faith of God, and God's own omnipotence.

4. Love, including all its accompaniments, fervour of spirit, compassion, tenderness, sympathy, concern for souls, affectionateness of manner, intense longing for the salvation of men, travail of spirit for the unsaved and that deep heart power which is the greatest of all spiritual forces. Many persons lack this essential element of power. Great courage, wisdom, earnestness and force are neutralised by hardness or lack of love. Arctic explorers kindle fires from the sun by ice lenses, but he who would kindle hearts from above must be himself on fire. "Thy heart must overflow if thou another's heart would reach." The Holy Spirit brings to us this element of power, even Christ's own love to men.

5. Earnestness, or the intense concentration of all one's power to the work of saving men. A soul fully alive to its great business, to men's interests and perils, and using all its powers and energies to do them good. There is no power without earnestness so deep and strong as to raise even enthusiasm. The very word means God in a man, and the power of God in us will kindle all our powers to a flame.

6. Unction. This is finer and diviner still. It is that inexpressible yet unmistakable influence which so melts and mellows the whole being, and baptises both thought, feeling, word, expression, and even our very tones, looks and gestures with the Spirit of God and with His life, love and power, that men are irresistibly impressed, subdued, attracted and convicted. We may be so pervaded by God Himself that God can constantly show forth in us the "sweet savour of Christ, and make manifest His knowledge by us in every place."

7. Conviction. There is yet another element of power. The power to lead men to conviction and decision, the power to reach their conscience with the sense of God, to awaken their fear of God and consciousness of sin, and to lead them to act, to decide, to choose, to be definite, immediate, and thoroughly committed to the one urgent, all-important step of receiving the Saviour. This power we see in Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, Paul's message to the Philippian jailer, and all the specially useful evangelists of later times. It is indispensable for all true Christian workers. He who neglects to receive and use it will have often cause to say of the fruits of his work "While Thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

THE SECRET OF POWER

But how shall we obtain the gift of power?

1. Conscious weakness. "To them that have no might he increaseth strength." Utterly to know and realise our insufficiency, we must come to the end of all our resources, power, love, thought, even faith itself, then He comes and lives in us, our all in all.

2. Consecration. Give your weakness to Christ to use for Himself. Dedicate to Him your power to be filled and used. Lay on His altar the gift He is about to bestow. Take it as a sacred and unselfish trust to be employed for His work and glory. And He will give abundantly. He will take the offered vessel and use it. He will feel the consecrated hand, and of His own you will serve and glorify Him.

3. Appropriating and acting faith. Take hold of His strength. Attach your little wheel to His great engine, and it will run with heavenly power. Sometimes we see such advertisements as this.

“TO LET WITH POWER”

That means that a store is for rent, with connections for steam power. All the manufacturer has to do is to move in his machinery, and attach to the great revolving rod or wheel that passes through the premises, and use the power that is there at his command. God gives to each of us a house “with power.” He puts within our reach the great engine of His omnipotence and bids us attach our wheel of need for strength or service, and take the power that is running to waste and freely at our disposal.

During the Philadelphia exposition one of the most extraordinary objects in the great hall was the Corliss engine, a steam engine with sufficient power to drive all the machinery which the building could hold. All over the immense building were scattered almost all possible apparatus of industrial machinery. Not one of them had any self-moving power, but all that was necessary to put every wheel in swift and powerful motion was to attach it to the great engine. Then the little knitting machine went as freely as the great printing press, each taking from the same source of power all it could contain and use. Even so in God’s great work of life, some of us are little knitting and sewing machines and some great presses but none of us have any power of our own. But in our midst is that Great Engine - the Holy Ghost - and we have only to attach the connecting band of faith; then the power passes into each life according to our need and in proportion to our use of it, and the humble seamstress at her sewing machine receives it as abundantly as she can take it in, as well as the author who sends his great thoughts to the world through the printing press or the voice that speaks to listening thousands the messages of truth and life. The power meets us, helps us, carries us wherever we are and whatever our service if it be but His will. And all we need is to make the connection and then to use the power for Him. So may He enable us to take hold of His strength and give it back to Him.

CHAPTER TWO

MOTIVES TO SERVICE

“Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar.” - Psalm 118:22

The sacrifice is our consecrated service to God and the cords which bind it to the altar are the motives, the impulses which ought to constrain us to a more earnest and entire devotion to Christ and to His work. God wants us so to yield ourselves, living sacrifices by the mercies of God, that we shall feel bound by a thousand cords on His altar - loving bonds, silken cords, that we would not break if we could.

1. The first motive which ought to hold us to serve the Lord Jesus Christ is the very fact of our redemption, for we are distinctly taught that we were not redeemed in any sense at all for our own selfish advantage. “Ye are not your own ye are bought with a price,” the apostle says very solemnly, commencing his letter to the Corinthians; “therefore glorify God in your body, which is God’s.” If you were to buy a house you would think it strange if the seller should retain it for his own use and want to live in it himself and collect the rent. If you were to buy an article of value, you would be surprised if the seller should refuse to let you use it. And so the Lord has bought you; He has bought you to use you; bought you to be an instrument for His service and even though you have not performed the consecrating act, you are bound to belong to the Lord. You were consecrated by your redemption, and you are not your own, for you were bought with a price, and consecration is just coming up to your true obligations and returning that which is simply right; and so the mere fact that you have been redeemed by Christ should constrain you and bind you as a cord to the altar of service.

2. Our salvation binds us to the service of Christ. We were not saved for ourselves, but in order to serve the Lord. We find this in a great many passages. Especially you will remember what Paul says about his own salvation: “For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first God might show a pattern of all longsuffering unto them that should after believe on Him to life everlasting.”

So he says he was saved not for the sake of his own soul merely, but saved that he might save other souls. The very reason of his rescue from his awful and presumptuous iniquity is that he might save just men in coming days and so, if you have been saved strangely and wondrously, is for you to save others through God as strangely and wondrously; if you have been saved from any evil it is for you to save others from that evil; if you have been saved from some special form of sin, it is your ministry to rescue others from the same, so that your very salvation is a cord that binds you to the altar of God.

3. Again our calling and election are for service.

I don’t use the term here with reference to our salvation, but I believe that these words, “calling and election,” are used in the Scripture very emphatically with respect to our service and to our special standing as Christians after we have been saved.

When Peter says, "Make your calling and election sure," I think he means not our salvation at all, but some higher calling that comes after our salvation; our calling to a place of service and honour, our election to an office - if you might use the term in allusion to the human use of the word - to a position of trust and honour. You know that in the State men are called to positions of trust; elected to positions of honour, and so I think God uses this word to denote our being summoned by His Word and set apart by His gracious will to some place of special usefulness.

Now, we are told distinctly that we are called that we might serve. "Ye have not chosen Me," Christ said to His apostles, "but I have chosen you." What for? That you should go to heaven? No, that you should go and bring forth fruit, that your fruit should remain, and that your prayer should be so effectual that "whatever you ask in My name, I shall do it." That is your calling, chosen and ordained, that you should bring forth fruit and be a minister of blessing to others. Paul says, speaking of his calling and referring to the story of his conversion, and the words God said to him as soon as he was called from the dead: "I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me. Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." That was Paul's calling. God appeared to him in that moment to save him and give him a higher calling.

And so to you there comes a calling in life somewhere and sometime as surely as it came to Abram in that day in Ur of Chaldea, and he went forth not knowing whither; as surely as it came to Jacob, in the vision at Bethel by night; as surely as it came to Paul on the way to Damascus. God has called you and called me to some special mission in life - a work that nobody else can do, and that if you do not do, you shall stand at his judgment door recreant and condemned for neglect of your vocations. I don't know what your calling is. I think I know something of what mine was, and I am sure that if I had not listened and by His grace stood amid testings which made the blood quiver, I would have missed the blessings of my life, and perhaps others besides would have lost theirs.

God calls every one of you to some special duty. I mean that mission for Him which is the very meaning of life, and without which life will be a miserable mistake and prove a fraud at last; and all the wishes and desires you spent on yourselves were lost, and even you lost the thing you lived for - yourself.

4. Again, we are sanctified to serve God. Our sanctification is one of the cords which binds us to the altar of service. We are taught again, in another place: "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works to serve the Living God."

Now, I used to think that we were sanctified at last in order to go to heaven - that the very last thing God did for the soul was to sanctify it, and that then He took it right home; and I will confess that I was a good deal afraid of being sanctified, at one time, for fear I would die very soon afterward; and I am afraid many people have the idea that sanctified people are not good for anything. But the Lord Jesus Christ tells us that

we are sanctified in order to serve Him here. You can not go forth and fight the enemy successfully until the victory is won in the citadel of your heart - in your own soul. While there is a revolution going on at home, you can not have much foreign aggression. While sin is mastering you, you can not do any work for Jesus. God wants you to get your victory from sin, in order that you may live a useful life and go forth with the prestige of that victory and overcome the world and the devil. And so this blessed experience that God has brought to you for the purpose of cleansing your soul from sin, means a life of service; and you will not be able to keep it up if it is going to make you join a sort of holy elite circle, enjoying your own blessing and wrapped up in your own comfort. No; only as you use it to bring others in can you keep what you have. Just as Joshua and the tribes of Israel when they entered into the land, it was that they might lead their brethren into the rest, and there was to be no rest for them until the Lord "had given their brethren rest, and they also shall have possessed the lands which the Lord gave them."

5. Again another cord that binds us to the altar is the enduement of the Holy Spirit, which is given us only for service, and which we can only keep while we consecrate it to the work of Jesus. "Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto Me." That is what you receive the power for; and the fact that you have received that divine Spirit is a solemn incentive and a strong motive that should lead you to use that trust for the highest ends for which God has given it. O, do not waste a treasure so unspeakably valuable. Don't let it be idly wasted away and expended in mere talk, mere personal enjoyment, mere idealism, but go forth with that higher power and work for others and for God, and thus keep the blessing which He has given only for service and only to them that obey.

I think it is Theodore Monod who speaks about a steam engine, and says: "Suppose I go to a locomotive, and say: 'What are you good for?' 'Well, I have got power.' 'What is your power good for?' 'Well, I can make a tremendous whistle.' 'Well,' he says; 'what is the good of a whistle? I want something that can do something - that can move these cars and carry these tons of freight along the track.'" And so, what is the good of your power if all that it does is to make a whistle, proclaiming how much power you have got? What God wants is the power that will carry other hearts and will bear the burdens of the Lord. How much are you bearing? What is your carrying power? That is the design of power. It is not what you say so much, but what are you doing and what are you bearing for Jesus Christ and His cause.

Well, this enduement of power which the Lord has given me, and I think God has given it to many of you, has been given for service. And it seems that a congregation who have known the Lord as you have known Him, a people that in the space of the last year have breathed in His very life and Spirit, as you have breathed Him in, should contain hidden elements of force and service which involve a tremendous responsibility. God has dropped celestial fire in your breast. O see to it that you kindle other fires and cover the whole world and the whole circle of your life with the flames. I should be afraid - terribly afraid - to have been where many of you have been, and then relapse into an easy, self-indulgent life. I should be terribly afraid to have touched the coal of fire, as some of you have touched it, and to have bowed at His feet in solemn consecration, and today to be doing nothing for His kingdom, or doing less than God calls you to. May the Lord bind you to His altar with the cords of His own

mighty indwelling and make you feel that to have God within your breast is a blessed privilege, but it is also a most sacred trust.

6. Again, our Christian experience is a motive to service. I mean by this that our Christian experience is given us not for our sake, but for the sakes of others. The way God leads you is intended to aid somebody else, the conflicts and victories that you have had are designed to enable you to help some fellow soldier in his strife. This is one of the deeper and mysterious principles of Christian life. "Whether we be afflicted," Paul says in 2 Corinthians, "whether we be afflicted, it is for your sake; whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." "God who comforteth us in all our trouble, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any trouble with the comfort wherewith we are comforted of God." The strange furnace through which you passed was just a special instruction for the instrumentality which God was making out of you. The almost martyr sufferings that still make you quiver and ache, were to enable you to sympathise with some other suffering soul. And, therefore, no matter how God leads you, don't question Him, but say: "Lord, what does it mean? How can I consecrate it to You? I give my trials to You; I give my experience to You; I bind my life on Your altar by these quivering heart-cords of pain or joy to be Thine alike in both and all.

7. Again, our Christian character needs service for its development and its strength. The young convert of Gadara desired, we are told, to be with Christ as soon as he was saved; but Christ suffered him not, but said: "Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee and hath had compassion on thee." And he went home and published through Decapolis what great things the Lord had done. A poor, weak convert, afraid to be alone, he naturally clung to Jesus' side. But the Master knew he needed a firmer discipline, and so He said: "Go through the cities of north-eastern Galilee, and tell them what you were and what you are, and get yourself so committed that you can not go back again, and every word you speak and every testimony you give will grow stronger and bolder and more committed to Me, until you become so My representative that you could not turn recreant to Me even if you attempted to." And so this poor fellow, fresh from Christ, went as a missionary through that Eastern land and before three months had passed the whole region on that side of Galilee was wonderfully awakened, and they gathered together in such multitudes that Jesus had to feed the four thousand on the shores of the lake and could not send them away. But this poor fellow was the strongest of them all, and out of all the good he did, the best was the good he got. And so, dear young disciples, to grow strong you must testify to what God has given you. You must stand up for Christ fearlessly, uncompromisingly, and your Christian life must bind you as a sacrifice on the altar of the service of Jesus.

Someone has drawn a beautiful figure of a little mountain stream starting down from the hills, a little tiny thing, not more than a foot wide and two or three inches deep, skipping over the rocks and dancing along the cataracts, flowing through the meadows and bearing away down to the sea, and as it went along it passed a great big pool of water, and the pool spoke up and said: "Why so fast? Why are you in such a hurry? Why don't you be quiet like me? You seem to be very free with your water; you seem to forget that summer is coming on and you will be very glad to have a little of that abundance then that you are throwing away now and so recklessly dashing around you. You must be forgetting the days that are coming. Why don't you keep your treasures

as I do?" But the little stream only answered by the dash of its waters over the rocks and went on, not stopping to answer and pouring its waters generously away. And so the spring and the summer came. It was not long until the pool began to find itself deserted, and the very cattle of the wilderness were afraid to come near it; the birds would not rest in the branches above it; a filthy smell arose from its stagnant waters; the air caught the malaria and bore it along through the plains; but the little dancing river went dancing on and the branches of the trees spread themselves over, and the cattle came to drink, and the little birds sat by its banks and the more it ran the deeper it grew - a great river supplying the people with water, and pouring its overflow into the great sea.

Now, do not let us lose our lesson, I don't care about the picture. Let us get the spiritual truth. Don't let anything keep us from that. Don't you be like the stagnant pool. Don't be like the Christian, who keeps what he has hermetically sealed in his heart and pocket-book, but be like the little stream, growing as it gives, for the more we give the more we get. "What I kept, that I lost. What I gave, that I have," is the epitaph on an old tombstone and which we might well remember. And, so dear friends, if you would have the richest Christian character, if you would have the full tide of heavenly power, be like the little stream, give, and giving you shall grow. You might think as you look at your bathtub in your house full of water, that there was a great deal more water there than in the little lead pipe that connects it; that little inch pipe you would think could not hold as much water as the basin, but I tell you that in the course of twenty-four hours there is ten times as much water goes through that little inch pipe as is contained in the larger basin. Why? Because it is a conduit pipe. It is giving as it receives. I would rather be a little conduit pipe than the reservoir, which seems the larger, but is not really so. For your own Christian character and life as well as for the Lord, give yourself to a useful consecrated life.

8. Then, again, our happiness, our real joy, ought to bind us to the altar of service. I mean by that a life of usefulness is the only happy Christian life. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed is the man whose sin is forgiven. Blessed are those who hunger, etc. There are a score of blessings! There is one little "more blessed," but it is better than them all. It is more blessed to give than to receive. It is one of the speeches of Jesus which Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have omitted. It is one of the little words of Christ that is not recorded there; but God thought so much of it, He made it a little fifth Gospel. Paul caught it up before it was lost and has given it to us and I am so glad he did, for in some respects it transcends any of the others. It makes you glad; it saves you from a thousand petty self-seeming cares and trials.

Someone has said in poetry:

Wouldst thou from sorrow find a sweet relief,
Or wouldst thou seek support for woes untold,
Balm wouldst thou gather for corroding grief,
Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold?
'Tis when the rose is wrapped in many a fold,
Close to its heart the worm is wasting there.

Many are living in a little world of their own trouble and sorrow. I never knew a sad soul yet that had broken out from life thus to go and live for Christ and for others. It is not possible to be overcome by grief and depression when you rise into the life of love. It is yourself that makes you morose because you are losing something or suffering something. It is the curse of Satan. It was the thing that made the devil a devil; that he ceased to live for God and began to live for himself. It will make anybody a devil, unless he turns from it. Self-love, self-pride, self-care, how they cling to you with such an instinct of fear that you are going to lose something. O, how sad it is! And it is the cause of all your miseries. But if you would live for others and be large-hearted and consecrated, you would be happy; your cares would be exchanged for His; you would cease to bear your burdens and you would bear your Master's, and He says that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

And then there is a deeper joy. There is the joy of Christ's love and Christ's benevolence and sympathy for others. Do you know what it is? Some of you do. There is no deeper joy in Christian hearts, perhaps, than the joy of bringing souls to Christ, the joy of seeing lives transformed, wrecked homes made happy and souls forever saved. This is the joy that comes from the service of God. May it bind your hearts and lives on the altar of God, a living sacrifice.

9. Another of the cords that ought to bind us is the value of the soul - the preciousness of the human soul. It seems there can be no motive stronger than this. Paul was bound on the altar by this cord. He says: "I have great heaviness and sorrow in my heart continually because of my brethren that are not saved. Those that have looked into the eternity and have measured the value of Christ's blood and Christ's warnings and invitations feel likewise that they can not rest while there will be one soul unsaved that they can rescue, and as Richard Knill used to say: "If there was but one man alive on earth unsaved and that one man was in Siberia, and it was necessary to save him every Christian in the world should go to him and plead with him, it would be worthwhile for all the fifteen hundred millions of people on the earth to go and plead with that one man, for eternity is so immeasurably long, and misery and joy forever mean so much, that it would repay us." We do not see it dear friends, now, but we have just got flashes of it; but when the lurid clouds of the great day shall be around us and the vanities of earth will be drifting like smoke and lost men like chaff in the storm, and those that you have known shall look back with one upbraiding glance, and the Lord will look on you as if to say: "Was this all you cared for Me?" O we will understand it then! May God help us to know it better, to preach as if we saw it, to pray as if we felt it, and to labour for it as for our own salvation.

10. Our opportunities for service give another powerful incentive to work for Christ. Every such opportunity is a direct call of God, and the special openings for service which we find in this day on every hand, seem to say as never before: "How knowest thou whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

There never was a time when deeper tides were moving in human hearts and a profounder hunger was crying for a living God and a full salvation. A silent revolution is passing over the Church of God, in which men and women are awaking to the need of something greater than ideas, organisations and works, and must have LIFE and POWER. It is a time for earnest work and testimony. O may God give us

“understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do,” and make us prompt, and wise and true. It is harvest time and harvest work waits not for our convenience. It is urgent work, immediate work, work which cries: “Son go work today in my vineyard.” By every call of opportunity “bind ye the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar.”

11. Another bond of obligation is found in the ample resources which Christ has given us for His work. If He sent us in our own strength or inadequately furnished, we might, perhaps, plead some excuse. But He has provided all grace, “so that we always having all sufficiency in all things may abound unto every good work.” The talents in the parable of Matthew 25 and the pounds in that of Luke 19 do not denote our natural endowments of mind or circumstances, but those free gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are offered “to every man to profit withal,” and we have but to take freely of His abundant grace and use it for His work. This renders the plea of weakness inexcusable and makes the sin of neglecting such costly divine provisions very great indeed. Let us therefore “receiving a kingdom, which can not be moved, have grace that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and a godly fear.”

12. Another bond and impulse of service is the great reward which He has promised to those who faithfully follow Him in the “path of labour and suffering.” “They shall shine as the stars forever and ever.” “They shall sit with Me in My throne.” When we see that recompense we shall be ashamed of our hardest sacrifice and we shall cry: “Not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory.” Ten cities for ten pounds well spent, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory for every weight of toil and pain. O it will seem too much for such poor work, and we shall cast the crowns at His blessed feet and cry: “Thou art worthy only to receive the glory.”

Finally, His own dear love to each one of us is the strongest cord. Think how He has saved us, loved us, led us and blessed us every one, and the highest offering is “little to give to Him,” as a dying mother said when asked if she could give up her darling children; “Do you always feel thus?” they asked the pilgrim. “When I look at my white garments, which the shining ones gave me, that will do it; and when I look at yonder celestial hills and think of the city, whither I am going, that will do it; and when I look back to the cross where He died for me and where I lost my burden, that will do it.” So let us look in, and look back and look forward, and “bind the sacrifice with cords even to the horns of the altar.”

CHAPTER THREE

INSTRUMENTS OF SERVICE

“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things are that no flesh shall glory in His presence; but of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.” - 1 Corinthians 1:27, 30

This passage gives us an inventory of God’s favourite instruments - of the things that God likes best to use, and the people that God especially chooses; and some of you may be surprised to find yourselves not included in this inventory; some of you may feel that it would be a considerable humiliation to come within it. You have got your choice of five places: you can either be among the foolish things, or among the weak things, or among the base things, or among the despised things, or among the things that are not at all, and in one or the other of these classes you will have to muster if you are going to be one of God’s favourite instruments and one of the things which God hath chosen to amount to anything and to bring to naught the things that are strong and wrong.

I. The foolish things. The Corinthians were terribly chagrined at the humiliation of having to give up their culture. It was a sort of modern Boston or Edinburgh and was very proud of its culture. And so when Apollos came among them and began to preach the philosophy of the Alexandrian school of which he was master, they were delighted with him, and turned away from the crude and barren style of old Paul and thought they had found something worthy to be compared with their wisdom. But Paul told them that God holds all this culture in great derision; that he thinks very little of it, indeed, that it is foolishness with Him, and that if any man will be wise, he must become a fool that he may be wise; that is, he must abandon his own natural and self-confident wisdom; he must be willing to esteem as of very little value the product of his own intellect and his education, and like a little child begin at the alphabet at the feet of Jesus, for God hath made foolish the wisdom of the wise and taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

There is a great deal of danger in our modern American life of this same thing. There is an affectation of culture, and perhaps a real culture, which is beginning to become a kind of God to the higher classes of American society. You noticed probably with alarm the other day the sums that were spent on a few special works of art in this city - hundreds of thousands of dollars at a single sale, enough to sustain the Gospel for half a century in the great mission fields. People ought to pause a little and remember, that natural culture has often been associated with the world’s darkest ages. The man that built the first city, made the first musical instrument, and the first works of human industry and art was Cain, and since that day the world, when it goes away from God, tries to make the earth a paradise. The next great land of culture was Egypt, but God took His people right out of Egypt and He didn’t preserve among them one single trace of Egyptian science, Egyptian art, Egyptian culture. Nay, He would not let them

touch a work of art, lest it should be made subservient to idolatry. The next great period of culture was perhaps in Babylon, the cradle, I dare say, of Grecian culture; but what did that come to? "Is not this great Babylon that I built by the might of my hand for the honour of my majesty?" In that same hour there came a voice from Heaven: "The kingdom is departed from thee and thou shalt have thy dwelling with the beasts of the earth;" and Nebuchadnezzar went out under the strongest form of madness until he learned that every man's pride must be laid low at the feet of God. The next stage of culture we find in Greece, and perhaps the highest stage that has ever been attained in the history of man. And what was Grecian culture and art when Paul looked upon its most splendid monuments in Athens? You don't find a bit of enthusiasm such as modern travellers display, but his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city given to idolatry; every particle of it was a minister of idolatry; every particle of it was the handmaid of sin, and it did not save Greece from the deepest moral degradation. The next and the most brilliant period of art and culture the world has ever seen was the modern Italian age when Raphael and Michael Angelo gave the world their triumphs of genius and you will remember that was the time when Caesar Borgia sat in the Papal chair, a monster of infamous iniquity, and when the Church was sunk in utter corruption; yet its temples were adorned with the most splendid paintings.

Now, I don't say that culture is necessarily wrong; I do not say that intellect and education may not go hand in hand with Christianity; I do not deny that the Reformation brought a revival of true literature; but I do say that to pursue culture for its own sake estranges one from God. To follow the sole guidance of the human mind and to depend upon it instead of God's holy Word and God's higher will as the basis of character and life is always fatal, both to morality and to religion. And I believe that today we are just hastening to that point when Daniel's vision will come true: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased but the wicked shall do wickedly," and then the Lord shall come. This is to be the last picture of the days before Christ's return; it is a picture of human smartness such as has never been known before, and human infamy, such as has never been dreamed of before.

Well, Paul therefore tells these Greeks that their wisdom, knowledge, skill, intelligence and philosophy will not make men wise; that "esteeming themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into that of corruptible man, and worshipped the creature more than the Creator;" and that God is not going to save the world by brilliant intellects, or magnificent talent, but by the foolishness of preaching and the simplicity of the cross and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And if any man is going to be much used by God he must not depend upon his brain, he must not depend upon his social power, he must not depend upon his wealth, he must not depend upon his influence, but he must put all these aside and go forth armed with the simple power of Jesus Christ's own Word and Spirit, for God hath chosen the foolish things. That does not mean the silly, absurd things, but the things that have not the strength of human wisdom. God is not going to save the world today by the men of genius, God is not going to save the world today by the men of the largest talents, but He is going to take average minds, and very humble minds sometimes, and very crude and very illiterate minds sometimes, and enlighten them by His Holy Spirit, and give them His holy Word and glorify His own name by the very simplicity of the instruments, which He employs.

Now, we see this all through God's Word. How absurd it must have seemed to the people of Jericho, when an army of six hundred thousand men marched around their city, armed with rams horns, and amid the blare of these instruments issued a challenge for Jericho to surrender. It was a foolish instrument, but God used that foolishness to confound all their wisdom, and before a week ended, the echo of their shout was answered by the roar and crash of falling walls and the shrieks of a city doomed to destruction. It seemed a very foolish thing when Jesus Christ told His disciples to take a few loaves and fishes and feed a crowd of five thousand men and perhaps ten thousand women and children. It was foolishness in the sight of man. It was an inadequate supply for such an enormous number, and some old writers represent Peter and John in starting out as giving very small crumbs to the people until after a little while they saw that their loaf was growing bigger and found that the more they gave the more they had, until there was enough to spare. It was foolish in man's judgment, but God proved that the foolishness of God is wiser than man. It seemed absurd, when a few humble fishermen were sent to confront the pride and wisdom of the Jewish synagogue, but these humble fishermen and these plain men were not only able to withstand all the combined wisdom that defied them, but we are told that the highest teachers of their synagogues were not able to resist the wisdom or the spirit with which they spake; and the simple crude Gospel of Christ and Him crucified had proved mightier than all the powers of Greece and Rome, and before the first century had closed, had brought the wisdom of the world to the foot of the cross. And so in these last days God has raised up from time to time this simple class of instruments - men who have been despised perhaps for their lack of culture and yet since the days of the apostles there has not been such a deep and wide-spread and general awakening as God wrought by a simple American evangelist, who can not always pronounce English words correctly, and who is not afraid to own it. I am always glad to bear witness to this dear servant of God. The very highest triumphs of Mr. Moody's evangelistic work have been in the centers of culture, and there was no place in all England where the multitudes gathered with such absolutely broken and open-hearted acceptance as in the very cities of Oxford and Cambridge, in the very face of learning, and scoffing pride. They had derided the idea of his coming and went to the meetings prepared to turn them into ridicule. But yet in these very places the simple, straightforward message of Jesus was greater than all their scorn and brought hundreds and hundreds of these proud men as humble penitents to His side, and today the most glorious examples of missionary zeal are some of these same young men, who are now preaching the Gospel in China. God did it to show that His foolishness was stronger than man's wisdom. If you are not ashamed of your simplicity and will obey God, He can use a very small brain and a very small stock of English words and phrases and a very small amount of English grammar to glorify His name.

II. Again, God uses the weak things of this world. If you don't like to take your place among the foolish things, the weak things come next in the scale of honour. There could not be anything weaker than Moses' rod, and yet when God sent him against the mightiest empire of the past, Moses asked Him what he was to take. He said: "What is this in your hand?" and Moses said: "A rod." That was enough and that rod broke the throne of Pharaoh, opened the rivers and the skies in judgment, divided the sea and opened a way for God's army to pass over, and brought the dark winged angel of death over every home in Egypt, and at last shattered Pharaoh and his army on the

shores of the Egyptian sea. That little rod in Moses' hand had been one of the weak things and it confounded the mighty.

There could not be anything weaker than Gideon's band of three hundred armed with a few pitchers with a few torches in the centre, and a trumpet in the other hand; almost as foolish as -Joshua's ram's horns, and yet these three hundred men were stronger than thirty thousand, and God had to send back the multitudes, because there were too many for Him to use; they were not weak enough for victory, and when He got them so that they saw no strength but His, then power and victory came to them.

It seemed much wiser and much stronger for David to put on Saul's armour when he went against the gigantic Goliath. Saul himself tried to induce him to put on the armour, but he refused to touch them and armed with his little sling and his three stones from the valley, he went out weak enough for victory and for God to use him and God did use him as the type of all those victories which he promised us, not by might nor by power, but by the Holy Ghost. All the army of Saul could not even attack the Philistines. Two helpless men put them to flight because they were weak enough to depend upon God and give Him all the glory. Even Sampson, with all his physical strength, could not be used of God until God put a weak and foolish instrument into his hand, the jaw bone of an ass, that God might be the more glorified. And the Lord sent out His apostles - sent them out in their weakness, a little band without any earthly influence, or power, or prestige, and He told them that their very weakness was their strength. And Paul says: "When I am weak, then I am strong and I glory in my very infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." He giveth power not to the strong, but to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. The youths shall faint and be weary; the young men shall utterly fail; but they who wait upon the Lord shall be mighty through God. It is a strange paradox, I know, dear friends, but it certainly has been true for me, and I am certain that many of you have found it true for you. The man who received the judgment of retribution was the man that had only one talent. And so, the great danger, dear friends, if you and I shall fail is just the fear of our weakness. God is calling the average workers, the little ones. His army is made up of the rank and file, of such as you. And be very careful that you do not commit a sin through that very weakness, because to be unduly self-conscious of your weakness is to be just as selfish as if you were making a great deal of your strength. How often God has done through a little child what great and strong men could not do. How many a hard heart has been broken by the simple, tender words of a lisping infant, which all the wisdom of man, which all the arguments of science could not break! I think it was the predecessor of Dr. Tyng in Philadelphia - I know it was in the same church - and he was a very brilliant and useful minister of the Gospel, who in his early years was an ambitious politician. He was elected to Congress, served several terms, got into an ambitious life and had no interest in religion. He refused all the appeals of letters, and sermons, and urgencies of friends, and was going on in his high career of success and of almost infidelity, when one day, as he returned from Congress, his little three year old girl came up to him and said, "Papa, do you know I can read?" and he said, "Darling, can you read?" and she said, "Yes." "Let me hear you," said her father, and she took up a little Testament and read: "T-h-o-u s-h-a-l-t l-o-v-e t-h-e L-o-r-d w-i-t-h a-l-l t-h-y h-e-a-r-t" and she looked up in his face with tears and smiles dancing there together and she didn't understand why it was that the tears came into her father's eyes too, but he took her to his bosom and pressed her and kissed her over

and over again, and he said, "Yes, darling, it is lovely; I am so glad you can read." and he went from that nursery and on his knees before God he took the wounded heart that that little arrow pierced, and he rested not until he could say, "Yes, Lord, I, too, love thee with all my heart." But O, that little word was the word that saved him.

A very learned minister preached a series of sermons on infidelity for the benefit of a very learned man in his church. There were some seven sermons, and he rendered them to his entire satisfaction and soon after he got through the infidel came to him and said that he was a Christian and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. He was very much gratified. He took all the credit to himself. After it was all talked over he said, "Now, my dear friend, will you tell me which of my lectures it was that convinced you?" He said, "Sir, it was not any of your lectures. It was that poor hobbling coloured woman, who, when she came out, would mutter among her tears, 'O, my precious Saviour, my precious Saviour; I could not live without You!' and I watched that woman and saw that it came right straight from her heart. I did not hear all that you said, hut I was deeply attracted by what she said. It was that which convinced me." It was one of the weak things of the world that God uses to confound the mighty. Do not be ashamed to do a little for God. Remember that the vast fields of the summer are made by little blades of grass, the foliage of the forest is made by little leaves, the joys of life are made out of little tokens of love; and I would rather - O, yes, I would rather give away all the great things in life than lose the little ones. I could not get on without them. And so God wants the humble services, the little ones. And so, you little children, you hard working men and women, you who can speak a word in the workshop, you who can work for Christ in your home, you, who can be sweet and holy little children for Jesus Christ, you, who have just the one talent, it is precious to God and it is very precious for your reward, don't lose it, but be one of the things that God uses to confound the mighty.

III. Another of the category is the base things. Now, I think this means the things that are either humble in their human relationship or associated with sin and with shame in their moral character and antecedents. Now, God loves to take the things that men consider low and use them to confound the things that men consider high. How often has He placed men on the thrones of earth, who came from the very kitchens of their masters, and who were despised as menial servants. Moses was the son of a slave, and yet it was the slave's child that conquered the proud Pharaoh. As I look back on the men and women that have told on society and on Christian life and work, I think I can say that among my fellow students and acquaintances they have been the children of the poor; they have been the boys and girls that fought with toil and adversity and won by energy and courage the success that God has given. Someone in giving the biography of the past two centuries says, "Some have succeeded by wealth, some by genius, some by influence, but the most of them by beginning without a penny." God "takes the poor from the dunghill and sets him with kings and princes."

And so, young men and humble men, there is no rank of usefulness that God will withhold from you if you are not afraid, like the children of Joseph, to go forth and conquer the hard places. "Give us a double inheritance," they said to the Lord. "You shall have it," He said, "if you are willing to conquer it in the face of difficulties," and so God says to every one.

But among the things that God uses, are also the things that were sinful. They that are in the lowest scale of morality are the ones that God has chosen and cleansed and made His instruments of blessing. It has been to me so strange that all through the pedigree of the Son of God it has pleased the Father to link in the most ignoble and once unworthy names. So that as we read the ancestry of Jesus we find mixed up in it in the regular line the name of Tamar, the daughter of Judah, who had the bar sinister on her life, and the name Rahab, the abandoned woman of Jericho, who believed and was chosen to be a link in the motherhood of Christ, that one should glory in His presence. And then again, even Mary through whom He came, while pure and holy as Heaven itself, yet was lowly in her social standing, and ever bore the shame before the world of a strange misunderstanding. Yes, the Lord has been pleased to take these things, and you know today that He has taken His Bunyans from the cursing, swearing, sinful crowds. He has taken His Jerry McAuleys from the prisons, His Morehouses from the pickpockets, and His Richard Weavers from the lowest ranks of sin, and chosen them to be His ministers, that no one should glory in His presence, and to prove the power of the grace of God to use the most unworthy, if only surrendered to His hands. Dear friends, has there been sin in your life? Is everything naturally against you? Have you been one of these that the Lord would be glad to choose, just to show by the very extent to which He lifts you up, the power of His infinite grace?

IV. Again, the despised things. Now, God can not use anybody very much without men persecuting him. "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you," is a strange and sadly true sentence of our tender Master. It was the despised Hebrews that God used to destroy the Egyptians. It was when their enemies were saying, "What do these feeble Jews?" that God built up the walls of Jerusalem. It was when the poor fellow was put out of the synagogue that Jesus found him and said, "Have they put you out? Well, I will take you in," and He sent him forth as the chosen instrument to put to confusion those proud men. And so it was that the Methodists in the days of Wesley got their nickname and the people that were ridiculed, that received this very name as a nickname, today have 25,000,000 followers in every land beneath the face of the sun. And, O, today, when I hear men laughing, jeering and scorning, I say, "Laugh on for the Lord has another laugh, and He will always turn it on the other side; let them curse on, the Lord will requite me blessing for their cursing this day." Don't be afraid to stand among the poor, despised company of Jesus, if it is in the name of Jesus, for the work of God and for the salvation of men. God is just going to use such things. He hath chosen the despised ones to bring to naught the proud ones.

How very often have I seen some very feeble, simple-minded one come into our work that seemed almost to be lacking in something, and I have heard good and well-meaning people say; "Now, you need not expect anything of this person." And, do you know, I have never seen that yet but God has taken hold of that person and done some wondrous thing for them. Some of the most marked cases of divine healing I have ever seen were people that were so weak that people would say, "They haven't anything in them," and the Lord said, "I will vindicate them." I remember, a few weeks ago, getting almost impatient with two persons. It seemed they were so unreasonable that I could not expect anything, and I had no sooner made up my mind than God took up those people and made them the very monuments of His love and power; and I said, "Praise the Lord!" I am afraid to think little of anybody. I am afraid to let the faintest shadow of deprecation pass my lips about the humblest and the lowest of His dear

children, for I am always expecting Him to come fast behind with horses and chariots of salvation, and lift them up and make them ride by His side.

There was a poor fellow that had been promoted from the ranks, and the officers were making fun of him. The colonel saw it, and he said; "Captain, I want you to come and lunch with me." He went and lunched with the colonel, and after lunch was over, the colonel took his arm, and they marched up and down in front of the other's tents, arm in arm. These foolish English officers had laughed and scorned, but the next time they met him their hats were off. The colonel had taken him by his side; and when the Lord takes people to ride or walk with Him, we can safely go along. Let us be careful lest we be found despising. The Lord knows a little about scorn as well as you. "Surely He scorneth the scorners but He giveth grace unto the lowly," and He hath chosen the things that are despised to confound the things that are proud. The banner of our calling is the cross of shame; and so the offense of that cross will last until He comes again. And out of the darkness and the blush of man's reproach will come the glory to our crown, and we shall not be sorry at one reproach, nor feel not the one blush of shame for which He said, "For your shame ye shall have double!" O, how often has He said that to me: "For your shame ye shall have double" - just twice as much as if you didn't have the shame - "and for confusion, ye shall rejoice in your portion."

V. Now, the things that are not. These are His last favoured ones. God hath chosen the things that are not to bring to naught the things that are." That means that God can not make anything out of you until you not only get lowly and weak, but until you get utterly dead, so that you are not at all. It is a good thing to be weak, and it is a good thing to lie down and it is a good thing to be willing to be despised, but it is better than all to be nothing at all, to cease to be, and to be able to say: "I live - no, I made a mistake; not I, but Christ liveth in me." That is the meaning of the things that are not. God could not use Abraham until Abraham was so yielded up that even his Isaac was given over to the Lord with such simple trust that he just believed that the Lord knew all about it, and would do better than he could understand. Joshua could not enter the land of Canaan until Joshua got out of the way. It was not enough that they had crossed the Jordan; it was not enough that Moses had died; it was not enough that they had been circumcised; but then the angel met Joshua and said: "Joshua down on your face and get out of the way." And Joshua said: "Who are you?" And He said: "I am captain." "Why, I thought I was captain," Joshua no doubt thought. "I thought you had told me to take the land?" "No, I am captain," said the Angel; and He said: "Take off your shoes and get down on your face." And Joshua got down on his face, and said: "What hath my Lord to say to His servant?" Joshua was dead. He was one of the things that are not, and God could use him to bring to naught the things that are.

Peter could not be used by the Lord until Peter killed himself by his denial, put his pride and confidence away, and got down in the dust, shamed and discouraged, and then the Lord came to him when Peter was gone, lifted him up, and gave him a new commission.

Paul was not used by God until he gave up his name Saul, and took the name Paul, "the little," and said: "Less than the least of all saints, not worthy to be called an apostle, the chief of sinners. Nay, not I at all, but Christ that liveth in me." Then the Lord lived, the Lord reigned, and the Lord used him.

These are the things that God uses. Are you willing to be one of them? If you are, then the blessed assurance is yours: “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord.” If you are weak, if you are dead, if you are nothing, rise up now on your feet; put on the new life, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will be your wisdom and He will be your strength, and in His sufficiency you can do all things.

Let us not then be so occupied with the thought of what we are not, as what we are in Christ. His last thought, His last word, is the word of all-sufficiency. “Of Him are ye, of yourselves ye are not, but you are something, you are everything in Him.” O, I know so many people who say, “I am nothing; I can do nothing.” God wants you to go farther: “I am nothing; I can do all things in Him.” May the Lord help us to take that place and standing today so that we shall know the full meaning of these two great words: MY INSUFFICIENCY, CHRIST’S ALL SUFFICIENCY.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

“And if any man ask ought of you, say the Lord hath need of them. Tell ye the daughter of Zion; Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass and a colt, the foal of an ass.” - Matthew 21:3, 5

There were few in these days of our Lord who had not either seen or heard of a Roman triumphal procession, or witnessed on a smaller scale the pageants of Herod; and they had heard all over the world of the majestic and magnificent entrance to the capital of returning consuls, and generals and emperors after some great victory; how, for days before, the city was clothed in holiday attire; everything was suspended but pleasure and pomp and at the appointed time the procession began to move along the sacred way toward the capital, preceded by great masses of splendid soldiers in perfect discipline and uniform, followed by long trains of captives, including kings and princes, and sometimes queens and beautiful women, walking in chains before the victor, while great multitudes of cattle for the sacrificial altar followed next behind; and then came the king or general himself in a gorgeous chariot drawn by many horses, clothed with every colour of splendour, and followed by the vast train of the people given up to the carnival and revelry, until at last the pageant reached the steps of the capital; and then some of those queens and kings and princesses would be taken aside and executed there, as the first sacrifice of the cruel, selfish triumph; and then the cattle were slain and offered in sacrifice to their heathen gods. So the mighty Caesar or some of his satellites would show himself the king. That was the human kingdom, that was man's stairway to a throne, and it was covered with cruelty and selfishness and blood.

The dear Lord Jesus in this chapter gives us His triumphal procession. He, too, was marching to a throne and to a kingdom. For thirty-three years He had been stepping up to it by the slow ascension of suffering and love. He refused from the devil the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them in a moment of time, and He would take His kingdom from His Father only - the pathway of blood, and sorrow and holy ministering love. And now, after long refusing earthly glories, after refusing the Galileans His consent to make Him a king, after passing so long through the pathway of obscurity, at last He puts aside the veil and lets them see Him in His true royalty and His kingly glory, and He begins to ascend the throne which for a little while only He will keep, but by and by He is going to sit upon forever.

Starting first from Jericho, He begins by healing poor Bartimeus, and then saving Zaccheus. Then He passes on to the home of Bethany, and is anointed by Mary, and then the next morning He passes on down the slopes of Olivet. Two of His disciples were sent before Him to prepare the way. A little ass and its colt upon which no man had ever sat are the chariots which He uses - sitting upon the lowliest, most commonplace of burden bearers, one that was used for toil and the meanest drudgery - on that little beast of burden He sits down, with the garments of his disciples as His trappings, then the multitude strew the way with palm branches and the little children cry: “Hosanna to the Son of David;” until at last the multitude join the procession, for there were three million of people at this time gathered around Jerusalem; it was the feast time, and on side hundreds of thousands of them were dwelling in little tents on the hillsides; and they heard the sounds and flocked around and joined them, until there

was as vast a procession, perhaps, as ever accompanied Caesar to his throne; and, in the midst, rides the royal Nazarene, meek and lowly, and sitting upon an ass.

On the way, He pauses just before the descent, and gazes on the city. There is no light of triumph on His brow today; there is no self-glorying in that face, as He halts and looks down on the city at His feet. He gazes a moment, and then there burst from His eyes great floods of tears, and He weeps and weeps again in the hour of His triumph, and says, "If thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes." And then He passes into the temple and as a King claims His place as its Master, driving out the earthliness and claiming it for His Father and Himself and stands there in the face of His enemies teaching and healing for whole week, defying them to arrest Him until His hour has come, a king in every sense - of wisdom, power, suffering and love. He shows Himself here as a King.

First, we see Him as the King of human hearts. He begins His royal march at Bethany, and receives first from Mary the offering of her love. Then, next we see Him as the King of the Jews, the Son of David, claiming the throne of Jerusalem, which He is yet to restore and possess. Then we see Him as the King of the Temple, stepping into His own house and saying; "My house." Three years before He had performed a similar miracle and said, "My Father's house." But He calls it "My house" now and He cleanses it by His word. Then, we see Him as the King of Love, weeping over sinners, and pardoning them in His mercy and then finally, we see Him as the conqueror of sin and sorrow and death, with a crown of thorns on His brow, the Author of redemption, the Prince of our salvation. You think of Him as your priest, you think of Him as your prophet, but He wants you to know Him as your King - ruling over you, ruling in you, conquering for you, and taking you to spread His kingdom abroad through the world.

Then, the coming of Christ to His kingdom, in this instance is the type of His coming to the individual heart. His ascension, His descent from the Mount of Olives, and His entrance to Jerusalem, is the foreshadowing of that which has come to some of our hearts, and which He wants to have come to all. O, it is a glorious hour in the soul's life when a voice from heaven says: "Daughter of Zion, behold, thy King cometh unto thee." You never know the deep reality and the central fact of living Christianity until on the mountain you hear that voice: "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;" and, then, in your heart the sweet answering echo: "The Lord in the midst of thee is mighty." "Rejoice greatly, O, daughter of Zion, for lo, I come and dwell in the midst of thee."

Is it true for you? Has the King come on His throne in your heart? Is Jesus, the Son of God, ruling in you in glory and royal majesty and supreme dominion? O, if He be, the world's glories are but a poor sham and mockery. Ambition can not tempt you, avarice can not lead you aside. You have the King of kings within you, and you possess the reality of which all else is but the imitation.

Do you know this? I believe today He is coming to some of you. I shall never forget the day when across the face of these skies there was to me a living form, a real Christ - an everlasting friend who henceforth was no longer to be so far away that I had to pass through clouds and vast immensities to reach Him, but His throne was in the heart and His presence was within whispering distance: King of the heart and the life for all things to those that love and trust Him. O that today you might, listening, hear the:

voice: that says: "Daughter of Zion, thy King cometh unto thee;" and, by and by, you shall hear that other voice: "Daughter of Zion, thy King cometh for thee."

These were the dying words of Frances Ridley Havergal, that glorious spirit who shone in the sky of Christian life for many years, as dear to many of us as if we had known her personally. When she passed away it seemed as though we had lost a personal friend, and I like to trace the last moments of her life as she lay on that couch of pain and agony. Her face so lighted up that it was glorious, her whole frame reaching out and stretching forth as though to meet someone in mid air, and at last the words breathed up from her parted lips: "My King, my King, my King," and she passed away. But O, there had come an hour long before that when she had said: "My King, my King," and she took Him into her heart. He will never come for you as a King if He does not come to you first. Is He your King, beloved? O, don't be put off with the Christianity of mere church membership. Don't be: mocked with the Christianity of mere baptism and confirmation and communion. Don't be satisfied with the mere hope of pardon and of heaven. Beloved, the true religion is Jesus within you, a living King and a glorious Friend. May God grant that it may be true for you today: "Thy King cometh unto thee."

Again let me say before I leave it, that you can not have God to come to you until you get like Him, meek and lowly. Thy King cometh to thee meek and lowly.

Now, some of you would not like to have Him come sitting on an ass. If He would come in a carriage, ring the bell respectfully, and have a good deal of show and social style, you would like it well but I am afraid if Jesus was to ride upon an ass to some of these mansions on Fifth Avenue, they would wonder who it was, and they would want Him to go around to the back door. They would not think that was treating them with respect.

Now, if your King is going to come to you, He: is not going to come to you with pride. Our King comes in such a way that have to get down on your knees and meet something that brings real humiliation, that makes you very small and if you are not willing to get down and be loyal and take Christ as the meek and lowly One, He is not going to come: to you. I have known some people that never could get God's full blessing until they let somebody bring it to them that they didn't think much of. The Lord is going to come to you in this way, and if you will not let Him come thus, He has plenty of other places to go. Are you willing to have Him as your King on His own level?

Again, when He comes He will cleanse the temple. You must remember that He is going to control your heart and love. Have you offered and dedicated yourself to Him for this?

This is also the type of His coming to His work and His Church in great spiritual blessings, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the quickening of God's work, and often in the new departure of the Church of God at such a time as this in our lives and history as a Church. Applying it to ourselves, we may look up and say: "Come:, Lord Jesus, and take command of Thy work; be the Captain of Thy host; be: the King of Thy kingdom; be the Proprietor of Thy house; be the Master of this work; be the Beginning and the End, the All-in-all of Thy people and all they desire to be, to have,

and do for Thee.” And I trust it is true of us today that the voices of yonder watchers are saying, “Rejoice greatly, O people of God, be glad, O land, for the Lord will do great things for you. He shall give you the years that the canker worms have eaten, and ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord who hath dealt wondrously with you and My people shall never be ashamed.”

And then, again, this is the type of His second coming, for that is what most of all our hearts look forward to in hope and watchful and earnest preparation. “Behold, thy King cometh to thee,” in a still grander sense. There is no coming of Christ to the heart, there: is no coming of Christ to the Church, there is no coming of Christ to the world, that can satisfy the longing for His personal return. Some people will tell you that they have Him in their soul, and that is enough. I find that the people who have Him in their soul long most for His nearer coming in the glorious advent.

There may be those here, this morning, to whom this is a new and somewhat unfamiliar thought. I will, therefore, just say in a few simple sentences that we believe the Scriptures to teach very plainly - and the number that so believe is increasing today in every part of the Church - that the great hope of Christ’s Church is His own personal advent, His own return in the flesh to this world again where He walked before for thirty-three years, and as He ascended to heaven, said: “I will come again and receive you to myself.” “This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.”

We believe that this dispensation is the dispensation of the Gentiles, and that God is gathering in from the heathen nations a people for His kingdom. All that are willing to accept the: Gospel are accepted and pardoned, and shall have a share in the blessings of His kingdom; but He has nowhere said that during this age will the whole world be converted. The whole world is to hear the message, but only a portion shall accept it. Many shall be called, but few shall be chosen, and yet all shall be without excuse. When all shall have had an opportunity through the various tribes of earth, then we are told that the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in, and then the Lord will return and save His people Israel and give to the Jews again the hopes of their fathers, and the salvation which they rejected when He was here on earth. At the same time, He will Himself return and reign over them, He will be the literal King of Zion, He will sit on the throne of His Father, David, His ancient followers shall sit with Him ruling Israel.

This glorious day of the dear Lord’s return is to be to us the day of the resurrection. It is to bring our return from the dust of death; or, if we shall be living at the time, it is to bring our translation into our resurrection bodies. It is to bring back our loved and lost who have died in Him, and it is to bring our own perfect spiritual and physical life. When He comes these bodies will be no more feeble, but they will be immortal. These souls will be free and glorious and pure like His, and together we shall meet Him and reign with Him on the earth for a thousand happy years.

That is the sure hope of the Gospel, and the promise of His Word. The conviction is pressing on Christians today that this advent is very near, that in the upheavals of society, in the workings of evil, in the intense unrest of the human heart, in the breaking up of nations and of social structures everywhere, in the throbbing of the world’s heart in the earnest spirit of revival that is coming forth in the Church of God, in the: love for His coming which is taking possession of the hearts of Christians, in

strange manifestations of God's hand and power today in the healing of disease and the working of divine power in every part of the world we are seeing the signs of a great crisis very near, and that yonder these spaces are teeming with chariots and with horsemen that forms unseen are gathering, that great armies are marshalling, and that the trumpet of the great procession is sounding afar, and a voice is beginning to say: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." O, it is indeed a solemn age! I have not talked with an earnest man for several years, but has said, "It is the most solemn age I ever knew of, and we are on the verge of a great and important change." I believe that the dear Lord is coming soon, and perhaps we have come with this work and into this place to be ready for His advent to prepare others to meet Him, and to spread abroad the message of His salvation and of His kingdom to all the world before He comes.

Now, it is for this that the Lord Jesus is calling you today. "Behold thy King cometh unto thee;" and, because He is coming, "the: Lord hath need of thee."

Let us look a moment at the Lord's instruments, the persons and things He wants to use.

First, you notice He wanted a poor, blind beggar - poor Bartimeus was one of them He had need of. Next, He sent two of His disciples before Him. Then, thirdly, He needed a little colt; the humble foal of an ass was His chief instrument; not the chariots and horsemen of Herod or Pilate, but a lowly little beast of burden, whom men only despised.

Again, He wanted the garments of the people to prepare for His coming. I believe, when the Lord Jesus is coming, He wants such instruments still. He wants poor, blind Bartimeus to tell the people that He is coming; He wants the blind and the dumb to speak for Him. He wants the two disciples - the lowly ones. He wants the little colt. And He wants your very robes to be ready and to be worthy of Him.

Again, He: wanted the children as the instruments which were to share in His coming. The little ones were the voices which raised the cry, "Hosanna," and if we are to be used much to prepare for Christ's coming, we must gather the children.

Again, He wants the cry of poor sinners to herald His coming, for this word, "Hosanna," just means the cry of the sinner; it means "Have mercy on me." It is not Hallelujah. That is a blessed cry. But Hosanna is the very voice of a poor, guilty man, and the Lord wants sinners by the thousand to throng at His feet and to prepare His way by their penitential tears, their cries for mercy and their songs of salvation. Jesus wants these things. He is in need of them - in need of the two disciples, in need of the little colt, in need of your garments, in need of your children, in need of poor sinners. O, if you today are a poor, lost man, the Lord hath need of you, and He is going to call somebody today that will be one of the glorious lamp-bearers in the procession of His advent. It seems to me if I were an unsaved sinner nothing would have more weight to lead me to Christ than this blessed thought that He will take me to be His servant and His helper; and so, today, if one of you has been living for self and sin, the Lord will take you this very moment, and, turning from Him, you can go forth as one of the heralders of His coming and one of the instruments to prepare for it.

Now, remember, dear friend, the Lord really needs you, for He would not say, unless He meant it, that He needs you and your services to prepare for His coming. The Lord needs today people that understand His Gospel, He needs people that understand His coming, He needs people who love His coming, He needs people that labour for His coming, He needs your prayers, He needs your influence; and, today, in His mighty name, would I throw this mighty word - for O, it seems to me it is just like a cord that should bind you to His altar - "The Lord hath need of thee" and calls thee today to prepare for His return. "The Lord hath need of thee." I don't know where you are, but He needs you just there. I don't know what your station, but you are just in the place, in the situation, that He needs you in. He has adjusted your life for this very thing and put you in these very circumstances. He needed the Hebrew maid not in Israel, but in Syria not as a daughter of Samaria at home, but as a poor captive abroad. So He needs you in your place, perhaps, as a helper in some position of humility.

He needed little Miriam just to come at the right moment. It may seem very little that you should teach a child, but some one of those little ones may be the last great herald of the Master's coming. You don't know what He is going to do. He needs you, and O, it is so solemn for me to feel that He needs me just in the place He puts me and tells me to stand. Sometimes He gives demands and directions that seem a little strange and difficult, positions that require the crucifixion of one's self-consciousness, but if He needs us, there stand if you stand alone. The Lord understands it. The Lord hath need of you, and the Lord will stand for you.

He needs a little rivet, just as much as the great revolving wheel. Remember, the whole of life may hang on you. O, if we could get men and women to understand that the whole framework of God's kingdom rests on each one's faithfulness. If they would come to their work, not saying this one or that one is going to pray, it will be all right, but saying, "If I fail, everything may fail; I am the very one called to hold up God's cause at this point. I must stand just as the soldier in that battlefield must stand, knowing that if he breaks the line the other lines may break. So the Lord has need of you today. Be careful, be faithful, and trust Him for evermore.

And now, in closing, the Lord not only needs you, but He has a right to claim you. The Lord created you, made your body, made your soul for this very purpose - not to be indulged and admired, but because He needed you. Your very countenance, your very form, your very tone of voice, your very place in the family, your very social position, God gave you because He needed you. It belongs to Him. It is a part of His investment in you. It is a dreadful sacrilege to hold it back- The Lord not only created you, but He has provided for you, He has kept you, He has spent upon you more than anybody else ever spent, and He has a right to you. The Lord has redeemed you - bought you back. If you buy an article, you rather expect to get the good of it. If you buy a house, you don't expect anybody else to get the benefit of it, and so the Lord redeemed you for His own special use.

I should be ashamed to have my old father labour for twenty years, and work out his life and leave me his inheritance, and then take that money and squander it. Yes, I should be ashamed to take the blood of Christ to cover my sin or to save my wounded conscience, and prostitute it for sin. It is a horrible breach of trust. O, give up the cross of Jesus if you are going to live for self and sin. Let Christ go. Just as soon take your

mother's picture into that house of shame and hold it up to ridicule and derision as take the blood of Jesus into sin. It is too sacred. You were bought. You are not your own. The Lord hath need of you and is expecting your service and has waited for it far too long already.

Again, not only has He redeemed you, but He owns you as His property. You say, "Well, I have not consecrated myself to God. I haven't gone as far as these people. This man and that woman have consecrated themselves, and I expect a good deal of them." O, dear soul, Christ consecrated you when He died for you. You are as much His own as if you had given yourself. The only difference is, the other has recognised the claim and you have not; but you are His; you belong to Him; you are not your own, and that does not lessen your obligation. The Lord has claims upon you. It is a very touching thought to me that He has made us the members by which He is to do His own work. He has made us the instruments of conveying His great gifts to the world, and He does not seem to have any other way to communicate Himself fully except through you. You just stand in the position of being Christ's hands, and feet, and tongue and limbs. He is the Head and you are the body. Now, suppose my head and heart wanted to do certain things, and my hands would not obey. Suppose my feet would not go forth on those errands; suppose that I was all paralysed or divided up, or selfish, and would not obey the voice of my brain, what a strange, distorted life I would have. Now, that is just the way our dear Lord is. He is our Head and we are His hands. He wants you to be a blessing to the world, and you will not, He is hindered by His own very flesh and blood.

If you were a trustee appointed for the special care of a sum of money which was to be for the benefit of poor children, and some good-hearted friend had put a million dollars in your hands, and you used it for yourself, how his heart would regret that he had given you this trust and let his kind purpose be hindered by your faithlessness. You and I are the executors of His blessing, and if we don't obey Him, when we meet Him at the last He will hold us responsible for the souls that are lost, and for our failure to carry out the purpose of His blessing. He needs you and me, and I trust that over this company of Christians as you pass out today, will hang a spell thrown over you from the Eternal, thrown over you from the cross where He died, thrown over you from the heaven where He abides, thrown over you from the judgment seat where you shall give your account, "The Lord hath need of thee." He wants you, dear brother, for some great work for Him; you, dear sister, for some place you can not get excused from. He wants you to begin today and work for the Lord's coming. He sends you forth, saying: "Loose that little colt that is tied. Set free that influence that is bound up. The Lord hath need of it. He puts His hand on your shoulder and you can not be released.

May God help you to be true, for it is sad when we disobey the claim of God. The barren fig tree was needed, but it would not give Him any fruit. The Lord had need in this very lesson of the fruit of that tree, but it refused Him its fruit. And what was the consequence? Before another day had come it was withered. And so, beloved, if the Lord has need of you and you don't meet Him, He will wither you, too, and you will stand like that barren tree. O, there are lives, I know, today, that don't know what is the matter - all blasted, all barren, all joyless, because when the Lord needed them they were afraid to obey. They refused to step out, and the Lord has no more use for them. The Lord will excuse you if you want to be excused. When Elijah went to anoint Elisha

to be a prophet, Elisha said, "Suffer me to kiss my father and mother." And Elijah said, "Go, and return. What have I done to you?" As if he had said, "It does not matter. If you don't mind, God doesn't mind. You can be excused." Elisha went and took his oxen and his plough and offered them up in sacrifice to his God, lest he should be tempted to go back again - gave the whole thing over to God - and was henceforth known as the man who poured water on the hands of Elijah. "The Lord has need of thee," but if you want to be excused, He may say, "Go, return. What have I done to you? I will call somebody else." But O, I should not like to be excused.

And, O, the blessedness, on the other hand, of being used by God; the sweetness of that consciousness that the Lord did take us and make something of us. I have at some time seen in a museum a drinking cup of George Washington, and how it was treasured because he drank water out of it; or the pen of some martyr, or the ink bottle of some reformer how they treasured it. John Knox sat in that old chair, and O, how men treasure it because he needs it. By and by they will come again in yonder heaven and say, "The Lord used her; the Lord used him," and you will be forever glorious because God made you His instrument. It is glorious to be used by God.

Once, away up in the Highlands of Scotland, Queen Victoria, while walking in the country near her summer palace, sat down in an old Highland lady's cabin and began to talk to her. She sat down on a little, old, three-legged stool and talked away for a long time with the old granny, but didn't let her know who she was, and then she said good-bye and left, the old lady wondering at her generosity. A few hours afterward, somebody came in and said, "Do you know who that is?" "No," she said. "Why, that was thee queen." "The queen! Did she sit on my stool?" And then she took up that stool and put it in a secret place by itself, and curtained it around. When people asked her why, she said: "Nobody will ever sit on that stool again." She handed it down to her children because her queen had sat upon it. I guess if the Roman Catholic Church, or the old Medieval Church, could have gotten the bones of that little colt that Christ sat upon, they would have built a church somewhere in Italy for it. It was not necessary that that little colt should ever drive the plough any more; it was not necessary that it should ever drag a cart. It had done its mission. The Lord had need of it, He used it, and forevermore it was linked with Him.

O, beloved, let the Lord use you and you will be glorious forevermore. Go this morning and say, "Lord, do you want me for this work, or do you want me for some work that perhaps I would not have chosen myself. Here I am, Lord. Thou hast need of me, and O, I have greater need of Thee." And when He comes you will find ten thousandfold return for the sacrifices and services of these days. With our faces, then, toward His second coming, let us go forth and let Him use us as He will, and then give to us a place by His side upon His throne; and to Jesus, our King, be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER FIVE

PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD

“We are labourers together with God” - 1 Corinthians 3:9

The members of an English publishing firm recently sat down together to their annual dinner in Exeter Hall. There were more than two thousand partners at the table. It was a strange sight to look at that immense crowd of men and realise that they were one firm. They had adopted the plan of making all their employees partners, and it had worked most successfully.

That picture leads our thoughts to a higher relationship. Our work for God is a great partnership. “We are labourers together with God.” When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He always declared that His work was done in partnership with His Father. “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” “The Father that dwelleth in Me He doeth the works.” And He taught His disciples that their work must be in similar partnership with Him. “He that believeth in Me the works that I do shall he do also.” And when He left them, Mark gives us this last picture of His ascension: “He was received up to heaven and sat on the right hand of God and they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.”

Let us look at the two sides of this partnership:

HIS PART

1. He pays our debts and establishes our credit.

He finds the firm insolvent and ruined, and not only so, but also criminal. And He pays all the old obligations and puts all His own credit to its account, making our standing as good as His own, even in the sight of God.

A friend of mine once told me of a business man of his acquaintance who had a dishonest clerk. The man embezzled considerable sums of money from him, but at last was brought to repentance and became a true Christian. He came to his employer, after a great struggle, to confess his wrong, expecting not only dismissal, but perhaps also severe punishment. The merchant heard his story and was deeply moved, for he knew that he might easily have escaped detection; and, when the contrite clerk closed by saying, “Of course I can not expect that you will ever employ me as a servant again,” he replied, “No, I never can employ you as a servant again. But,” he added after a pause, “you shall be a partner in my business, for I know the worth of such a testimony as that you have just given.” Not often does man act so nobly, but this is just what God has done. He has assumed our liabilities, has cancelled our crimes, has even suffered their consequences Himself, and has also taken us into His own complete fellowship and made us joint heirs in all His riches of grace and glory.

2. He supplies all the resources and capital of the business. He does not send us, like Pharaoh’s taskmasters, to work without materials, but He invests all the resources that we need, Himself. He does not even limit our capital, but says to us, “God is able to make all grace abound to you; so that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may

abound unto every good work.” We often see after the titles of business corporations the word “Limited.” But there is no such condition upon our incorporation in the service of God. It is all grace, always, with all-sufficiency in all things, and unto every good work. Our service is not to be measured, therefore, by our natural talents, our narrow sphere, or any condition. We can draw of Him to any extent for His work. A wealthy merchant said once to a dear servant of God, “Draw on me any time you need, for it will be honoured.” So God says to His workers, Where natural strength fails, and natural talent is insufficient, His power and His wisdom meet all demands. When you have to cry, “We have no might against this company, neither know we what to do,” then remember, “the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding,” when nature cries, “We are not sufficient even to think anything as of ourselves,” faith can answer, “But our sufficiency is of God; who hath also made us able ministers of the New Testament.”

3. He entrusts to us the chief work of His kingdom. He does not do it Himself and leave us simply to gather up the fragments, but He Himself does all that is difficult and trying, and leaves to us the joy of harvest.

Down into the wild wilderness He came and cleaned the ground and prepared the soil with toil and pain; and then to us He left the delightful task of rearing the fruits and harvest of His husbandry. He is the strong vine, sending out its roots into the deep places of strength and life and supporting all the branches, but to us, the branches, He gives the joy and riches of bearing the fruit. He spent thirty-three years amid the shame and toil of the workshop, the judgment hall and the cross, and when it was over He had less than a thousand followers in all the world. And to His disciples He gave thousands of souls in the first month after His ascension. “Greater works than these shall they do,” He says, “because I go to My Father.” To us He has given these greater works. Angels would be glad to do them, but mortals are privileged instead.

4. He prepares the workers. All true workers must be prepared. And the learning of a valuable business or art is no small advantage in secular affairs. For His service our Master Himself prepares His workers. “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” We are made with a special view to this very thing, that we may be adapted to good works. Adaptation is necessary in everything. Without it the fish is lost on the land and the fowl in the sea and the quadruped in the air. Each has its natural element and action, and this is easy and spontaneous. The organ is adapted for music, and the orange tree for fruit bearing, and the rose for sweet perfume. To try to make a rose grow oranges, and an organ act as a locomotive, would be foolish and idle business. And so, to expect an unregenerate soul to do Christ’s service is vain. It succeeds as well as a blacksmith would at a surgical operation, or a ploughman at a fresco painting. Therefore, Christ prepares His instruments. He makes them for this very end. He puts into them the instincts, impulses and endowments that will lead them to choose, to love and to accomplish the results intended. And He especially fits each one for the service assigned. Fitly framed together, they severally fulfil their respective relationships and spheres. Each of us is created, regenerated and divinely educated for the very place we are called to fill. The great Author of our spiritual training and the source of our power is the Holy Ghost. He is promised to every true servant of Christ as a “Spirit of power, of love and a sound mind.” Without Him and His gifts we can do nothing acceptable to God or effectual with men. He must open to us the Scriptures,

by which “the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” He must lead us into the separation and sanctification in which we shall be “meet for the Master’s use and prepared unto every good work.” He must reveal to us the things of God which are spiritually discerned and speak through us “in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,” or our words shall be idle and vain. And He does prepare His “chosen vessels” and his “polished shafts,” and make them “mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.”

5. He not only prepares the instruments, but He also prepares the works. Let us quote again from St. Paul: “Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them.” Our works are prepared for us, and we have but to walk in them. This is an unspeakable comfort. We have not to make them, but to receive them and wear them as habits and garments. Just as in the drama the actors may have to wear a great many different costumes, but they do not need to make them. They are provided for the piece; they have only to put them on and wear them in the proper place. At one time it is the part of a workman, at another a merchant, at another a prince; but the proper robe for each is provided, and they have only to put it on and wear it. So the Lord Jesus prepares our work for us. At one time we need the garment of love, at another power, at another wisdom; now we must understand a human heart, again we must weep with a mourner, again we must warn a hardened heart, now we must cheer a depressed one; again we must lead it to the Saviour, or the Sanctifier, or the Healer; or yet again we must meet some perplexing issue or decide at some great turning point in life. But all is ready, laid up for us in Christ our Lord, and only needing to be transferred into our life in action and experience. So that in the service, as much as in the experience, it is not I, but Christ; not our works, but His works in us; we being but the pen, and He the Hand that guides it; we but the voice, He the Word that speaks by it; we but the vessel, and He the precious Living Water that fills it. This makes our work so easy. It is spontaneous service the overflow of the heart. John Bunyan says of his book; “I wrote because joy did make me write.” So Jesus says of true service in the Spirit: “Out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water.” Most persons find their work a burden. The true servant of Christ finds the Lord carries both him and his burden, too. We begin our work for the Lord with great zeal and try to help the Lord and His cause. We feel at last that He needs not us or our eager impetuosity, and we are glad to lay the burdens of His work on Him. A little child insisted on carrying an armful of his father’s books upstairs. The father told him the load was too heavy, but the little fellow insisted and started with his load. By and by they came tumbling down in confusion, and he burst into tears and stretched out his tired hands to his father for help. The father took him to his arms, and then lifted the books and carried them, too. So He takes us and our service, and we serve Him best when we rest upon His breast and just let Him use us as He needs us and fills us. The disciples thought they could keep and manage Him when they took Him from His weary toil and put Him on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship to sleep. But they were glad to put themselves in His care ere long and awake Him to save them from destruction. And such service is as strong as it is calm. It moves with the mighty tides of heaven. “I labour,” Paul says concerning it, “according to His working which worketh in me mightily.”

6. And He rewards the work and shares the recompense with us as fully as if we had done it all. “He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal.” I can

not tell you what that reward will be. But you and I know something of the joy of bringing a soul to Jesus even here. We know something of what it means to have someone meet us in after years and tell us how some word or prayer of ours had once helped or saved them. O, what will it be, there, to find them coming from the East and the West, bringing the souls they have won, and recognising us as the instrument of all their blessing, while he shall say: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto these, ye have done it unto Me." "He shall make them sit down to meat, and shall Himself come forth and serve them." "They shall shine as the stars forever and ever." They shall be rulers over many things and shall enter into the joy of their Lord. They shall share His kingdom and His throne and be promoted to grander service through the millennial years. O, then we will not regret the nights of watching and days of toil, but wish we could have done and suffered more for so great and far-surpassing a recompense.

OUR PART

1. To recognise the work as His.

A great deal of Christian work is our work, and He only is consulted and asked to help it. True Christian service is given to Him, and done as His and at His bidding, and under His absolute responsibility and ownership. It is not, What am I doing for the Lord? But, What is the Lord doing through me?

Let us consecrate our work as well as ourselves. Then we shall not hear so much about our church, our connection, our cause, and our work, but like the men of old, shall "dwell with the King for His work."

2. To recognise the necessity and obligation of our co-working.

God could do without us. He could, by His direct omnipotence, Himself, do all He uses us to do. But He has appointed human agency in the salvation of men. He has arranged for the supply of the world with the Living Water by the pipes and channels of our hearts and hands. And, therefore, if we fail to do our part, there is a failure in the supply. What a grief it must be to Him to know that there is enough in the resources of redemption for all mankind, and that it cost Him His life-blood; and yet, through the unfaithfulness of His servants, so many are left to perish without it. We are members of Christ, and just as we have seen a large and generous heart and a gifted head hampered by a debilitated body, and hindered in carrying out its noble aims and purposes by paralysed limbs, so often Christ looks in vain for hands and hearts to carry out His merciful and mighty plans for a lost world.

He has so ordered it that His grace must reach others through us, and it is a great crime against His love as well as against the souls of men to fail to work together with Him. It is as great a crime as it would be for a generous benefactor to leave a large inheritance to the poor children of the city and deposit it with certain trustees for this end, and these trustees, instead of giving it to the persons for whom it was intended, should spend it on themselves and let the children starve in neglect. O, do we realise that we are His trustees, His representatives, His agents, His body, His hands, and feet, and voice, through whom He has condescended to work; and shall we not be true to our glorious Head and the trust that He has given us?

3. To work in His way and plan.

Much work is destroyed by being done in our way. He demands that if we build in His temple, we must build on His plan, on the foundation He has laid according to His specifications and with the materials He has supplied. "See that thou make all this according to the pattern showed thee in the mount." "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." We often hear of some new religious "enterprise" being started. The Church is not an "enterprise," but a divine temple, built of divine materials by the Holy Ghost through consecrated men and women. There is too much of man's "enterprise" about it. Instead of the simplicity of the Gospel, the power of the Spirit, the agency of truth, faith and prayer, the personal holiness of a consecrated membership, the testimony of people separated from the world, the power of personal work for souls, an open door for the poor and lost, an aggressive work to reach the outcast and hopeless, the free and voluntary gifts of God's children, a full Gospel for spirit, soul and body, and a church of which a living Christ is the Life and Lord we have smart preachers and fashionable people, operatic choirs and ungodly trustees, church fairs and Sunday school theatricals, religious concerts and charity balls, splendid church edifices and vast religious endowments, pew rents which exclude the poor, philosophical essays which exclude the Gospel and the Saviour, culture and scholasticism which leave out the Holy Ghost, and a mass of man's machinery which leaves little room for the supernatural operation, or the power of the Living God. The work of the apostles was under the direction of the Holy Ghost. Natural gifts were not despised, but all was fused into the living fire of the Spirit of power and consecration. The planting of Christianity in the continent of Africa was wholly due to the obedience of Philip to the Holy Ghost, bidding him leave a great work in Samaria and go down into the desert. The result was the conversion of the Prince of Ethiopia, and the first spread of the Gospel among the Gentile nations. The planting of the Gospel in Europe was also due to the obedience of Paul to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, forbidding him to preach in Asia and Bythinia, and calling him to Macedonia. The same God is with us still, and if we would let Him lead us, we should see the same glorious results.

4. To work in His strength. The reason why civilised nations are in advance of barbarous people is because they have learned the secrets of nature and know how to use the hidden forces of God. The savage needs a hundred men to drag the load which an American engineer can carry with a touch on the valve of his steam engine. The one uses his own strength, the other the hidden forces of nature. The mighty forces of electricity and steam are only God's power taken into partnership with man for his secular work. So we can take His power into partnership for spiritual work; and, instead of the toil and strain of our own wisdom and skill, we can put on His strength and use His omnipotence. A touch of God's hand is worth a million human hands. A company of engineers were lifting an immense and costly obelisk to its pedestal in Alexandria. They had raised it aloft, almost to the level of the base. But it needed one inch more to clear and swing in upon its pediment. The ropes had been strained to their utmost tension and nothing more could be done, without lowering the whole pulleys and mechanism and commencing over. There was a moment of intense disappointment. Man's power could do no more. Suddenly a sailor's voice rang out clear and sharp: "Wet the ropes." In an instant the engineer understood the simple hint. The ropes were saturated with water from top to bottom. In a few moments the immense obelisk began to rise, slowly, surely, silently - it has reached the level of the

base - it has passed it - it is swinging clear, it is settling in its place, the cords are loosed - it stands firm and steady on its foundation and a shout of cheers goes up from a thousand voices at the simple touch of power, that came forth from nature at a word. So is the work of God; there is a limit where all our strength comes to an end. The might of a million men can not go farther, but there is a secret place of power, and one whisper of faith will bring omnipotence so simply, so silently, so easily, yet so victoriously, that earth and heaven will shout the glad notes of praise forever. This is the secret of the work. "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto Me to the uttermost part of the earth." It is the same old Gospel. Let us put it into our work as well as our souls and we shall find that He is All in all.

CHAPTER SIX

WORDS FOR DISCOURAGED WORKERS

“Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein; For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will glory in the midst of her.” - Zechariah 2:4-5

Last week we listened to the words of encouragement from the old Prophet Haggai, as he spake to the band of captives who were restoring the temple of God in Jerusalem. About the same time there was another prophet named Zechariah, a young man, who perhaps at this time was just beginning his prophetic ministry, whose voice was also associated by the Lord with Haggai's in this ministry of help.

It was on the first day of the sixth month that Haggai opened his lips, and it was in the eighth month that Zechariah began his ministry, and in the eleventh month of the same year that he gave the next series of visions. So you see there was a great deal done between the sixth and the eleventh month. God compressed a great deal into a small space when His people were ready for it.

Let us, this morning, look at some of the messages of Zechariah. They are quite different from Haggai's but have in them the same spirit with a deeper poetry and a loftier inspiration. The first message that Zechariah gave to the people was not exactly one of reproof, but it was a gentle reminder of the warnings which had already been given and a very serious caution not to forget them.

But he does not linger long over the words of reproof. He just touches the canvas with a mere outline of the vision of judgment that, like a departing cloud, has gone and will never come again if they are faithful; and then he presses on to that which is bright and hopeful, and in a series of eight visions gives them a succession of pictures of hope and cheer like, perhaps, nothing else in the sacred volume for beauty and encouraging power. They all came on the same night. It took many hours to record them and many years to fulfil them; but they all came before the mind of this young man perhaps in a single hour. It was on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, very near the close of the year, when sleep perhaps was beginning to throw its veil over his brain, there rose before him a panorama of strange scenes, peopled with moving forms from the heavenly world, and voices fell upon his ear, and God covered him with the cloud of His presence, and out of the glory came these wonderful visions.

I. Encouragement against their depression.

The first was a vision of a low bottom, something like the banks of the river Nile, or the low bank of the Kedron, and on this low land were growing groves of myrtle trees, looking something like a city of the dead, for the myrtle was the tree of sorrow; and, as he looked upon the scene, the low valley and the dark green myrtle branches, the type of his people's sorrow and sadness, he saw in the midst of them a number of war horses of different colours with heavenly horsemen seated upon them, and he asked who they were. The answer came that these were God's messengers, whom He had sent abroad throughout the earth. As he watched, he saw another form, no longer an

angel, but the angel of the covenant Himself - the Son of God. There in the midst of this dark, sad scene, beside these angel horsemen he sees Jesus Christ, the angel of the covenant, and He lifts his voice to Heaven and begins to pray for his suffering people; "O, Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years" - the seventy years of the captivity. It was Jesus praying for His people. It was the Great High Priest beginning His intercession for you and for me. Others had prayed, but there had not come any answer. But now Jesus clasps His hands and looks up to His Father, and utters just one prayer to God, and the shadow of seventy years passes away - the clouds are all broken. And the next verse contains the answer: "The Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words." The Father can not turn away the pleadings of His Son. One prayer of Jesus is worth a million of the best prayers on earth. If you want to get your prayers answered, get Him to pray for you. All the years of this restoration began with that little prayer of Jesus to His Father. And is it not glorious to know today that He ever liveth to make intercession for us? For we have a great High Priest who has passed into the Heavens - Jesus the Son of God. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Then the answer goes on: "Cry thou, saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies. My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."

That is the first vision. It is the vision of the sorrow and depression of God's people - among the myrtle trees, in the bottom, low down and covering themselves with sorrow, with God's mighty angels moving among them, God's dear Son praying for them, and God answering: "I am returned with mercies."

II. Encouragement against their enemies.

We come now to the second vision. "I lifted up mine eyes and saw four horns." He knew what they meant. They were the symbols of those cruel earthly powers that had pushed against Judah and Jerusalem, and pierced her heart and crushed her under their ruthless feet - the horns of earthly power, the figure by which God always represents the evil powers of the world. But he says, "I lifted up mine eyes again, and I saw four carpenters," with saw and hatchet and plane, coming to meet and fray these sharp horns. "What are these?" he asks. "These horns," he says, "are the horns that have scattered Judah, and these carpenters have come to fray them" - that is, to peel them down and take the sharp points from them, and soften them as you would soften the end of a broom, so that they should have no power to harm. This second vision means defense against the hostility of enemies. The four horns mean that there are enemies on all sides - north and south, and east and west. Look where you will there are horns, but look where you will there are carpenters to meet them. There is just as much protection as there is opposition, and greater is He that is for us than all they that are against us. Cheer up then, again, beloved; don't mind the horns, but remember God has got His tools to take their sharpness all away. No harm can come to those that serve and follow Him. "For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children."

III. Encouragement against the smallness of their numbers.

Then we have the third vision. He sees a young man with a measuring line in his hand, and he is very busy and important. He is a contractor, or a clerk of works, or some official in connection with building operations, and he has a long tape line in his hand, and he is measuring off the ground. And Zechariah comes up to him, and he says, "where are you going?" And he says, "I am going to measure Jerusalem to see how long it is and how wide it is. We are going to build walls, and we want to lay out the work;" And then there comes a voice from the angel: "Run, speak to this young man that is laying out the work and measuring off the ground for the walls, and tell him to stop; tell him there is no need for his measuring line; tell him there is no need for his work; tell him that God is undertaking the business and going to build all the walls Himself, and man's measuring line is too short for God's plan. Tell this young man that his ideas are too small and too petty for this great work; tell him that Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein."

You are going to make a little town for thousands of people, and God is going to have millions of people, and when he gets them together he says: "I will be a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of them." What a glorious promise! What a glorious reproof to our little faith! Man is always getting his hand on the work in some little way, and God is always waiting to get us out of the way, so that He may do larger things for us. Their enemies were saying: "What is the use of building Jerusalem? Where are you going to get your people? You have only got a little handful there. Your building this temple with a few hundred of people, it is all nonsense." They had only 50,000. There used to be 9,000,000, and 50,000 was a very small nation compared with 9,000,000. It would not make one good-sized city. And so they were all discouraged about their small numbers, and this vision came to encourage them in this respect, and tell them that God had the people in His hand like the sands of the sea and the stars in the Heavens - if they only had faith enough to rise to His perfect will, then He would protect them and guard them Himself; and just as the shepherd builds his wall of fire round his folds at night, and it is better than any wall of masonry to keep the wolves out, so God will shine forth in their midst with His fiery presence. And then He adds, "He that toucheth you will be just the same as if he touched the apple of my eye," so that as your eyelids fall when a grain of dust comes near, or the sand-fly touches against the tender organs of sight, down comes that little trap door and shuts out the intruder, so God says He shall be just as sensitive to your dangers. And then He says, "Many nations will come, and gather to you, and I will make you a blessing to the nations of the earth."

Beloved, is not that a good and comforting word for us - a little band thinking sometimes about our lack of power and numbers; but God says if we will trust Him we will not need any measuring line. I have always been afraid to number people. I used to be able to tell just how many I had on the communion roll, and how many I had talked with about salvation, but since God has called me to this work, I have kept no figures except such as are necessary for church order. I don't know how many I have talked with; I don't know how many I have prayed with. When I try to use the measuring line, God seems to say: "My child, let me measure, or rather let me bless without measure." If we can be humble enough to forget the numbers, if we can stop man's glorying, and

sitting at the feet of Jesus see Him only, and glorify Him only, God will see that His promises are exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.

IV. Encouragement against conscious unworthiness.

Now we come to the fourth vision. The people took courage from these blessed words and went on with their work. The temple was at last so far finished that they were ready to worship in it, and they came through the person of Joshua to worship before the Lord; and they had no sooner come there than on the right hand of Joshua there came another character. "Joshua stood before the Lord, and lo, Satan at his right hand to accuse him." There he is pointing with his finger to poor Joshua, who is covered with filthy garments, and looking up to God as much as to say: "This is a pretty sight in your holy temple, to see this man here, representing the nation, defiled with sin and unfit to appear before you." That is just what Satan always does. His very name means "the accuser;" and his business is to point his finger at your filthy garments and remind you of your unworthiness. Sometimes you will find him standing at your right hand in the very house of God, and perhaps here this morning to accuse you. How often, when some work for God has been laid upon you, has he come to you, and with his foul whisper saying: "You are not fit for this." How often, when you have wished to speak to someone, has he come to you to repress you with the reminder of something that is lacking in yourself! How often, when you kneel in prayer to ask great things of God he says to you: "How dare you claim this with your unworthiness." And so he holds you back and keeps you down.

What does Joshua do? He can not do anything. He knows that the filthy garments belong to him - only too well he knows it. But O, the blessed Lord steps in and answers for him, and says unto Satan, without giving Joshua time to answer, or even to get confused: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan. The Lord rebuke thee, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee." "Is not it enough that I have chosen them, and that they are like brands plucked from the burning fire - but they are not in it now; I have torn them out and saved them, and though they have the mark of the flames upon them they are mine, and I have chosen them." And then God makes the answer more emphatic still: "Take away the filthy garments from him." And then He says, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." And so God takes off his old robes, covers him with the beauty of Jesus, and then He adds: "Let them set a fair diadem upon his head." And they set a fair diadem on his head, and crowned him as an accepted king and a pure priest, a holy worshipper through the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the way God will comfort you when the enemy reminds you of all your imperfections, if you will put them away with a true heart and take Jesus for your righteousness. The Lord not merely accepts you, but He crowns you with His blessing, and He says those great words: "If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou shalt also judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts, and I wilt give thee the places to walk among those that stand by." "I will give you a place of honour even among the heavenly thrones. Sinner though you were, I now cover you with My beauty and glory through My precious blood."

V. Provision for their weakness.

They were conscious of being very weak. Now, it is a very sad thing to be without human power, and also without divine power; and that was their position. So, now, another vision comes - a fifth. This figure represents God's strength in their weakness. Zechariah beholds a golden - a seven branch - candlestick, and on each side of this seven-fold lamp there was a living olive tree; and, as the olive tree grew and ripened its berries, he saw the berries pressed out - not by hands of men, but by some unseen force - and pouring their oil into a pipe which connected the tree with the lamp; thus pouring in their oil as fast as they made it, and so keeping the lamp burning without the touch of human hand - without the least human machinery. I don't know anything so exquisite and delicate in the imagery of the Bible. Joshua looked with wondering eyes, and remembered how the temple had to be supplied with oil by snuffers and vessels, and the hands of 30,000 Levites, and he says, "What does this mean?" And the answer comes back: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." That is the way the work is going to be carried on. This is God's candlestick, the true church of Jesus Christ. It is not going to be supplied by man's wisdom, but the Holy Ghost is going to be its life and invisible power. On each side of His church there are two living trees; one of them on the Heaven side, the other on the earth side. The one on the Heaven side is Jesus, the High Priest, the one on the earth side is the Holy Ghost that dwells within us; and so we stand between the two - Jesus on this side, the Spirit on this side - both of them, with living and constant supply, pouring into us their very life, and keeping the lamp burning "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Beloved, that is God's way of nurturing His church. God wants man's hands put aside. Just as the measuring line must go, so must the snuffers and the tunnels go, too, and God must be constantly breathing life to the throbbing pulses of the church that He has redeemed and loved. And now, He adds, "Since this is so you will say, Who art thou, great mountain? Thou shalt become a plain, and ye shall bring forth the headstone of the work with shoutings: Grace, grace, unto it. Not man's doings, but all Christ's. And the work shall be finished. And then He adds, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" That is just the day that God uses and blesses.

I remember well the cold and desolate afternoon, years ago, when a little band of humble, praying Christians met in an upper room to begin this work for God. There were less than a dozen, and we asked the Lord to give us His Word for this work; and we opened our Bibles, and these words were just before us: "Who hath despised the day of small things; not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." And we knelt before Him there and thanked Him that we were poor, and thanked Him that we were few, and thanked Him that we were weak, and threw ourselves upon the might of the Holy Ghost, and He has never failed us and if we keep little enough, and lowly enough, and humble enough, and trustful enough, He will love and bless us more and more. O, beloved, cherish this vision! I know God wants us to remember in our work, above everything else, the might of weakness which is the might of God.

VI. Defense against iniquity in their midst.

The fifth chapter gives us the next vision. He sees a flying roll, with curses written on it, touching the house of this one and that one as it passes by, and he asks, "What does this mean?" And the answer comes: "This is God's curse that strikes the wilful and wicked." You don't need to curse anybody. God will judge. If men and women will sin and go on unrepentant, God has His flying roll. And then, in the same vision, He sees an ephah, and in it a woman's form as the type of iniquity; and he sees two angels taking the measure and putting the lid upon her head and just shutting her down in the measure, and then carrying it away to the land of Babylon, putting it in its own place. He asks again, "What does this mean?" And the answer is, "God is going to take the evil away Himself in that way. He is going to smite that which will not turn to Him, and then He is going to lift up and turn out of your midst all that offends, and put it out of your way, so that you don't need to do anything but trust Him, and God will keep His work pure." That was their fear. They say, "How can we be sure that we shall not be hindered by elements coming in among us that are not pure?" He says, "God will do that Himself." And so, beloved, we will take God to guard the purity of His work. How wonderfully has He guarded and kept us here. How many times it has seemed that evil and dangerous elements were trying to break in; but God, without any human contrivance, almost without speaking a word has just kept us; and, as we trusted Him, guarded His work, making it simple, and Scriptural, and heavenly, and holy, and so that He can bless us to the fullness of His love and will.

VII. Defense against the powers of the world.

Then comes the next vision, "He looked again and saw four chariots, and these four chariots were going out in different directions. One was coming north, another was following after it; another was going south, and another was following in its train.

He asks, "What are these?" And the Lord says, "These are the spirits of the heavens, and they go forth into the kingdoms of the world, and they keep things under God's control in the mighty empires of earth." One is going away north into the Grecian empire, the other is going away south into the Persian, for these were the two great empires of that day. And He says, "They have quieted My Spirit in the north country and in the south country, that is, they have taken My powers with them to hold in check all evil that would hinder My kingdom; and so you need not fear the power of the northern kingdom or the southern throne. I have got armies there who are encamping in the clouds and around about the thrones and camps of earth. And you need not fear. And today God says to you and me, He has His chariots in the north, and in the south, and in all lands, and He is overturning, restraining and controlling all things for the glory of His name and for the advancement of His Church. Remember this vision of providence and of God's controlling power in all human affairs, and be sure the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder thereof shall be restrained. God wants us to take the place of faith and know that at the throne of prayer we can touch the mightier hands, and thus bring about the coming of the Messiah.

These are the seven visions which Zechariah saw; and as he closes them, he adds another beautiful incident, with which we shall close. It is the last incident in the sixth chapter. It is one of exceeding beauty, and very comforting. I think, to us today. Just at

this very time there came a little deputation away over from Babylon, from the captives that had not returned to Jerusalem, and they brought along with them some presents of silver and of gold. Though they could not return, they sent what they could to help; and from afar their gifts were carried by the living hands of these three men - Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah. They brought their money to Joshua, and as soon as it was received, God spake through Zechariah, and gave this direction, "Take this money that these men have brought; God does not need it in His temple, because He has got all the money. What God wants is their love; but take the money that they have brought and forge it into crowns, and then take the crowns and put them on the head of Joshua, the high priest, and let him wear them there on the day of some public service in the temple of the Lord; and let him tell the people and you tell them, Zechariah, that he is but the type of another great One who is to bear the same name. Tell them that there is another Joshua coming - Jesus of Nazareth, that He is to be the great High Priest, and that just as Joshua wears the silver and gold for a crown, so the day is coming when Jesus will take the gifts of His people, the little sacrifices that they have brought, and make them into crowns, and wear them on His head before all heaven, and will say to the angels of glory: "These are the gifts of little children; these are the gifts of poor men and hard working women; these are the dollars and half dollars, the gifts of My children and I wear them in memory of their love for Me."

So God will take your gifts and make crowns out of them, and wear them for you, and then hang them up as your memorial forevermore. But O, I am so glad that He wears the crown first Himself. Yes, it is not you that is crowned - it is Jesus that is crowned. He wants you to bring your gifts, your sacrifices, your services, and give them to Him. He only is worthy. It was He that died for you. It was He that redeemed you. It was He that forgave you. It was He that took you back again. It was He that blessed you, lifted you, laid aside His crown for you. Now crown Him Lord of all. Be like the dying woman who, when she could only say one word, gasped out the word "Bring." And they brought her water, and they brought her medicine, and they brought her, her friends, and they brought her, her children, and they brought her, her husband, but she waved them all away, and mustering up her last strength, she sang, "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all." And then, with her last breath, she just went up in a chariot of praise to His blessed arms.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINISHING OUR WORK

“That I might finish my course with joy.” - Acts 24

It is this thought of finishing things that I think God wants to speak to us about today. We are finishing, this morning, our ministry in this place; at least, we are gathering this Sabbath morning within these walls for the last time. For two years and one month the Lord has permitted us to labour in this place that was built for the worship of God, afterwards given to secular business, and finally, desecrated in the devil's employ. It has pleased Him by a miracle of providence to give us, just at the time we needed it, this place for His work; and for twenty-five months He has permitted us here to do as much work, perhaps as many churches do in five or six years - a good deal more than I ever did in six or seven years before, even counting by the number of services. We have had about 1,100 religious services in this place within the time I have mentioned. Many of them were for the comfort of Christians and the building up of God's Church and people, and therefore have not had the same visible results in the way of salvation; but almost every evangelistic service that has ever been held here has been followed by the conversion of souls.

I have made no attempt to keep record of these names, but I should judge that at least as many as a thousand souls every year of our work here - which is only about twenty a week - have been awaked and talked with on the subject of their salvation sometimes a great many more - and very recently, in connection with our mission work, this number has been more than doubled. The Lord has permitted us, during these two years, to bring perhaps many souls to the feet of Jesus, whom we have not been able to follow afterward. God only knows; and I am sure that tens of thousands have come in here once or twice and passed on, having heard the word of eternal life.

I shall never cease to thank God for the wonderful providence that opened this place, and the still more wonderful grace that made it a perfect delight to minister and serve Him here. I thank Him also for the dear people that have gathered, for the labourers that have been always willing to lead souls to Christ, for the way in which He has raised, I think, at least \$25,000 in these two years and met the needs of the work without our going to man. I don't speak at all of the money given for the new tabernacle; I don't speak of the money given to establish a home and sustain a training college; I don't speak at all of the work done in connection with the work for which the Lord has made me personally responsible, but for the work of this church God has put in into the hands of you simple people to sustain. I thank Him the more because there has been nothing on our part to cause it; there has been nothing of human ability, but simple dependence in Christ. You know very well the truth given here has been very simple, and wholly designed to lead sinners to Christ and to lead Christians closer to His side. You know there has been no great business capacity in the management of things, no ecclesiastical experience; we have been simply humble instruments of Christ, and He has seen fit to lead us on and to bless us; and we do this morning give Him all the praise and glory, place ourselves at His feet in great humility, and ask Him to use us. still.

Now, this is a most serious thought, this thought of finishing our work - finishing even this stage of our work. How much it means for this work, and how much it suggests for our whole Christian life and work. There is nothing, I think, in Christian life so sad as unfinished work. There is no memorial in the cemetery that brings the tears to our eyes more quickly than the broken column which tells of a life broken in the midst; and as I look around me, I see so many broken columns in human life. Someone said to Napoleon, in one of his pageants in Africa under the shadow of the Pyramids, as his veterans were marching in review: "Emperor, what is lacking here?" "Nothing, nothing," said he, "but continuance." He knew that in a little while these squadrons would dissolve and life itself be perhaps a bitter disappointment. And so, in the work of God we have seen so much that was incomplete. I have seen so much in my own work that I have cried to God, that, even if He gave me a very little work it would all be clear work - that it would be all finished work.

I remember that when, five years ago, this work began, how delightful it was that there were only a dozen or twenty members, and to feel that we were all on a Scriptural foundation; and the desire has never left me that whatever we do may last until the Master comes, even if it be humble work. As I look over the work of God, I see this curse incompleting work - strewing the way all along with miserable wrecks. I find the book of Judges telling us of five hundred years of declension because God's people did not complete their work when they were in possession of Canaan. They conquered Jericho; they conquered thirty-one kingdoms; they divided the land among twelve victorious tribes; but they left here and there little strongholds that were not subdued, little tribes that could not or would not be driven out; and it was not long until they brought Israel under subjection, and neutralised all the work of Joshua's conquest. I look again at the life of poor Saul, and I see that the one turning point in his life was where he stopped short of finishing God's work, where he let his own fleshly heart control him, and left God's work unfinished, and the curse of God's rejection fell upon him.

I look at the ministry of Elijah, and never has the world seen anything more sublime than his victory on Carmel; but, O, who has not wept at the reaction of the morrow, when at the shaking of a woman's finger he fled into the desert and left the field in possession of God's enemies; from which Israel never again recovered, but went down and down, until it passed away - not in captivity, but in extinction.

And so, it is, not enough to go on for a while. It is the last step that wins. O, may God put on our hearts, as we leave here, this great thought, "that I may finish my course with joy and the ministry that I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." How this has often been brought to my own heart, until it seemed to me that I could see nothing but just the closing days of life, the thought when it would all be finished and handed over to His hands and there were the two pictures; the one the thought of much accomplished, but much lost; something done, but something undone; and the sad bitterness of the thought: O, it is almost better not to have lived than to have failed to complete my one life, and yet to know that I can never live it again, and that something is left out forevermore. And then came the other picture; the soldier pressing on until the last hour - unflinching, unwearied - afraid even of the thought of weariness; and, at last, looking back and saying; By the grace of God there is nothing left out that the Lord had in His heart to give me to do; I have fought a

good fight, I have finished my course; henceforth it is all victory. And, as you go forth in this spirit, you will find that while you keep your eye on the end, it will give impulse and power to every step of the way.

Then, as we look at finished work, how much of it do we find in the work and Word of God.

We find, in the first chapter of Genesis. when God began the work of creation, He left nothing undone. So God finished, as we are told, the heavens and the earth, and God saw everything that He had made, that it was good, and then He sat down and rested on His own Sabbath day. There was nothing left undone. Take the most finished work of art and compare it with God's smallest creations, and you find the sting of the bee is superior to the most perfectly wrought needle that ever came from the factories or the tools of man. You find that the most perfect polished surface under the magnifying glass seems like a great mass of hills and valleys compared with the surface of your hand. The wing of the smallest insect is all spangled and shining with burnished, radiant splendour, and no matter how carefully you inspect it, there is no flaw - it is all perfect. You find the little blade of grass is made as carefully as the immense pine tree. All God's work is well done, and myriads of things seem to be made that produce no adequate return. On every side of us there are things that we do not seem to understand the use of. Everything is done with a prodigal bountifulness, and yet all are perfect.

We read again about Moses, that he finished his work. In the last chapter of Exodus, we have this description, "So Moses finished the work as the Lord commanded. So did he." His work was all done, and then God came in and took possession, and made it His dwelling place.

God does not want to come in and dwell in unfinished things. If you build a house and put no roof on it, it will fall to pieces, and so unfinished work will fail.

Again, we find that Joshua finished his work, and that was the secret of his power. "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses. There was not a city that he did not take and there failed not one word of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel." He finished his work through and through, and all his life God's blessing was on that work and on the people; and it was when Joshua passed away that they began slighting the work and then came the declension and ruin of the period of the Judges.

Again we read of Nehemiah, that he finished his work. The prophet Haggai had said about this restoration, "The hands of Zerrubbabel have laid the foundation of His house; his hands also shall finish it, and ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me unto you." So we read about Nehemiah, "So the wall was finished on the four and twentieth day of the month." There was no gate left out, no hinge broken, no breach in the walls that was not completed, no unfinished work; but every little thing, every bar, every hinge, every river, was all secure; then God blessed and established the work.

We read about the dear Lord Jesus, He finished His work. "I must be about My Father's business; I must work while it is day; or, as it is in the original: I must work all the day long, every hour of the day, for the night is coming; My meat and drink are to

finish the work, which My Father has given Me to do. And the hour came at last when He could say, "I have glorified Thee on earth; I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do, and now I come to Thee." His last word on the cross was just one little word, "finished." And when He rose from the grave there was such a wonderful quietness and deliberateness about Him, such an evidence of everything being orderly and completely done, that even the napkin was found wrapped together in a place by itself, and His grave clothes were all folded up in order; there was not a trifle left undone. The Lord did everything perfectly, easily and well. We read about Paul that his one mission was to finish his course; and the time came when, within the sight of the Ostian gate where he died, he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give to me in that day and not to me only, but to all them who love His appearing." He finished his work, and, had he His life to live over again, perhaps there is nothing more he could add to it.

And now, dear friends, how about your work and mine? Let us look into it today. You are standing within a few steps of a border line, when this period of your life will close up forever. Have you accomplished that which you set out to do? Have you finished that which you began? How is it about your Christian character - is it entire, or is it incomplete? "I pray God to sanctify you, wholly, entirely, and that your whole spirit, and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus. Is that fulfilled, or are you only saved in spots, only cleansed here and there, and great blotches of sin are upon you like a moth-eaten garment? That is not God's plan. God's idea for you is entire wholeness of character - your spirit, your soul, your body all sanctified unto Him. Why not? It is because you have not taken God's Word. It is because you have not been willing to enter into God's blessing and God's will. If you have not entered into here, it is not going to be any easier to enter into it anywhere else. O, before this day shall close, just go to Him to give you that complete transformation. It is not a thing that you grow into; it is a thing that you take from Him as the free gift of His grace. May God help you today not to seek human perfection, not to say there is no room for progress, but to take and have the perfect Christ reaching every part of your life and going ever in your complete being, a perfect child, perhaps, but just as perfect as a perfect man. You know what it is to be a perfect babe. It is a poor, weak little thing, but it is perfect. You know what it is to have a poor, mutilated body with a hand off or an eye out. Now, God wants you to be a perfect child - to be complete, to be finished in all your parts, although with room for boundless expansion in the growth of your future life. The dear Saviour has it for you, and you are slighting His costly purchase if you do not receive it.

Again, have you entered into the complete plan and purpose of God for your life. Paul prays for the Thessalonians that they may know all the good pleasure of His goodness, and that the Lord will fulfil in them His perfect will. Are you reaching out to that for which you were apprehended by Christ, or is God all the time having to drive you forward and press you on. God calls you to a complete conformity to His will that you may be holy and please God, and He will give you the grace to do it.

How about your work; have you finished that? Have you started, and then got tired and dropped it? Have you been sent to some service, and at some little discouragement put it aside? Have you brought some soul to Christ and then left it again - never prayed

for it, never sought to finish the trust that God gave to you? Have you promised anything and never fulfilled it? God calls us today, before we leave this place to balance all our accounts with Him, and to go away with the blessed thought that we have nothing more to do that could have been done; and He does not call us to anything unreasonable, extreme or impossible.

And then, as a church, have we finished that for which God sent us to this place? When we have passed away from Twenty-third Street to return, perhaps, in this sense, no more, shall we be able to say, "I am pure from the blood of all men. I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God; I have held up Christ before His coming to all I could reach; I have done all that I could do in these meetings to bring souls to Christ; I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do."

Even Sampson, in the last moment of his life, accomplished a life's work in an hour. May God help you to accomplish the trust that has been committed to your hands, to leave nothing at least, undone.

So, in this special enterprise as a church, let us finish our work. We have started to secure our new church home - let us finish it. We have given our honour before God and man that we will independently, even at great sacrifice, purchase a house for God. Have you finished your part? Have you done what God has called you to do? Is it finished? Shall we go there with no unravelled ends, with no loose, unfinished work, but with that promptness and that obedience which God loves, and on which He pours out His perfect blessing, even in financial matters, for He blesses His Church for generosity quite as much as He does for faith and prayer and Christian work, and I am sure that the blessing has come to this people, because we have been liberally meeting the claims of Christ in these past months.

And then our life work, dear friends, O, is that going to be a completed scroll, or is it going to be a torn parchment, unfinished? I don't believe God wants it to be so for you or for me. O, what a precious life yours and mine is. Only once can it be lived; never again can we traverse this ground. O, remember as you go forth: "I shall never pass this way again;" and so let every earnest fibre of your being be laid at His feet, and do it as you would wish it done in that day when you shall look back upon the life that shall come no more. I say this for myself - I say it for you, dear friends. Someone has said,

For at my back I always hear
Time's swift-winged chariot hurrying near;
And onward, all before, I see
Deserts of vast eternity.

And Dr. Bonar reminds us:

Not many lives have we - but one.
One, only one!
How precious should that one life be -
That narrow span!
Day after day filled up with faithful toil;
Year after year still bringing in new spoil.

I heard, somewhere, of a poor fellow dying on the railroad track; and, as they picked him up all mangled, his face pale and blood flowing from every wound, he just had strength to say one sentence; "O, if I only had." Nobody knew that terrible regret that came surging up in his memory; something he had meant to do and just put off that day; something he had promised God to do but he did not, and never could it be done again. "O, if I only had." O, it speaks to me as the signal of an unfinished life - saved, perhaps, but not what God saved it for; coming in, but coming in to lose the crown God would have given. Happy, I hope. O, yes, in heaven you will have happiness even in the lower place, but the one that could be content to take the lower place has got a mean soul and can not be very happy anywhere.

It is said that one of the old translators of the Bible, as he was finishing his work, felt the cold damp of death coming over him, calling his scribe, he said; "All is done but just one-half a chapter." And, as his pulses grew colder, he summoned up his faith and courage, and called his amanuensis, and said; "Write quickly." And he began to dictate, and words poured from his lips as fast as the hand could write. "Be quick," he said, "be quick, the sands are running out." And the words poured out as the last drops of the stream of life; and when he had finished it, he clasped his hands, and said "Now, glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." And his lips were cold and his work was done. There was nothing lacking. The last line had been added, and the English Bible was put in the hands of man. That was finished work. God has something for you to do until it is all done, and then when it comes to the end, O, it will be sweet to say like Lady Huntingdon: "My work is finished, and I have nothing to do but die."

So may the dear Lord bless our living and then I am sure He will glorify our dying.