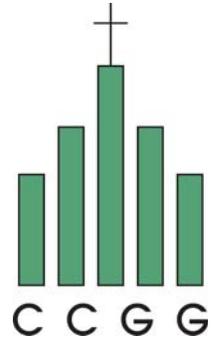


Conference on the Church
for God's Glory



A Day of Refreshment

May 21, 2007
First Baptist Church
Rockford, IL
www.CCGGRockford.org

Conference Overview

11:00	Preaching Session 1 <i>Scott Williquette</i> "God's Measure of Ministry Success" - Philippians 1.27-30	3
12:00	Lunch	
12:45	Workshop 1 <i>Kerry Allen</i> "Lessons from the Ministry of C. H. Spurgeon"	5
2:15	Break	
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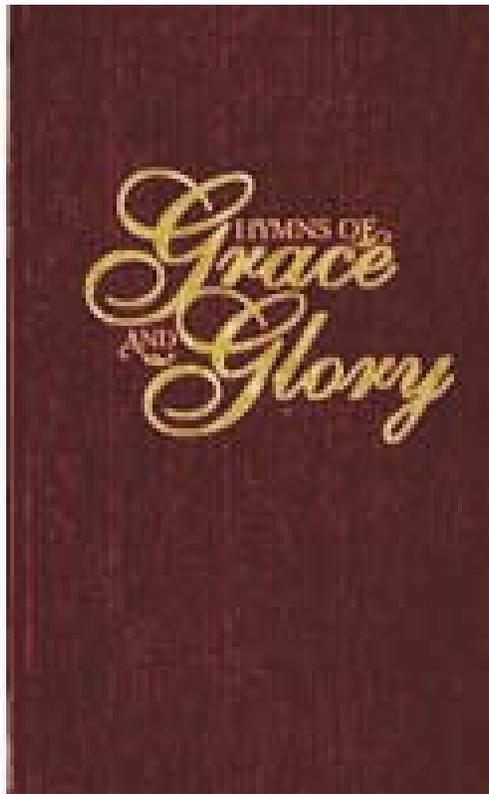
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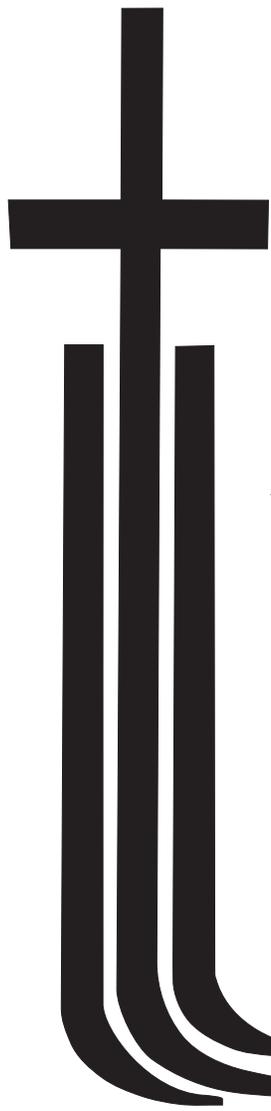
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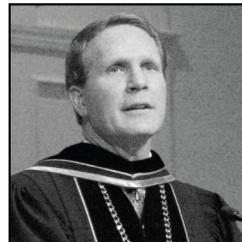
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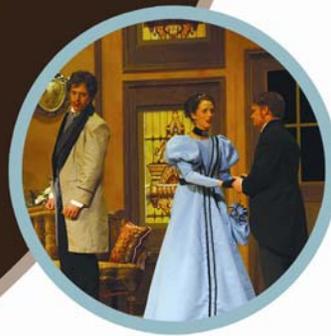
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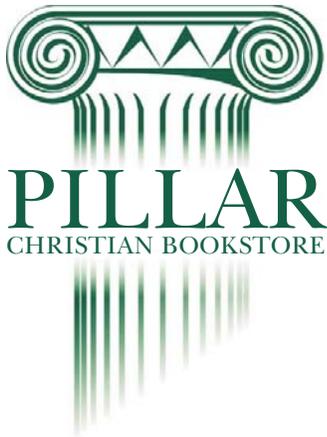
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God's Measure of Ministry Success

Scott Williquette



Pastor Williquette has been in the ministry for 18 years. He is the senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Rockford, Illinois. He has both M.Div. and Th.M. degrees from Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary and has completed all the class work toward a Th.D. at Central Baptist Seminary. He and his wife, Vicki, have three children.

Philippians 1.27-30

We all know that size is not the measure of God's blessing. We know that even after decades of preaching righteousness, Noah's congregation swelled to all of 8 people including himself. We know that Jesus' faithful followers would have filled only a small room. And yet we still often play the numbers game in our churches as a measure of success.

So what is the measure of success for a local church? Paul provides us with some help in Philippians 1.27-30. In Philippians 1.12-26 Paul described how he saw his own personal circumstances in light God's work. For Paul, nothing mattered but the advance of the Gospel (1.12), and the exaltation of Christ (1.20). Paul lived every day chained to one of 9,000 elite Roman soldiers, and instead of being discouraged by his imprisonment, he saw it as a means of advancing of the Gospel and exalting Christ. In 1.27 Paul stops describing himself and turns his attention to the believers at Philippi and his desire for them. His desire is that they too live and die for the advance of the Gospel, and the exaltation of Christ. The governing command of this section is found in verse 27 — "conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." In the remainder of this passage, Paul enumerates the characteristics of a Gospel-worthy church, and in so doing he provides us with a checklist for determining a church's ministry success. Is your church ministry pleasing to the Lord? Is it successful in His estimation? Is it truly worthy of the Gospel?

A Successful Church Is a Church That Is Worthy of the Gospel.

- I. A Gospel-Worthy Church Possesses Internal Harmony (1.27b).

II. A Gospel-Worthy Church Is Devoted to the Progress and Purity of the Faith (1.27c).

III. A Gospel-Worthy Church Is Courageous In the Face of Opposition (1.28-30).

A. Courageous believers are blessed with the gift of Christian assurance (1.28b).

B. Courageous believers realize that suffering is part of their Christian mission (1.29).

C. Courageous believers realize that suffering is part of their Christian heritage (1.30).

Lessons from the Ministry of C. H. Spurgeon

Kerry Allen



Kerry James Allen (B. S., M. Ed.) started and has pastored Fox River Baptist Church of Oswego, IL since 1993 and began Fox River Press in 1996. He has edited three volumes of sermons by Spurgeon and produced the largest collection of topically arranged quotes by Spurgeon ever assembled (Exploring the Heart and Mind of the Prince of Preachers). In addition he has written a memory program to evangelize children called How Can I Except Some Man Should Guide Me? He and his wife Marcia have four children.

1 Timothy 1:16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

My admonishment for today's session, courtesy of CHS:

When you meet your brother ministers do not be in a hurry to advise them; they know their duty quite as well as you know yours, and your judgment upon their course of action is probably founded upon partial information supplied from prejudiced sources.
2LS178

Easy writing is usually hard reading. Tell us something well worth knowing when you write. It is folly to open your mouth merely to show your teeth; have something to say, or speak not at all: ink is better in the bottle than on the paper if you have nothing to communicate. Instruct us, impress us, interest and improve us, or at least try to do so.
ST3:357-58.

Black preacher to me: "That Spurgeon is a monster of a preacher!"

Did Spurgeon have impact? Russell Conwell's biography of Spurgeon sold 125,000 copies in the first four months of sale, and Conwell received letters from 29 young men who had surrendered to ministry after reading it.

B. H. Carroll stated that the sermons of Spurgeon constitute a complete body of systematic theology (I would heartily agree).

Does Spurgeon still have impact? Warren Wiersbe recently wrote a new book called *Life Sentences*. In it he states that he was reading sermon number 1610 by Spurgeon and in the first

line of the message saw these words: "Scripture frequently sums up a man's life in a single sentence." His book was the result of reading one line of Spurgeon.

His writings are still in constant reprint and demand, and he is without a doubt the most influential Christian writer who has ever lived. Spurgeon spoke almost prophetically about his own ministry and its extension into the future:

In the last sermon but one that Mr. Spurgeon ever revised, that remarkable discourse upon the text, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord;" he uttered these words, which have already been to a large extent fulfilled with regard to himself: "Often, the death of a man is a kind of new birth to him; when he himself is gone physically, he spiritually survives, and from his grave there shoots up a tree of life whose leaves heal nations. O worker for God, death cannot touch thy sacred mission! Be thou content to die if the truth shall live the better because thou diest. Be thou content to die, because death may be to thee the enlargement of thine influence. Good men die as dies the seed-corn which thereby abideth not alone. When saints are apparently laid in the earth; they quit the earth, and rise and mount to Heaven-gate, and enter into immortality. No, when the sepulcher receives this mortal frame, we shall not die, but live." A1:4

Spurgeon has been a great encouragement to me for at least ten years, since I began my interest in his sermons and his life. He has been to me much like he was to his brother James. In Spurgeon's words...

Long after my own sons had grown to manhood, I recalled to my father's recollection an experience of which, until then, he had never had an explanation. My brother, as a child, suffered from weak ankles, and in consequence frequently fell down, and so got into trouble at home. At last, hoping to cure him of what father thought was only carelessness, he was threatened that he should be whipped every time he came back showing any signs of having fallen down. When I reminded my father of this regulation, he said quite triumphantly, "Yes, it was so, and he was completely cured from that time." "Ah!" I answered, "so you thought, yet it was not so, for he had many a tumble afterwards; but I always managed to wash his knees, and to brush his clothes, so as to remove all traces of his falls." A1:41

Don't believe everything you've hear! Especially about Spurgeon! You would think from what you have heard and read that Spurgeon's life verse was "I am made all things to all men." Made and re-made I might add. How about this quote: "Lord, save the elect, and then elect some more!" Cute, but fantasy.

David Otis Fuller was a fan of CHS, and edited a book or two of Spurgeons. Unfortunately, he also attempted to portray CHS as a much stronger advocate of the King James Bible than he was. Fuller's problem was that after the Revised Version came out CHS preached several messages from it. Spurgeon held to the KJV, but always appealed to the originals for clarity and had no problem with new translations if they were an improvement over the KJV.

Robert Van Kampen presents CHS as a believer in the pre-wrath Rapture. CHS had little use for J. N. Darby and dispensationalism, and other than believing in a premillennial return and literal 1,000 year reign of Christ and the re-gathering of Israel, made little attempt to harmonize all the events of the second coming. About the Plymouth Brethren he humorously stated, "Ye men of Plymouth, why stand ye gazing into Heaven?" Van Kampen later succumbed to pre-wrath death!

James Dobson claimed on a Focus on the Family broadcast that Spurgeon lost both of his sons to sin and the world when in reality they were both faithful Baptist pastors to their deaths. Dobson later acknowledged his error in writing to Bob Ross, but never made a public correction to his statement. Here are Spurgeon's own words on the subject: "I know none of my father's family, or of my own, who are unsaved and, therefore, I can lead you in the song!" Sermon #2539 "The Joy of Holy Households."

Dave Hunt attempts to portray Spurgeon as ambivalent about Calvinism and the extent of the atonement, and completely distorts Spurgeon with ellipsis quotes. Here is one quote from a sermon by CHS in Hunt's book, and then a quote from the same sermon one page earlier and you be the judge. CHS via Hunt's quote:

"As it is my wish and your wish...so it is God's wish that all men should be saved...he is no less benevolent than we are." The quote was accurate, but there is a context to the quote. Here is CHS one page earlier: "It is quite certain that when we read that God will have all men to be saved it does not mean that he wills it with the force of a decree or a divine purpose, for, if he did, then all men would be saved. He willed to make the world, and the world was made: he does not so will the salvation of all men, for we know that all men will not be saved."

Hunt presents CHS as a tortured soul who vascillated between Calvinism and Arminianism all his life.

Charles Swindoll in his book *Improving Your Serve* (Word, 1981, page 122) states, "I am told that his wife, seeing the results of those verbal blows on her husband, decided to assist him in getting back on his feet and regaining his powerful stature in the pulpit. She found in her Bible Matthew 5:10-12-the beatitude we have been studying-and she printed in beautiful old English the words of this passage on a large sheet of paper. Then she tacked that sheet to the ceiling of their bedroom, directly above Charles' side of the bed! Every morning, every evening, when he would rest his enormous frame in his bed, the words were there to meet and encourage him. The large sheet of paper remained fixed to the ceiling for an extended period of time until it had done the job."

Here's the actual story via Mrs. Spurgeon herself: "For a long time, I wondered how I could set continual comfort before his eyes, till, at last, I hit upon the expedient of having the following verses (Matthew 5:11-12) printed in large Old English type, and enclosed in a pretty Oxford frame. The text was hung up in our own room, and was read over by the dear preacher every morning..."

Peter Masters, the current pastor of the Tabernacle, has written that Spurgeon was amillennial. Iain Murray and Banner of Truth maintain the same position. Banner's current leader, Jonathan Watson, sent me supposed "proof" written by Murray with a quote or two from CHS. I sent him several pages with many quotes from CHS documenting his belief in a bodily premillennial return of Christ, a literal 1,000 year reign upon earth, and all of this separated by the two resurrections. One of his replies to me was, "Well, we do have a constituency." Dennis Swanson's article on spurgeon.org settles the question.

Rick Warren makes this astounding statement in his recommendation of a book about Spurgeon: "My great-grandfather came to Christ and was trained as a pastor through the ministry of Charles Spurgeon. He passed on to me many of Spurgeon's insights through his books and articles, which I treasure to this day. Spurgeon's model of leadership has profoundly influenced my life and ministry."

Other than they are both about the same shape, I don't see the connection! If CHS were alive today, Rick would be reading an expose on himself in the *Sword and Trowel*!

Jack Hyles repeatedly stated that "Spurgeon in his best years only baptized 500." Actually it was 571, but those were additions to attendance not just baptisms. And at the Tabernacle you were not automatically added as a member just because you were baptized, as in Hammond. Hammond did make one attempt at sermon publishing-The Hammond First Baptist Pulpit. It didn't last long. Spurgeon's sermons have crossed the 150 year mark with no sign of waning.

B. R. Lakin preached in the church I was baptized and married in and told a wonderful story about Spurgeon. The problem is, it was a total fabrication that he evidently heard and passed along!

It seems everybody would like to cloak themselves with Spurgeon. The problem is that in all of these cases the cloak didn't fit!

Spurgeon began pastoring with 40 people in Waterbeach at the age of 19. When he left it was over 400. He went to Park Street at 19, and after enlargement, it seated 1,500 but was always full. He then preached for 3 years at the Surrey Garden Music Hall, seating 10,000, and again always full. This led to the building of the Tabernacle, opened in 1861 when CHS was 26. He preached there for the next 30 years. It seated 5,500, held 6,500, and was always full.

Who and what made Spurgeon?

I. Spurgeon's Mission Statements

A. From his first words at the Tabernacle

"I would propose that the subject of the ministry in this house, as long as this platform shall stand, and as long as this house shall be frequented by worshippers, shall be the person of Jesus

Christ. I am never ashamed to avow myself a Calvinist, I do not hesitate to take the name of Baptist; but if I am asked what is my creed, I reply, "It is Jesus Christ." My venerated predecessor Dr. Gill, has left a body of divinity, admirable and excellent in its way; but the body of divinity to which I would pin and bind myself for ever, God helping me, is not his system, or any other human treatise; but Christ Jesus, who is the sum and substance of the Gospel, who is in Himself all theology, the incarnation of every precious truth, the all-glorious personal embodiment of the way, the truth, and the life." PB66

B. From his last sermon at the Tabernacle (June 7, 1891)

"If you wear the livery of Christ, you will find Him so meek and lowly of heart that you will find rest unto your souls. He is the most magnanimous of captains. Here never was His like among the choicest of princes. He is always to be found in the thickest part of the battle. When the wind blows cold He always takes the bleak side of the hill. The heaviest end of the cross lies ever on His shoulders. If He bids us carry a burden, He carries it also. If there is anything that is gracious, generous, kind, and tender, yea lavish and superabundant in love, you will always find it in Him. His service is life, peace, joy. Oh, that you would enter on it at once! God help you to enlist under the banner of Jesus Christ!" PB135

C. As woven throughout his sermons and writing

How do you, at this time, look at your life's mission? What is that mission? What are you at? I think I hear you answer, "Our chief end is to glorify, God." We do not regard it as our first business to convert sinners, nor to edify saints; but to glorify God. If we have preached God's truth, and on any one occasion no souls have been saved thereby, we are still "unto God a sweet savor of Christ," as well in those that perish as in those that are saved. The preaching of Jesus Christ is the burning of sweet odors before the throne of God, and to the Lord it is evermore an acceptable oblation. ARM299

D. On God's sovereignty and human responsibility

I see, in one place, God in providence presiding over all, and yet I see, and I cannot help seeing, that man acts as he pleases, and that God has left his actions, in a great measure, to his own free-will. Now, if I were to declare that man was so free to act that there was no control of God over his actions, I should be driven very near to atheism; and if, on the other hand, I should declare that God so over-rules all things that man is not free enough to be responsible, I should be driven at once into Antinomianism or fatalism. That God predestines, and yet that man is responsible, are two facts that few can see clearly. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one part of the Bible that everything is foreordained, that is true; and if I find, in another Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, that is true; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other. I do not believe they can ever be welded into one upon any earthly anvil, but they certainly shall be one in eternity. They are two lines that are so nearly parallel, that the human mind which pursues them farthest will never discover that they converge, but they do converge, and they will meet somewhere in eternity, close to the throne of God, whence all truth doth spring. A1:176-77

E. On his personal giving

I knew a lad in Christ, who adopted the principle of giving a tenth to God. When he won a money prize for an essay on a religious subject, he felt that he could not give less than one-fifth of it. He had never after that been able to deny himself the pleasure of having a fifth to give. God had wonderfully blessed that lad, and increased his means, and his enjoyment of the luxury of luxuries,-the luxury of doing good. A1:57

F. On persistence

Be dogmatically true, obstinately holy, immovably honest, desperately kind, fixedly upright.
3381.558

II. Early influences*A. Family influence*

"I was privileged with godly parents, watched over with jealous eyes, scarcely ever permitted to mingle with questionable associates, warned not to listen to anything profane or licentious, and taught the way of God from my youth up." BannerBio 1:38

I remember, on one occasion, her praying thus: "Now, Lord, if my children go on in their sins, it will not be from ignorance that they perish, and my soul must bear a swift witness against them at the day of judgment if they lay not hold of Christ." That thought of a mother's bearing swift witness against me, pierced my conscience, and stirred my heart. How can I ever forget when she bowed her knee, and with her arms about my neck, prayed, "Oh, that my son might live before Thee!" Nor can her frown be effaced from my memory,-that solemn, loving frown, when she rebuked my budding iniquities; and her smiles have never faded from my recollection,- the beaming of her countenance when she rejoiced to see some good thing in me towards the Lord God of Israel. Well do I remember hearing my father speak of an incident that greatly impressed him. He used to be frequently away from home preaching, and at one time, as he was on his way to a service, he feared that he was neglecting his own family while caring for the souls of others. He therefore turned back, and went to his home. On arriving there, he was surprised to find no one in the lower rooms of the house; but, on ascending the stairs, he heard a sound as of someone engaged in prayer. On listening at the bedroom door, he discovered that it was my mother, pleading most earnestly for the salvation of all her children, and specially praying for Charles, her first-born and strong-willed son. My father felt that he might safely go about his Master's business while his dear wife was caring so well for the spiritual interests of the boys and girls at home, so he did not disturb her, but proceeded at once to fulfill his preaching engagement. My mother said to me, one day, "Ah, Charles! I often prayed the Lord to make you a Christian, but I never asked that you might become a Baptist." I could not resist the temptation to reply, "Ah, mother! the Lord has answered your prayer with His usual bounty, and given you exceeding abundantly above what you asked or thought." A1:68-69

B. Father and grandfather pastors

I had quite a different experience on the occasion when I went to preach at Haverhill, in Suffolk. The congregation that day had the somewhat unusual privilege, or affliction, of listening to two preachers discoursing by turns upon the same text! The passage was that grand declaration of the apostle Paul, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians ii. 8). It does not often happen to me to be late for service, for I feel that punctuality is one of those little virtues which may prevent great sins. But we have no control over railways and breakdowns; and so it happened that I reached the appointed place considerably behind time. Like sensible people, they had begun their worship, and had proceeded as far as the sermon. As I neared the chapel, I perceived that someone was in the pulpit preaching, and who should the preacher be but my dear and venerable grandfather! He saw me as I came in at the front door, and made my way up the aisle, and at once he said, "Here comes my grandson! He may preach the gospel better than I can, but he cannot preach a better gospel; can you, Charles?" As I pressed through the throng, I answered, "You can preach better than I can. Pray go on." But he would not agree to that. I must take the sermon, and so I did, going on with the subject there and then, just where he left off. "There," said he, "I was preaching on 'For by grace are ye saved.' I have been setting forth the source and fountain-head of salvation; and I am now showing them the channel of it, 'through faith.' Now, you take it up, and go on." I am so much at home with these glorious truths, that I could not feel any difficulty in taking from my grandfather the thread of his discourse, and joining my thread to it, so as to continue without a break. Our agreement in the things of God made it easy for us to be joint-preachers of the same discourse. I went on with "through faith," and then I proceeded to the next point, "and that not of yourselves." Upon this, I was explaining the weakness and inability of human nature, and the certainty that salvation could not be of ourselves, when I had my coat-tail pulled, and my wellbeloved grandsire took his turn again. When I spoke of our depraved human nature; the good old man said, "I know most about that:, dear friends;" so he took up the parable, and for the next five minutes set forth a solemn and humbling description of our lost estate, the depravity of our nature, and the spiritual death under which we were found. When he had said his say in a very gracious manner, his grandson was allowed to go on again, to the dear old man's great delight; for now and then he would say, in a gentle tone, "Good! Good!" Once he said, "Tell them that again, Charles," and of course I did tell them that again. It was a happy exercise to me to take my share in bearing witness to truths of such vital importance, which are so deeply impressed upon my heart. Whenever I read this text, I seem to hear that dear voice, which has been so long lost to earth, saying to me, "Tell them that again." I am not contradicting the testimony of forefathers who are now with God. If my grandfather could return to earth, he would find me where he left me, steadfast in the faith, and true to that form of doctrine which was once for all delivered to the saints. I preach the doctrines of grace because I believe them to be true; because I see them in the Scriptures; because my experience endears them to me; and because I see the holy result of them in the lives of believers. I confess they are none the less dear to me because the advanced school despises them: their censures are to me a commendation. I confess also that I should never think the better of a doctrine because it was said to be "new." Those truths which have enlightened so many ages appear to me to be ordained to remain throughout eternity. The doctrine which I preach is that of the Puritans: it is the doctrine of Calvin, the doctrine of Augustine, the doctrine of Paul, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. The Author and Finisher of our faith Himself taught most blessed truth which well agreed with Paul's

declaration, "By grace are ye saved." The doctrine of grace is the substance of the testimony of Jesus. A2:86-87

C. A ministry "given thee by prophecy" 1 Timothy 4:14

The story of Mr. Knill's prophesying that I should preach the gospel in Rowland Hill's Chapel, and to the largest congregations in the world, has been regarded by many as a legend, but it was strictly true. Mr. Knill took the county of Essex in the year 1844, and traversed the region from town to town, as a deputation for the London Missionary Society. In the course of that journey, he spent a little time at Stambourne Parsonage. In his heart burned the true missionary spirit, for he sought the souls of young and old, whenever they came in his way. He was a great soul-winner, and he soon spied out the boy. He said to me, "Where do you sleep? for I want to call you up in the morning." I showed him my little room, and he took good note of it. At six o'clock he called me up. There stood in my grandfather's garden two arbors made of yew trees, cut into sugar-loaf fashion. Though the old manse has given way to a new one, and the old chapel has gone also, yet the yew trees flourish as aforetime. We went into the right-hand arbor, and there, in the sweetest way, he told me of the love of Jesus, and of the blessedness of trusting in Him and loving Him in our childhood. With many a story he preached Christ to me, and told me how good God had been to him, and then he prayed that I might know the Lord and serve Him. He knelt down in that arbor, and prayed for me with his arms about my neck. He did not seem content unless I kept with him in the interval between the services. He heard my childish talk with patient love, and repaid it with gracious instruction. On three successive days he taught me, and prayed with me; and before he had to leave, my grandfather had come back from the place where he had gone to preach, and all the family were gathered to morning prayer. Then, in the presence of them all, Mr. Knill took me on his knee, and said, "This child will one day preach the gospel, and he will preach it to great multitudes. I am persuaded that he will preach in the chapel of Rowland Hill, where (I think he said) I am now the minister." He spoke very solemnly, and called upon all present to witness what he said. Then he gave me sixpence as a reward if I would learn the hymn, - "*God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.*"

I was made to promise that, when I preached in Rowland Hill's Chapel, that hymn should be sung. Think of that as a promise from a child! Would it ever be other than an idle dream? Years flew by. After I had begun for some little time to preach in London, Dr. Alexander Fletcher was engaged to deliver the annual sermon to children in Surrey Chapel; but as he was taken ill, I was asked in a hurry to preach to the children in his stead. "Yes," I replied, "I will, if you will allow the children to sing, 'God moves in a mysterious way.' I have made a promise, long ago, that so that hymn should be sung." And so it was: I preached in Rowland Hill's Chapel, and the hymn was sung. My emotions on that occasion I cannot describe, for the word of the Lord's servant was fulfilled. Still, I fancy that Surrey was not the chapel which Mr. Knill intended. How was I to go to the country chapel? All unsought by me, the minister at Wotton-under-Edge, which was Mr. Hill's summer residence, invited me to preach there. I went on the condition that the congregation should sing, "God moves in a mysterious way,"-which was also done. To me it was a very wonderful thing, and I no more understood at that time how it came to pass than I understand today why the Lord should be so gracious to me. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfillment? I think so. I believed them, and looked forward to the time when I should preach the Word: I felt very powerfully that no unconverted person might dare to

enter the ministry; this made me, I doubt not, all the more intent upon seeking salvation, and more hopeful of it, and when by grace enabled to cast myself upon the Savior's love, it was not long before my mouth began to speak of His redemption. How came that sober-minded minister to speak thus of one into whose future God alone could see? How came it that he lived to rejoice with his young brother in the truth of all that he had spoken? We think we know the answer; but each reader has a right to his own: so let it rest, but not till we have marked one practical lesson. Would to God that we were all as wise as Richard Knill, and habitually sowed beside all waters! A1:33-34

Immediately on entering, Mr. Knowles exclaimed, 'Boys, have you heard the Cambridgeshire lad?' None of us had heard him. 'Then, boys,' he continued, 'go and hear him at once.' This was after Mr. Spurgeon had been preaching at New Park Street Chapel two Sundays. 'Go and hear him at once if you want to know how to preach. His name is Charles Spurgeon. He is only a boy, but he is the most wonderful preacher in the world. He is absolutely perfect in his oratory; and, beside that, a master in the art of acting. He has nothing to learn from me, or anyone else. He is simply perfect. He knows everything. He can do anything. I was once lessee of Drury Lane Theater; and were I still in that position, I would offer him a fortune to play for one season on the boards of that house. Why, boys, he can do anything he pleases with his audience! He can make them laugh, and cry, and laugh again, in five minutes. His power was never equaled. Now, mark my word, boys, that young man will live to be the greatest preacher of this or any other age. He will bring more souls to Christ than any man who ever proclaimed the gospel, not excepting the apostle Paul. His name will be known everywhere, and his sermons will be translated into many of the languages of the world.'" A1:354

D. Baptism and Baptist influence

I can never forget the 3rd of May, 1850; it was my mother's birthday, and I myself was within a few weeks of being sixteen years of age. I was up early, to have a couple of hours for quiet prayer and dedication to God. Then I had some eight miles to walk, to reach the spot where I was to be immersed into the Triune Name according to the sacred command. What a walk it was! What thoughts and prayers thronged my soul during that morning's journey! It was by no means a warm day, and therefore all the better for the two or three hours of quiet foot-travel which I enjoyed. The sight of Mr. Cantlow's smiling face was a full reward for that country tramp. I think I see the good man now, and the white ashes of the peat-fire by which we stood and talked together about the solemn exercise which lay before us. A1:151

If I thought it wrong to be a Baptist, I should give it up, and become what I believed to be right. The particular doctrine adhered to by Baptists is that they acknowledge no authority unless it comes from the Word of God. They attach no importance to the authority of the Fathers,-they care not for the authority of the mothers,-if what they say does not agree with the teaching of the Evangelists, Apostles, and Prophets, and, most of all, with the teaching of the Lord Himself. If we could find infant baptism in the Word of God, we should adopt it. It would help us out of a great difficulty, for it would take away from us that reproach which is attached to us,-that we are odd, and do not as other people do. But we have looked well through the Bible, and cannot find it, and do not believe that it is there; nor do we believe that others can find infant baptism in the Scriptures, unless they themselves first put it there. A1:155

E. Early Calvinistic influence

The first lessons I ever had in theology were from an old cook in the school at Newmarket where I was an usher. She was a good old soul, and used to read *The Gospel Standard*. She liked something very sweet indeed, good strong Calvinistic doctrine; but she lived strongly as well as fed strongly. Many a time we have gone over the covenant of grace together, and talked of the personal election of the saints, their union to Christ, their final perseverance, and what vital godliness meant; and I do believe that I learnt more from her than I should have learned from any six doctors of divinity of the sort we have nowadays. There are some Christian people who taste, and see, and enjoy religion in their own souls, and who get at a deeper knowledge of it than books can ever give them, though they should search all their days. The cook at Newmarket was a godly experienced woman, from whom I learned far more than I did from the minister of the chapel we attended. A1:53

Many years later CHS learned that this woman was living in poverty, and he began supporting her until she died.

Well can I remember the manner in which I learned the doctrines of grace in a single instant. Born, as all of us are by nature, an Arminian, I still believed the old things I had heard continually from the pulpit, and did not see the grace of God. When I was coming to Christ, I thought I was doing it all myself, and though I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me. I do not think the young convert is at first aware of this. I can recall the very day and hour when first I received those truths in my own soul--when they were, as John Bunyan says, burnt into my heart as with a hot iron, and I can recollect how I felt that I had grown on a sudden from a babe into a man--that I had made progress in Scriptural knowledge, through having found, once for all, the clue to the truth of God. One weeknight, when I was sitting in the house of God, I was not thinking much about the preacher's sermon, for I did not believe it. The thought struck me, How did you come to be a Christian? I sought the Lord. But how did you come to seek the Lord? The truth flashed across my mind in a moment--I should not have sought Him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to make me seek Him. I prayed, thought I, but then I asked myself, How came I to pray? I was induced to pray by reading the Scriptures. How came I to read the Scriptures? I did read them, but what led me to do so? Then, in a moment, I saw that God was at the bottom of it all, and that He was the Author of my faith, and so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me, and from that doctrine I have not departed to this day, and I desire to make this my constant confession, "I ascribe my change wholly to God." I once attended a service where the text happened to be, "He shall choose our inheritance for us;" and the good man who occupied the pulpit was more than a little of an Arminian. Therefore, when he commenced, he said, "This passage refers entirely to our temporal inheritance, it has nothing whatever to do with our everlasting destiny, for," said he, "we do not want Christ to choose for us in the matter of Heaven or hell. It is so plain and easy, that every man who has a grain of common sense will choose Heaven, and any person would know better than to choose hell. We have no need of any superior intelligence, or any greater Being, to choose Heaven or hell for us. It is left to our own free-will, and we have enough wisdom given us, sufficiently correct means to judge for ourselves," and therefore, as he very logically inferred, there was no necessity for Jesus Christ, or anyone, to make a choice for us. We could choose the inheritance for ourselves without any assistance. "Ah!" I thought, "but, my good brother, it may

be very true that we could, but I think we should want something more than common sense before we should choose aright." A1:168-69

F. His refusal of higher education

Soon after I had begun to preach the Word in the village of Waterbeach, I was strongly advised to enter Stepney, now Regents Park, College, to prepare more fully for the ministry. Knowing that solid learning is never an encumbrance, and is often a great means of usefulness, I felt inclined to avail myself of the opportunity of attaining it: although I hoped that I might be useful without a College training, I consented to the opinion of friends that I should be more useful with it. Dr. Angus, the tutor of the College, visited Cambridge, and it was arranged that we should meet at the house of Mr. Macmillan, the publisher. Thinking and praying over the matter, I entered the house exactly at the time appointed, and was shown into a room where I waited patiently a couple of hours, feeling too much impressed with my own insignificance, and the greatness of the tutor from London, to venture to ring the bell, and make inquiries as to the unreasonably long delay. At last, patience having had her perfect work, and my school-engagements requiring me to attend to my duties as an usher, the bell was set in motion, and on the arrival of the servant, the waiting young man was informed that the Doctor had tarried in another room until he could stay no longer, and had gone off to London by train. The stupid girl had given no information to the family that anyone had called, and had been shown into the drawing-room; and, consequently, the meeting never came about, although designed by both parties. I was not a little disappointed at the moment, but have a thousand times since thanked the Lord very heartily for the strange Providence which forced my steps into another path. Still holding to the idea of entering the Collegiate Institution, I thought of writing and making an immediate application, but this was not to be. That afternoon, having to preach at one of the village-stations of the Cambridge Lay Preachers' Association, I walked slowly, in a meditative frame of mind, over Midsummer Common to the little wooden bridge which leads to Chesterton, and in the midst of the Common I was startled by what seemed a loud voice, but which may have been a singular illusion. Whichever it was, the impression was vivid to an intense degree; I seemed very distinctly to hear the words, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not!" This led me to look at my position from another point of view, and to challenge my motives and intentions. I remembered the poor but loving people to whom I ministered, and the souls which had been given me in my humble charge; and, although at that time I anticipated obscurity and poverty as the result of the resolve, yet I did there and then solemnly renounce the offer of Collegiate instruction, determining to abide for a season at least with my people, and to remain preaching the Word so long as I had strength to do it. Had it not been for those words, in all probability I had never been where and what I now am. I was conscientious in my obedience to the monition, and I have never seen cause to regret it. A1:241-42

G. Early premonitions of printed works

On August 20, 1854, I preached at New Park Street Chapel from the words in x Samuel xii. 17 "Is it not wheat harvest to-day?" The sermon was published by Mr. James Paul, as No. 2,234 in his Penny Pulpit, under the title, "Harvest Time," and was, I believe, the first of my discourses to appear in print. Before I ever entered a pulpit, the thought had occurred to me that I should one day preach sermons which would be printed. A2:154

H. *Helpful criticism*

While I was preaching at the Music Hall, an unknown censor, of great ability, used to send me a weekly list of my mispronunciations and other slips of speech. He never signed his name, and that was my only cause of complaint against him, for he left me with a debt which I could not discharge. With genial temper, and an evident desire to benefit me, he marked down most relentlessly everything which he supposed me to have said incorrectly. Concerning some of his criticisms, he was himself in error; but, for the most part, he was right, and his remarks enabled me to perceive many mistakes, and to avoid them in the future. I looked for his weekly memoranda with much interest, and I trust I am all the better for them. If I repeated a sentence which I had used two or three Sundays before, he would write, "See the same expression in such-and-such a sermon," mentioning the number and page. He remarked, on one occasion, that I too often quoted the line, — *Nothing in my hand I bring*,"— and he added, "we are sufficiently informed of the vacuity of your hand." He demanded my authority for calling a man covechus,' and so on. Possibly, some young men might have been discouraged, if not irritated, by such severe criticisms; but they would have been very foolish, for, in resenting such correction, they would have been throwing away a valuable aid to progress. A2:227-228

I. *On John Calvin*

Among all those who have been born of women, there has not risen a greater than John Calvin; no age, before him ever produced his equal, and no age afterwards has seen his rival. In theology, he stands alone, shining like a bright fixed star, while other leaders and teachers can only circle round him, at a great distance, -as comets go streaming through space, -with nothing like his glory or his permanence. Calvin's fame is eternal because of the truth he proclaimed; and even in Heaven, although we shall lose the name of the system of doctrine which he taught, it shall be that truth which shall make us strike our golden harps, and sing, 'Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever;' for the essence of Calvinism is that we are born again, 'not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' A2:372

J. *His mind*

Spurgeon's mind was on a different plateau than most, if not all. He knew every member of the Tabernacle by name. His library consisted of some 12,000 volumes and years later he could remember what he read and where. He once counted 8 sets of thoughts passing through his mind while preaching! His sermon preparation was done on Saturday nights and only consisted of one side of a page from which he preached 45 minutes.

This extraordinary incident occurred in this early period of our history. One Saturday evening, my dear husband was deeply perplexed by the difficulties presented by a text on which he desired to preach the next morning. It was in Psalm 110:3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of Thy youth;" and, with his usual painstaking preparation, he consulted all the Commentaries he then possessed, seeking light from the Holy Spirit upon their words and his own thoughts; but, as it

seemed, in vain. I was as much distressed as he was, but I could not help him in such an emergency. At least, I thought I could not; but the Lord had a great favor in store for me, and used me to deliver His servant out of his serious embarrassment. He sat up very late, and was utterly worn out and dispirited, for all his efforts to get at the heart of the text were unavailing. I advised him to retire to rest, and soothed him by suggesting that, if he would try to sleep then, he would probably in the morning feel quite refreshed, and able to study to better purpose. "If I go to sleep now, wifey, will you wake me very early, so that I may have plenty of time to prepare?" With my loving assurance that I would watch the time for him, and call him soon enough, he was satisfied; and, like a trusting, tired child, he laid his head upon the pillow, and slept soundly and sweetly at once. By-and-by, a wonderful thing happened. During the first dawning hours of the Sabbath, I heard him talking in his sleep, and roused myself to listen attentively. Soon, I realized that he was going over the subject of the verse which had been so obscure to him, and was giving a clear and distinct exposition of its meaning, with much force and freshness. I set myself with almost trembling joy, to understand and follow all that he was saying, for I knew that, if I could but seize and remember the salient points of the discourse, he would have no difficulty in developing and enlarging upon them. Never preacher had a more eager and anxious hearer! What if I should let the precious words slip? I had no means at hand of "taking notes," so, like Nehemiah, "I prayed to the God of Heaven," and asked that I might receive and retain the thoughts which He had given to His servant in his sleep, and which were so singularly entrusted to my keeping. As I lay, repeating over and over again the chief points I wished to remember, my happiness was very great in anticipation of his surprise and delight on awaking; but I had kept vigil so long, cherishing my joy, that I must have been overcome with slumber just when the usual time for rising came, for he awoke with a frightened start, and seeing the tell-tale clock, said, "Oh, wifey, you said you would wake me very early, and now see the time! Oh, why did you let me sleep? What shall I do? What shall I do?" "Listen, beloved," I answered; and I told him all I had heard. "Why! that's just what I wanted," he exclaimed; "that is the true explanation of the whole verse! And you say I preached it in my sleep? It is wonderful," he repeated again and again, and we both praised the Lord for so remarkable a manifestation of His power and love. Joyfully my dear one went down to his study, and prepared this God-given sermon, and it was delivered that same morning, April 13, 1856, at New Park Street Chapel. It can be found and read in Vol. 2. of the sermons (No. 74), and its opening paragraph gives the dear preacher's own account of the difficulty he experienced in dealing with the text. Naturally, he refrained from telling the congregation the special details which I have here recorded; but, many years after, he told the tale to his students at one of their ever-to-be-remembered Friday afternoon gatherings, and some of them still keep it fresh in their memories. A2:188-189

K. His conversion

There is an account of his conversion in every single volume of the 56 volume MTP set.

I sometimes think I might have been in darkness and despair until now had it not been for the goodness of God in sending a snowstorm, one Sunday morning, while I was going to a certain place of worship. When I could go no further, I turned down a side street, and came to a little Primitive Methodist Chapel. In that chapel there may have been a dozen or fifteen people. I had heard of the Primitive Methodists, how they sang so loudly that they made people's heads ache; but that did not matter to me. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they could tell me

that, I did not care how much they made my head ache. The minister did not come that morning; he was snowed up, I suppose. At last, a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker, or tailor, or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. Now, it is well that preachers should be instructed; but this man was really stupid. He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say. The text was, — **"LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH."** He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. There was, I thought, a glimpse of hope for me in that text. The preacher began thus:—"My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, 'Look.' Now lookin' don't take a deal of pains. It ain't liftin' your foot or your finger; it is just, 'Look.' Well, a man needn't go to College to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn't be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look; even a child can look. But then the text says, 'Look unto Me.'" "Ay!" said he, in broad Essex, "many on ye are lookin' to yourselves, but it's no use lookin' there. You'll never find any comfort in yourselves. Some look to God the Father. No, look to Him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says, 'Look unto Me.' Some on ye say, 'We must wait for the Spirit's workin'. You have no business with that just now. Look to Christ. The text says, 'Look unto Me.'" Then the good man followed up his text in this way:—"Look unto Me; I am sweatin' great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin' on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to Heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin' at the Father's right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! look unto Me!" When he had gone to about that length, and managed to spin out ten minutes or so, he was at the end of his tether. Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I daresay, with so few present, he knew me to be a stranger. Just fixing his eyes on me, as if he knew all my heart, he said, "Young man, you look very miserable." Well, I did; but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made from the pulpit on my personal appearance before. However, it was a good blow, struck right home. He continued, "and you always will be miserable-miserable in life, and miserable in death,-if you don't obey my text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved." Then, lifting up his hands, he shouted, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, "Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothin' to do but to look and live." I saw at once the way of salvation. I know not what else he said,-I did not take much notice of it,-I was so possessed with that one thought. Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, the people only looked and were healed, so it was with me. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, "Look!" what a charming word it seemed to me! Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away. There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him. A1:105-106

III. At church

A. *His focus*

He was a "called, and chosen, and faithful" servant of Christ in the very highest degree; and during all his life he put God's service first, and all earthly things second. I have known him to be so abstracted, on a Sabbath morning at the Tabernacle, just before preaching, that if I left his

vestry for a few moments, he would, on my return, rise and greet me with a handshake, and a grave "How are you?" as if I were a strange visitor; then, noting the amused look on my face, he would discover his mistake, and laughingly say, "Never mind, wifey dear, I was thinking about my hymns." This happened not once only, but several times, and when the service was over, and we were driving home, he would make very merry over it. A2:15

B. His insight

There were many instances of remarkable conversions at the Music Hall; one especially was so singular that I have often related it as a proof that God sometimes guides His servants to say what they would themselves never have thought of uttering, in order that He may bless the hearer for whom the message is personally intended. While preaching in the hall, on one occasion, I deliberately pointed to a man in the midst of the crowd, and said, "There is a man sitting there, who is a shoemaker; he keeps his shop open on Sundays, it was open last Sabbath morning, he took ninepence, and there was fourpence profit out of it; his soul is sold to Satan for fourpence!" A city missionary, when going his rounds, met with this man, and seeing that he was reading one of my sermons, he asked the question, "Do you know Mr. Spurgeon?" "Yes," replied the man, "I have every reason to know him, I have been to hear him; and, under his preaching, by God's grace I have become a new creature in Christ Jesus. Shall I tell you how it happened? I went to the Music Hall, and took my seat in the middle of the place; Mr. Spurgeon looked at me as if he knew me, and in his sermon he pointed to me, and told the congregation that I was a shoemaker, and that I kept my shop open on Sundays; and I did, sir. I should not have minded that; but he also said that I took ninepence the Sunday before, and that there was fourpence profit out of it. I did take ninepence that day, and fourpence was just the profit; but how he should know that, I could not tell. Then it struck me that it was God who had spoken to my soul through him, so I shut up my shop the next Sunday. At first, I was afraid to go again to hear him, lest he should tell the people more about me; but afterwards I went, and the Lord met with me, and saved my soul." I could tell as many as a dozen similar cases in which I pointed at somebody in the hall without having the slightest knowledge of the person, or any idea that what I said was right, except that I believed I was moved by the Spirit to say it; and so striking has been my description, that the persons have gone away, and said to their friends, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did; beyond a doubt, he must have been sent of God to my soul, or else he could not have described me so exactly." And not only so, but I have known many instances in which the thoughts of men have been revealed from the pulpit. I have sometimes seen person's nudge their neighbors with their elbow, because they had got a smart hit, and they have been heard to say, when they were going out, "The preacher told us just what we said to one another when we went in at the door." A2:226-227

C. On membership

The officers of the Church consist of an Assistant Teacher, Deacons, and Elders. There are ten Deacons who are chosen for life, and whose duty is to attend to the temporal interests of the Church. There are twenty-three Elders who are annually elected, and whose duty is to attend to spiritual affairs only. Candidates for Church-membership have an interview with one of the Elders, some of whom attend at the Tabernacle for that purpose every Wednesday evening. A record is made by the Elder of the result of that interview in what is called the Inquirers' Book. If

satisfied with the candidate, he gives a card, which qualifies for direct intercourse with Mr. Spurgeon, who devotes a fixed portion of his time to that office. If Mr. Spurgeon thinks favorably of the individual, the name is announced at a Church meeting, and visitors are appointed to make the most careful inquiries into the whole circumstances connected with the application. If this investigation is satisfactory, the candidate appears at a Church meeting where he is examined by the pastor, after which he retires, and the visitor gives his report upon the case. It is then proposed to the Church for its adoption, and if approved, the Pastor gives the right hand of fellowship. As soon after this as convenient, the candidate is baptized, and on the next first Sabbath in the month ensuing, unites in the Communion Service, having first been recognized before the whole Church by again receiving from the Pastor the right hand of fellowship. Each member on admission, and at the beginning of each year, receives a ticket corresponding with the periods of communion. These tickets are collected by the Deacons just before the communion service commences. The numbers and dates of the tickets correspond with their names in the Church books, so that absentees are known and inquiry in due time is made respecting them. This form of Church-government has risen out of the peculiar circumstances of a rapid increase, and is, we believe, in harmony with that which in similar circumstances existed in the primitive Churches. It has resulted spontaneously from the influence of the same truths, and the gratification of the same desires. It answers at least all the ends of communion, and discipline, and cooperation contemplated by a Christian Church. It enables a Church of nearly three thousand members to observe all its ordinances with order, solemnity, and profit, with entire freedom from those prodigious evils which have resulted from Churches founded upon totally different principles, and from those even which have attended smaller Churches of their own order. ST1:19

Oh, that we had a purer membership to work with! Do what we may, Judas will come in; but let us not invite him: let us not make it easy for a betrayer of Christ to be comfortable with us. To mix up the world with the church, is a crime; it brings with it an awful curse, and acts upon godliness as a blast and a mildew. Let the door of the church be opened to all sincere souls, but closed against all whose hearts are in the world. It is not even for the worldling's good that he should hold the form of godliness while he is a stranger to its power. As you love your Lord, and value men's souls guard well the entrance of the church. ARM310

The following section contains quotes on over 70 ministry related topics drawing heavily from *An All Round Ministry* and *The Soul Winner*. Many of these quotes are not included in the book *Exploring the Heart and Mind of the Prince of Preachers*.

IV. Spurgeon on...

ACCOUNTABILITY

...give an account of thy stewardship...Luke 16:2

We hear a great deal, nowadays, about the liberty of ministers to preach what they like, but what about the liberty of the people? Are they not to be considered? Are churches made for ministers, or ministers made for churches? After the people have elected a man to be their pastor, and he changes his views, it is only common honesty that he should say so, and no longer pretend to preach what he does not believe, or to belong to a church with which he is not sincerely in sympathy. 3200.266

AMBITION

And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not. Jeremiah 45:5

Qualify yourselves for larger spheres, you who are in little places; but do not neglect your studies to look after better positions. Be prepared for an opening when it comes, and rest assured that the office will come to the man who is fit for the office. ARM196

ANGER

...anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Ecclesiastes 7:9

So you fly into a passion, and you "give it" to the people because they are not all they ought to be; are you all you ought to be? ARM277

Brothers, you will need all the wisdom and grace you can get in order to fulfill your duties as pastors. There is an adaptation to rule men which would seem to be quite absent from certain preachers, and the place of it is supplied by an adaptation to set a house on fire, for they scatter firebrands and burning coals wherever they go. Be ye not like unto them. Strive not, and yet wink not at sin. ARM277

BETRAYAL

For Demas hath forsaken me...2 Timothy 4:10

Be not surprised when friends fail you; it is a failing world. Never count upon immutability in man: inconstancy you may reckon upon without fear of disappointment. The disciples of Jesus forsook him; be not amazed if your adherents wander away to other teachers: as they were not your all when with you, all is not gone from you with their departure. 1LS179

BOASTING

In God we boast all the day long...Psalm 44:8

The fact is, that too frequently religious statistics are shockingly false. Cooking of such accounts is not an unknown art in certain quarters, as we know. GF41

As a rule, the smallest boy carries the biggest fiddle, and he who makes most boast has least roast. He who has least wisdom has most vanity. John Lackland is wonderfully fond of being called Esquire, and there's none so pleased at being dubbed a doctor as the man who least deserves it. Many a D.D. is fiddle-dee-dee. PP28

I am weary of this public bragging, this counting of unhatched chickens, this exhibition of doubtful spoils. Lay aside such numberings of the people, such idle pretence of certifying in half a minute that which will need the testing of a lifetime. SW15

As some men build castles in the air, so others build churches there, they educate preachers in the air, they support Christ's ministers in the sky, they send out fresh missionaries in the clouds. 433.76

Oh! the wonderful prospectuses that some people have brought out, of wondrous things that were going to regenerate the world, and the only purpose they have served up to now has been to increase the work in some printing office! 3364.352

Nehemiah says, "Neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem." You will often find it best not to commit your plans to others. If you want to serve God, go and do it, and then let other people find it out afterwards. 3364.352

CALLING

...who will go for us?...Isaiah 6:8

Yours is not a trade, or profession. Assuredly if you measure it by the tradesman's measure it is the poorest business on the face of the earth. Consider it as a profession: who would not prefer any other, so far as golden gains or worldly honours are concerned? But if it be a divine calling, and you a miracle-worker, dwelling in the super-natural, and working not for time but for eternity, then you belong to a nobler guild, and to a higher fraternity than any other that spring of earth and deal with time. 2LS161

Many preachers are good tailors spoiled, and capital shoemakers turned out of their proper calling. When God means a creature to fly, he gives it wings, and when he intends men to preach he gives them abilities. PT70

There are little spheres, and God will have little men to occupy them. 175.83

What an honour to have it as one's calling, to study, to expound, and to publish this sacred Word! I cannot help feeling that the man who preaches the Word of God is standing, not upon a mere platform, but upon a throne. 2010.114

For us to give ourselves to getting up entertainments, to become competitors with theatres and music-halls, is a great degradation of our holy office. If I heard of a minister becoming a chimney-sweep to earn his living, I would honour him in both his callings; but for God's watchmen to become the world's showmen is a miserable business. 2189.87

We have known ministers whose "call" to a place always depended upon the size of the salary. 3078.66

CHEERFULNESS

...he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast. Proverbs 15:15

An individual who has no geniality about him had better be an undertaker, and bury the dead, for he will never succeed in influencing the living. 1LS183

There are more flies caught with honey than with vinegar, and there will be more souls led to heaven by a man who wears heaven in his face than by one who bears Tartarus in his looks. 1LS184

CHURCH SIZE

For who hath despised the day of small things? Zechariah 4:10

Remember, dear brother, if you give your whole soul to the charge committed to you, it does not matter much about its appearing to be a somewhat small and insignificant affair, for as much skill may be displayed in the manufacture of a very tiny watch as in the construction of the town clock; in fact, a minute article may become the object of greater wonder than another of larger dimensions. Quality is a far more precious thing than quantity. ARM70

COMPASSION

...some have compassion...Jude 22

The man who grinds out theology at so much a yard has no power over men; the people need men who can feel, -men of heart, weak and feeble men, who can sympathize with the timid and sorrowful. ARM221

COMPROMISE

Buy the truth, and sell it not...Proverbs 23:23

We are influenced by one another, and we influence one another. The greatest are unconsciously affected in some measure by the least. The minister must be overwhelmingly influenced by the Lord his God, so that other influences may not warp him from his fidelity. We must resort continually to headquarters, and receive the Word from the mouth of the Lord Himself, so that we may be kept straight and true; otherwise, we shall soon be biased, although we may not be aware of it. There must be no holding back to please one person, no rushing forward to satisfy another, no moving an inch even to gratify the whole community. We must not harp upon a certain string to win the approval of this party, neither must we be silent upon an important doctrine to avoid offending that clique. What have we to do with idols, dead or alive? O brethren, if you go in for pleasing everybody, you have indeed set yourselves a task! The toils of Sisyphus and the labors of Hercules are nothing to this! We must not flatter men; we must speak plain words, and words which conscience will approve. If we please men, we shall displease our Lord; so that success in our self-imposed task would be fatal to our eternal interests. In trying to please men, we shall not even succeed in pleasing ourselves. To please our Lord, though it may seem very difficult, is an easier task than pleasing men. ARM271

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I am afraid that we sometimes preach smooth things, too soothing and agreeable, and that we do not set before men their real danger as we should. SW122

Why is false doctrine so rampant in the churches? It is because we have ungodly people in the church and in the ministry. Eagerness for numbers, and especially eagerness to include respectable people, has adulterated many churches, and made them lax in doctrine and practice, and fond of silly amusements. 2047.562

CONFRONTATION

...rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Proverbs 9:8

I thank God that I can say this,-there is no member of my church, no officer of the church, and no man in the world, to whom I am afraid to say before his face what I would say behind his back. ARM48

Once when I was unduly depressed, my good wife said to me, "I have a book here which I should like to read to you." It did me good to hear her read, but I felt myself rebuked by every word. I half suspected what was coming when she said, "That is your own, recollect." She had been giving the doctor some of his own medicine. What many things you have said, my brethren, that will condemn you if you do not trust God! 3273.510

It is a very easy thing for us to be self-deceived, probably more easy for us than for any other people, because, having a sacred office for a secular vocation, we handle these things every day. Assuming it to be our duty to admonish others, we are prone to resent admonition ourselves. 3305.270

CONSENSUS

...in multitude of counselors there is safety. Proverbs 24:6

Meeting as you do in class, in prayer-meeting, in conversation, and in various religious engagements, you gauge each other; and a wise man will be slow to set aside the verdict of the house. 1LS27

I believe that at bottom, most people think it an uncommonly easy thing to preach, and that they could do it amazingly well themselves. PT24

CRITICISM

But exhort one another daily...Hebrews 3:13

If we could only put certain men into the positions which their brethren faithfully occupy under great discouragement, they would know themselves better, and leave off boasting, and instead of finding fault, they would wonder that so much has been accomplished under such circumstances. ARM216

DEPRESSION

Why are thou cast down, O my soul?...hope thou in God...Psalm 42:5

To see the hopeful turn aside, the godly grow cold, professors abusing their privileges, and sinners waxing more bold in sin-are these not sights enough to crush us to the earth? 1LS170

All mental work tends to weary and to depress, for much study is a weariness of the flesh; but ours is more than mental work-it is heart work, the labour of our inmost soul. 1LS170

Excess of joy or excitement must be paid for by subsequent depressions. 1LS173

Let no man who looks for ease of mind and seeks the quietude of life enter the ministry; if he does so he will flee from it in disgust. 1LS176

I suspect that, because we are in affinity with nature, we, too, shall have our changes, and shall not abide at one elevation. No man's life is all climax. ARM129

DISCOURAGEMENT

He shall not fail nor be discouraged...Isaiah 42:4

When we begin in the Master's service, we think we shall turn the world upside down in six weeks, but we do not do it; and when we find that we must plod on, and not despise the day of small things, we are apt to become weary. Lifelong service under great discouragement is not so easy as mere dreamers think. 3193.184

DUTY

...we have done that which was our duty to do. Luke 17:10

Do not take an exaggerated view of what the Lord expects of you. He will not blame you for not doing that which is beyond your mental power or physical strength. You are required to be faithful, but you are not bound to be successful. You are to teach, but you cannot compel people to learn. You are to make things plain, but you cannot give carnal men an understanding of spiritual things. ARM214

ENCOURAGEMENT

...timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto. 1 Chronicles 22:14

It does not often happen that he gives a whole piece of work to one man; but he seems to say to him, "You go and do so much; then I will send somebody else to do the rest." How this ought to cheer some of you up, the thought that your work may be no failure, though in itself it may seem

to be so, because it fits onto the work of somebody else who is coming after you, and so it will be very far from a failure! 2261.295

ENTERTAINMENT

...the gospel...is the power of God unto salvation...Romans 1:16

Until I see that the Lord Jesus Christ has set up a theatre, or planned a miracle-play, I shall not think of emulating the stage or competing with the music-hall. ARM274

Some preachers evidently do not believe that the Lord is with their gospel, because, in order to attract and save sinners, their gospel is insufficient, and they have to add to it inventions of men. ARM388

St. Augustine desired to be always found aut precantem, aut predicantem; that is, either praying or preaching, either speaking to God for men in prayer, or speaking for God to men in his ministry. Ministers of Christ, especially, should give themselves not to serving tables, but to the ministry of the Word and prayer. For us to give ourselves to getting up entertainments, to become competitors with theatres and music-halls, is a great degradation of our holy office. If I heard of a minister becoming a chimney-sweep to earn his living, I would honour him in both his callings; but for God's watchmen to become the world's showmen is a miserable business. BA166

In the great day, when the muster-roll shall be read, of all those who are converted through fine music, and church decoration, and religious exhibitions and entertainments, they will amount to the tenth part of nothing; but it will always please God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Keep to your preaching; and if you do anything beside, do not let it throw your preaching into the background. In the first place preach, and in the second place preach, and in the third place preach. SW188

ENVY

...charity envieth not...1 Corinthians 13:3

"Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?" I have known persons utter sentiments which condemned themselves merely with the view of injuring others. They cared not if they perished, like Samson, so long as they pulled the house down upon others. An ancient story tells us that a king invited to his palace two men, one of whom he knew to be the slave of envy. "Now," said he, "I will give you whatever you please, upon the condition that this man shall choose first, and his companion shall have twice as much as he." The first man was envious: he desired great wealth, but he could not endure that the other man should have double. He therefore thought that he would reduce what he asked for, but this also left his companion his superior; and as the fable goes,-for peradventure it was only a fable,-his envy so

prevailed that he chose to have one of his eyes torn out that the other man might be rendered totally blind. Somewhat similar is the spirit of those who oppose others upon principles fatal to their own work. Brother, do not so. If thy neighbor be honored of God, thank God for it; If thou art not so honored, be humbled, and pray more earnestly. If the blessing comes not to thee, still rejoice that it gladdens thy comrade. In any case, do not envy others. ARM79

EXAMPLE

...being ensamples to the flock... 1 Peter 5:3

I believe that many weak ones in our churches are seriously injured, if not entirely broken down, by following the example of their ministers in matters wherein they come short of the Lord's mind. How grievous it would be; if any believers were dwarfed through our conduct! May we not fear that there are some in our churches today who are not what they might have been had we properly guided them? No doubt some have been coddled into weakness, and others have been allowed to grow more in one direction than in others. Do you say, "We cannot help this; it is no business of ours?" I tell you it is our business. Strangers may talk in a careless way, but fathers are conscious of great responsibility as to their children. If a family is not well ordered, a wise father begins to mend his own ways. If our people do wrong, we fret and blame ourselves. If we were better, our church-members would be better. It is little use to scold them; our wiser way is to humble ourselves before God, and find out the reason why our ministry does not produce better results. ARM246

A minister soon gets round him people like himself: "like priest, like people." ARM258

He that cannot be safely imitated ought not to be tolerated in a pulpit. GF48

FAITHFULNESS

...it is required...that a man be found faithful. 1 Corinthians 4:2

Know your work, and bend over it, throwing your heart and soul into it; for, be it great or small, you will have to praise God to all eternity if you are found faithful in it. ARM71

I like to think this over sometimes, not that we may quiet ourselves when we do not see numbers saved, nor that we may ever grow indifferent to the great multitudes who remain unconverted; but that we may rest assured that our God is not disappointed, that his plans are not frustrated, and that, after all, the gospel is not preached in vain. 1218.102

Brothers, we need not ask for more talents, we have quite as many as we shall be able to answer for. Preachers need not seek for larger spheres: let them be faithful in those which they now occupy. 1960.246

There will be a fearful amount of blood upon the skirts of a man whose ministry has startled nobody. 2772.147

We cannot always be sure when we are most useful. A certain minister with very great difficulty reached a place where he had promised to preach. There was deep snow upon the ground, therefore only one hearer came. However, he preached as zealously as if there had been a thousand. Years after, when he was travelling in that same part of the country, he met a man who had been the founder of a church in the village, and from it scores of others had been established. The man came to see him, and said, "I have good reason to remember you, sir, for I was once your only hearer; and what has been done here has been brought about instrumentally through my conversion under that sermon." We cannot estimate our success. 3052.393

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

...one thing is needful...Luke 10:42

There are some who get so absorbed in Christian work that they never listen to the Word; they hardly ever read; they only talk. This is sorry work. If you do not take in, you cannot give out. If your own soul is starved, you cannot be strong for the Lord's service. 2914.609

When we speak as ministers and not as men, as preachers instead of penitents, as theologians instead of disciples, we fail; when we lean our head too much upon the Commentary, and too little upon the Savior's bosom; when we eat too largely of the tree of knowledge, and too little of the tree of life, we lose the power of our ministry. ARM64

FELLOWSHIP WITH MEN

Iron sharpeneth iron...Proverbs 27:17

For the sheep there are many companions; for the shepherd few. 1595.233

FELT NEEDS

The prophets prophesy falsely...and my people love to have it so...Jeremiah 5:31

We make no mistake here; we shall not watch our congregation to take our cue from it, but we shall keep our eye on the infallible Word, and preach according to its instructions. Our Master sits on high, and not in the chairs of the scribes and doctors, who regulate the theories of the century. We cannot take our key-note from the wealthier people, nor from the leading officers, nor even from the former minister. ARM318

Liberal divines do not always command the respect of the public, but they gain a certain popularity by pandering to prevailing tastes. DG38

FLATTERY

A flattering mouth worketh ruin...Proverbs 26:28

Have you not by this time discovered that flattery is as injurious as it is pleasant? It softens the mind and makes you more sensitive to slander. In proportion as praise pleases you censure will pain you. 2LS174

HELL

...destroy them with double destruction...Jeremiah 17:18

Shun all views of future punishment which would make it appear less terrible, and so take off the edge of your anxiety to save immortals from the quenchless flame. 2LS156

HUMILITY

For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. Galatians 6:3

So prepare yourselves, my younger brethren, to become weaker and weaker; prepare yourselves for sinking lower and lower in self-esteem; prepare yourselves for self-annihilation, and pray God to expedite the process. ARM218

Ministers are for churches, and not churches for ministers. In our work among the churches, we must not dare to view them as estates to be farmed for our own profit, or gardens to be trimmed to our own taste. ARM256

A sensible friend who will unsparingly criticize you from week to week will be a far greater blessing to you than a thousand indiscriminating admirers if you have sense enough to bear his treatment, and grace enough to be thankful for it. 2LS175

The less you think of yourself, the more will people think of you; and the more you think of yourself, the less will people think of you. SW80

We are men, and therefore liable to overthrow; we are feeble, and therefore unable to prevent it; we are sinful men, and therefore deserving it, and for all these reasons we are afraid. TD56:3

Somebody once said that it proved the divinity of our holy religion that it survived ministers; and there was a good deal of truth in the remark. How I have wondered that this congregation has survived me! and I think we may wonder that as a whole the gospel survives its advocates. We are poor tools. 2032.376

As far as ever you can, keep your own name out of all the work you do for the Lord. 2842.363

HYPOCRISY

Let love be without dissimulation...Romans 12:9

Sooner let us have an honest death than a counterfeit life. ARM176

We have all heard the story of the man who preached so well and lived so badly, that when he was in the pulpit everybody said he ought never to come out again, and when he was out of it they all declared he never ought to enter it again. 1LS12

I believe that the most damnable thing a man can do is to preach the gospel merely as an actor, and to turn the worship of God into a kind of theatrical performance. Such a caricature is more worthy of the devil than of God. SW74

You know, brethren, that it is possible for you to appear to be just a wee bit too good, so that people will feel that you are altogether transcendental beings, and fitter to preach to angels, and cherubim, and seraphim, than to the fallen sons of Adam. SW79

It is a terribly easy matter to be a minister of the gospel and a vile hypocrite at the same time. 3008.483

JEALOUSY

...jealousy is cruel as the grave...Canticles 8:6

Though certain wise persons pretend to despise the power to gather the multitudes to hear the word, you and I need not mind their decrying it, since we shrewdly suspect that their depreciation of the gift is caused by their not possessing it themselves; the grapes are always sour if they hang above our reach. 1381.608

I am not quite certain that every minister in the world would leap for joy if a brother settled close beside him, and had twice as large a congregation as he had, and did ten times as much good. Hearts want a little schooling at such a time as that; for, as the stars love to shine, they sometimes like not only to shine but to outshine. 2319.365

LEGACY

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches...Proverbs 22:1

A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you, and were helped by you, will remember you when forget-me-nots are withered. Carve your name on hearts, and not on marble. LS 1:8

LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

...God hath made that same Jesus...both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:36

Thousands of people are quite willing to be saved by Christ, but when it comes to the very first step, namely, that Jesus must be accepted as ruler, lawgiver, master, king, and Lord, then they start back and reject eternal life. 1375.535

You must either let him reign over you, or else you will have to lie beneath his feet. 2940.297

I cannot conceive it possible for anyone truly to receive Christ as Saviour and yet not to receive him as Lord. One of the first instincts of a redeemed soul is to fall at the feet of the Saviour, and gratefully and adoringly to cry, "Blessed Master, bought with thy precious blood, I own that I am thine,-thine only, thine wholly, thine for ever. Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" 3229.617

It is not possible for us to accept Christ as our Saviour unless he also becomes our King, for a very large part of salvation consists in our being saved from sin's domination over us, and the only way in which we can be delivered from the mastery of Satan is by becoming subject to the mastery of Christ. 3229.617

LOVE

...lovest thou me?...feed my sheep. John 21:17

You cannot look after God's people, and properly care for them in all their sins, temptations, trials, and difficulties, unless you love them; you will grow sick and weary of pastoral work unless there be a fresh spring of love in your heart welling up towards them. A mother tires not of watching by the bedside of her sick child, because love sustains her; she will outlast the paid nurse by many an hour; love props her drooping eyelids. 3211.398

Love to God will help a man to persevere in service when otherwise he would have given up his work. ARM195

Brethren, love your work. You will never preach well unless you are enamored of it. ARM192

MANIPULATION

For neither at any time used we flattering words...1 Thessalonians 2:5

Under God, I owe my position in my own church to the absence of all policy, and the habit of always saying what I mean. The plan of making things pleasant all round is a perilous as well as a wicked one. If you say one thing to one man, and another to another, they will one day compare notes, and find you out, and then you will be despised. The man of two faces will sooner or later be the object of contempt, and justly so. Now, above all things, avoid that. ARM48

MEMBERS WITH MONEY

...if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin...James 2:9

We need a holy people; but, alas! there is too often an Achan in the camp. Achan is more generally harbored than he used to be, because goodly Babylonish garments and wedges of silver are much in request, and weak faith feels that it cannot do without these spoils. Carnal policy whispers, "What shall we do with the chapel debt if the wealthy deacon leaves, and his silver goes with him? We should miss the respectability which his wife's goodly Babylonish garment bestows upon the place. We have very few wealthy people, and we must strain a point to keep them." Yes, that is the way in which the accursed thing is allowed to debase our churches, and defeat our ministries. When this pest is in the air, you may preach your tongue out, but you will not win souls. One man may have more power for mischief than fifty preachers have power for good. ARM356

MOTIVATION

...do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31

Dear brother, are you going to do a wrong thing in the hope of saving your work? Have you subscribed to that wicked maxim, "Let us do evil that good may come"? After all, what have I to do with the consequences of right actions? Is it not my business, if I have learned any truth, to follow it wherever it will lead me? 3142.211

NEOLOGY (Spurgeon's term for "new" theology)

Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 2 Timothy 3:7

I am frequently told that I ought to examine at length the various new views which are so continually presented. I decline the invitation; I can smell them, and that satisfies me. ARM125

Their doubts are stronger than their beliefs. The worst of it is that they not only give us very little gospel, but they give us much that is not the gospel. In this they are like mosquitoes, of whom I have often said that I do not mind their taking a little of my blood, but it is the poison which they put into me which is my great cause of quarrel with them. That a man should rob me of the gospel, is bad enough; but that he should impregnate me with his poisonous doctrine, is intolerable. ARM142

Truth is one and the same in all eras, but falsehood changes its shape, and comes and goes like the fashions of dress. ARM285

Some ministers believe nothing except that nothing can be believed. ARM298

They prefer the chase after truth to truth itself; it is clear that such a chase has not much of reality in it, for the man is pleased that his prey should perpetually escape him. In olden times, the prophet was a seer; but, nowadays, a prophet is one who is too cultured to see anything. ARM304

An unregenerate heart lies at the bottom of "modern thought." ARM375

By prophetic vision I see gathering another opposition which will be as difficult to cope with as any that has gone before. I see mustering within the ranks of the church of God men who say they hate all creeds, meaning that they despise all truth, men who would fain be ministers amongst us and yet tread under foot all that we hold sacred, not teaching at first the fulness of their infidelity, but little by little gathering courage to vent their unbeliefs and heresies. Creedophobia is maddening many. They appear to fear lest they should believe anything, and to hope that there is something good to be found in atheism, or devil worship,-indeed in all religions except the only true one. 1224.167

ORIGINALITY

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you... 1 Corinthians 11:23

There may be much of the Athenian spirit among congregations, but that should be no excuse for its being tolerated among ministers; we, of all men, should be the last to spend our time in seeking something new. Our business, my brethren, is the old labour of apostolic tongues, to declare that Jesus, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. 503.193

PARTIALITY

...doing nothing by partiality...1 Timothy 5:21

To see ministers of different sects fluttering around a wealthy man, like vultures around a dead camel, is sickening. 1LS187

PASTORAL GOSSIP

...speak evil of no man...Titus 3:2

Learn to disbelieve those who have no faith in their brethren. Suspect those who would lead you to suspect others. A resolute unbelief in all the scandalmongers will do much to repress their mischievous energies. LS3:161

PERSISTENCE

...in due seson we shall reap, if we faint not. Galatians 6:9

Forward is your only way; you are shut up to it. You have no armor for your backs; and whatever dangers lie in front, there are ten thousand times as many behind. It is onward or nothing; nay, onward or dishonor; onward or death. ARM33

Meanwhile, it is for us quietly to labor on. Our daydreams are over: we shall neither convert the world to righteousness, nor the church to orthodoxy. We refuse to bear responsibilities which do not belong to us, for our real responsibilities are more than enough. Certain wise brethren are hot to reform their denomination. They ride out gallantly. Success be to the champions! They are generally wiser when they ride home again. I confess great admiration for my Quixotic brethren, but I wish they had more to show for their valor. I fear that both church and world are beyond us; we must be content with smaller spheres. Even our own denomination must go its own way. We are only responsible so far as our power goes, and it will be wise to use that power for some object well within reach. For the rest, let us not worry and weary about things beyond our line. What if we cannot destroy all the thorns and thistles which curse the earth; we can, perhaps, cleanse our own little plot. If we cannot transform the desert into a pasture, we may at least make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before; and that will be something. ARM231

PRAGMATISM

Let us do evil, that good may come? Romans 3:8

I often wonder what those preachers do who feel called to make up their message as they go on; for if they fail, their failure must be attributed in great measure to their want of ability to make up a moving tale. They have to spread their sails to the breeze of the age, and to pick up a gospel that comes floating down to them on the stream of time, altering every week in the year; and they must have an endless task to catch this new idea, or, as they put it, to keep abreast of the age. 2026.301

PRAISE OF MEN

Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth...Proverbs 27:2

We must also put away all notion of self-importance. God will not bless the man who thinks himself great. To glory even in the work of God the Holy Spirit in yourself, is to tread dangerously near to self-adulation. "Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth," and be very glad when that other has sense enough to hold his tongue. ARM46

PREACHING

Preach the word...2 Timothy 4:2

Gentlemen, twice a week preaching is very dangerous, but I have found five or six times healthy, and even twelve to fourteen not excessive. 1LS129

Always inconvenience yourself rather than your audience: your Master would have done so. 2LS85

No piper ever suited all ears. PT23

If you are a preacher, do not think of what you will preach about the next time; think of what you are going to preach about now. It is always quite enough to get one sermon at a time: you need not have a store; because if you get a lot piled away somewhere, there will be a stale odour about them. WE154

Upon no sermon I have ever preached, though God knows I have preached my very soul out, am I able to look back without a measure of shame and confusion of face. 1181.375

I wish that I knew how to preach. I have tried to do so for thirty years or so, but I am only now beginning to learn the art. 1691.650

To a great degree I attribute the looseness of the age to the laxity of the doctrine preached by its teachers. 1906.343

I rejoice that Jesus forgives the sins of my sermons. 1923.545

If preaching is not a supernatural exercise, it is a useless procedure. 2246.117

There are certain preachers who seem as if they must mystify it, like the negro, who said, "Brethren, I have read you a chapter, and now I will confound it." 2275.460

Some people, when they speak, do not know what they mean; and when a man does not make you understand what he means, it generally is because he does not himself know the meaning of what he says. Indistinct speaking is usually the result of indistinct thinking. 3053.398.

If we play at preaching, we have chosen an awful game. To shuffle texts like cards, and make literary essays out of themes which move all heaven and hell, is shameful work. We must be serious as death in this solemn work. 3350.189

Some brethren have done with their text as soon as they have read it. 1LS75

It has been said by an eminent divine that many of us in preaching the word suppose too great knowledge in our hearers. 140.265

Wherever you are weak, be strong in the pulpit. Give the people a good hearty meal whenever you preach. They will put up with a great many defects if you will only feed them. 3211.405

He who never quotes, will never be quoted, and he who does not read is not very likely to be read. 3318.421

-DULL

I heard one say, the other day, that a certain preacher had no more gifts for the ministry than an oyster, and in my own judgment this was a slander on the oyster, for that worthy bivalve shows great discretion in his openings, and he also knows when to close. If some men were sentenced to hear their own sermons, it would be a righteous judgment upon them; but they would soon cry out with Cain, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Let us not fall under the same condemnation through any faults in our preaching which we can remedy. ARM41

Unless we are careful, we shall be likely to say to ourselves, "Monday evening here again, I must give an address at the prayer-meeting. Thursday evening, and I have to preach, although I have not yet a topic! Sunday morning, Sunday evening; I have to preach again! Yes, preach again! Then there are all those extra engagements; it is for ever preach, preach, preach! I am always preaching. What a weariness it is!" Preaching ought to be a joy, and yet it may become a task. Constant preaching should be constant enjoyment, and yet, when the brain is tired, pleasure flies. Like the sick boy in the prophet's day, we are ready to cry, "My head! my head!" We ask, "How can we keep up our freshness?" It is hard to produce so much with such scant leisure for

reading; it is almost as bad as making bricks without straw. Nothing can maintain us in the freshness of our beginnings but the daily anointing of the Spirit. ARM134

Self-interest quickens attention. 1LS149

If you do not touch the heart you will soon weary the ear. 1LS150

A dull minister creates a dull audience. 2LS147

There be some preachers who can distribute narcotics with a bounteous hand, and send at one motion of their deadly arm a whole crowd to sleep. May it never be so here. If we cannot keep you awake it is better ourselves to go to sleep. When the congregation is asleep, it is a sign the minister ought to be in bed, where he could be comfortable, rather than in a pulpit where he is mischievous. 375.221

Those of you who are workers for God may have a fear that you will lose the freshness of your utterances—a fear which haunts a good many of us. Now, that may happen to us by our own fault if there be a want of searching the word, if there be a want of fresh acquisitions of sacred knowledge, and it may happen to us again, if we are always gathering the thoughts of others, and do not think ourselves. Then we shall lose freshness, and become mere dealers in second-hand observations. 1649.154

-ENTHUSIASM IN

Heat your sermon red-hot, and it will be likely to be remembered by all who come into contact with it. ARM176

Those who attend our ministry have a great deal to do during the week. Many of them have family trials, and heavy personal burdens to carry, and they frequently come into the assembly cold and listless, with thoughts running hither and thither; it is ours to take those thoughts and thrust them into the furnace of our earnestness, melt them by holy contemplation and by intense appeal, and pour them out into the mould of the truth. 2LS147

We do not go out snow-balling on Sundays, we go fire-balling; we ought to hurl grenades into the enemies ranks. SW76

And first I will tell you, it is difficult because it is so hard as not to be warped by your own prejudices in preaching the word. WCo80

Ministers who do not aim to cut deep are not worth their salt. God never sent the man who never troubles men's consciences. Such a man may be an ass treading down the corn, but a reaper he is certainly not. WCo59

My motto is *cedo nulli*-I yield to none. I have not courted any man's love; I asked no man to attend my ministry; I preach what I like, and when I like, and as I like. 12.90

I have not softened down the Bible to suit the carnal tastes of men. I have said damn, where God said damn-I have not sweetened it into "condemn." 194.237

True ministers of God are great alarmists. 550.38

Every man who preaches should aim at preaching his best sermon every time he mounts the pulpit. 1119.367

-FAITHFULNESS IN

Take care, O preacher, that you do not blunt the word, or try to cover over its edge; for that would be treason to the Lord who made it to be sharp and cutting. There is much about the true gospel which offends, and it should be our desire never to tamper with it, or tone it down, lest we become enemies to the Lord's truth. Truth which is meant to offend human pride must be stated in its own way, even though seen to produce anger, and annoy self-righteousness. Doctrine which is cutting and killing must not be concealed or softened down. 1976.441

He who preaches all sweetness and all love, and has nothing to do with warning men of the consequences of sin, may be thought to be very loving; but, in truth, he is altogether unfaithful to the souls of men. 2284.571

"You are not very complimentary." No; if you want compliments, do not come here, for I do not deal in them, and I do not intend to. God's Word is what I have to preach, and that contains something better than compliments. 2662.81

I am content to live and to die as the mere repeater of Scriptural teaching; as a person who has thought out nothing, and invented nothing; as one who never thought invention to be any part of his calling; but who concluded that he was to take the message from the lips of God to the best of his ability, and simply to be a mouth for God to the people, mourning much that anything of his own should come between, but never thinking that he was somehow to refine the message or to adapt it to the brilliance of this wonderful century, and then to hand it out as being so much his own that he might take some share of the glory of it. 2916.4

-ILLUSTRATIONS IN

Beware of those extremely popular compilations of illustrations which are in every Sunday-school teacher's hand, for nobody will thank you for repeating what everybody already knows by heart: if you tell anecdotes let them have some degree of freshness and originality; keep your eyes open, and gather flowers from the garden and the field with your own hands; they will be far more

acceptable than withered specimens borrowed from other men's bouquets, however beautiful those may once have been. 1LS147

Illustrate, by all means, but do not let the sermon be all illustrations, or it will be only suitable for an assembly of simpletons. 3LS5

I would also bid you beware of the many common anecdotes, which are often repeated, but which I half suspect could not be proved to be matters of fact. Whenever I have the slightest suspicion about the truth of a story, I drop it at once; and I think that everyone else should do the same. 3LS54

-LENGTH OF

All truth is not to be comprised in one discourse. Sermons are not to be bodies of divinity. There is such a thing as having too much to say, and saying it till hearers are sent home loathing rather than longing. 1LS80

If you ask me how you may shorten your sermons, I should say, study them better. Spend more time in the study that you may need less in the pulpit. We are generally longest when we have least to say. A man with a great deal of well-prepared matter will probably not exceed forty minutes; when he has less to say he will go on for fifty minutes, and when he has absolutely nothing he will need an hour to say it in. 1LS145

There is a great difference between irrigation and inundation; and some preachers forget this. 1999.703

-PREPARATION FOR

I always find that I can preach best when I can manage to lie a-soak in my text. ARM124

Your pulpit preparations are your first business, and if you neglect these, you will bring no credit upon yourself or your office. 1LS98

I have no belief in that ministry which ignores laborious preparation. 1LS98

You who are ready to preach in a hop, skip, and jump, will pardon me if I take a pew somewhere else. 1LS98

To rush from your bed to the pulpit to talk what first comes to hand seems to me to be next door to profanity. 1403.152

-REPETITION IN

There are persons in the ministry who, having accumulated a little stock of sermons, repeat them ad nauseam, with horrible regularity. Itinerant brethren must be far more subject to this temptation than those who are stationed for several years in one place. If they fall victims to the habit, it must surely be the end of their usefulness, and send an intolerable death-chill into their hearts, of which their people must soon be conscious while they hear them parroting forth their time-worn productions. The very best invention for promoting spiritual idleness must be the plan of acquiring a two or three years' stock of sermons, and repeating them in order again and again. 1LS86

As for the root facts, the fundamental doctrines, the primary truths of Scripture, we must from day to day insist upon them. We must never say of them, "Everybody knows them"; for, alas! everybody forgets them. 1592.194

-TEXTS

To me still, I must confess, my text selection is a very great embarrassment-embarras de richesses, as the French say-an embarrassment of riches, very different from the bewilderment of poverty-the anxiety of attending to the most pressing of so many truths, all clamoring for a hearing, so many duties all needing enforcing, and so many spiritual needs of the people all demanding supply. 1LS88

Like the fish, you nibble at many baits, but when the hook has fairly pierced you, you will wander no more. 1LS88

Never let your hearers have to ask the question, "What has this sermon to do with the text?" SW105

-VARIETY

There can be no difficulty as to finding themes totally distinct from those we have handled before; the variety is as infinite as the fulness. GF21

If you were ordained to be a preacher throughout eternity, you would have before you a theme equal to everlasting demands. GF21

Doctrine, precept, history, type, psalm, proverb, experience, warning, promise, invitation, threatening, or rebuke-we would include the whole of inspired truth within the circle of our teachings. 1LS93

Human nature craves for variety, and God grants it in nature, providence, and grace; let us have it in sermons also. 1LS142

You can make a good thing become a nuisance by harping on that one string from dawn to dusk. PP74

PRIDE

Pride goeth before destruction...Proverbs 16:18

I hope our sermons will never be of the same order as those which were set up in a certain printing office, and the chief compositor had to request the manager to send for an extra supply of capital I's. ARM61

He saved others, and therefore could not save Himself; but we are keen to guard ourselves and our reputations, and often act as if we thought self-preservation the highest law of nature. ARM146

At the commencement of our ministry, when our stories are fresh, and our energies are full; then we blaze and flash, and spend much time in the firework factory, people are apt to think us wonderful beings; and then the apostle's word is needed, "Therefore let no man glory in men" (1 Cor. iii. 21). It is not true, as flatterers insinuate, that in our case the gods have come down in the likeness of men; and we shall be idiots if we think so. In due time, foolish expectations will be cured by disappointment; and then we shall hear unwelcome truth, mingled with unrighteous censure. The idol of yesterday is the butt of to-day. ARM253

Is it not possible that we may be wishing for a great blessing that we may be thought great men? GF62

There is, after all, something very noble in being too proud to be proud. SW50

PUGNACIOUSNESS

...not a brawler...1 Timothy 3:3

Those who are always contending, not for the truth, but for petty differences, and family jealousies, are not likely to bring to the church the dove-like Spirit. Want of unity always involves want of power. I know that some churches are greatly at fault in this direction; but certain ministers never have a harmonious people, although they change frequently; and I am afraid it is because they are not very loving themselves. Unless we are ourselves in good temper, we cannot expect to keep the people in good temper. ARM357

PULPIT SPEECH

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words...Ecclesiastes 12:10

It is impossible to hear a man who crawls along at a mile an hour. One word to-day and one to-morrow is a kind of slow-fire which martyrs only could enjoy. 1LS123

Above all things beware of letting your tongue outrun your brains. 1LS165

Nonsense does not improve by being bellowed. 2LS29

READING

...bring...the books...2 Timothy 4:13

He is inspired, and yet he wants books! He has been preaching at least for thirty years, and yet he wants books! He had seen the Lord, and yet he wants books! He had had a wider experience than most men, and yet he wants books! He had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard things which it was unlawful for a man to utter, yet he wants books! He had written the major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books! The apostle says to Timothy and so he says to every preacher, "Give thyself unto reading." The man who never reads will never be read; he who never quotes will never be quoted. He who will not use the thoughts of other men's brains, proves that he has no brains of his own. Brethren, what is true of ministers is true of all our people. You need to read. 542.668

REPENTANCE

...repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 20:21

Though nowadays we hear of persons being healed before they have been wounded, and brought into a certainty of justification without ever having lamented their condemnation, we are very dubious as to the value of such healings and justifying. This style of things is not according to the truth. God never clothes men until he has first stripped them, nor does He quicken them by the gospel till first they are slain by the law. SW28

Repentance is an old-fashioned word, not much used by modern revivalists. "Oh!" said a minister to me one day, "it only means a change of mind." This was thought to be a profound observation. "Only a change of mind"; but what a change! A change of mind with regard to everything! Instead of saying, "It is only a change of mind," it seems to me more truthful to say it is a great and deep change-even a change of the mind itself. SW31

If a man does not live differently from what he did before, both at home and abroad, his repentance needs to be repented of, and his conversion is a fiction. SW32

RETIREMENT

...so that I might finish my course with joy...Acts 20:24

But, you will say, surely it might have been as well if Moses had lived to have seen Joshua win the country. Would this have been desirable? Do active men find much delight in sitting still and seeing others take the lead? Moreover, had Moses lived, he would before long have felt those infirmities from which he had for one hundred and twenty years been screened: is it so very desirable to survive one's powers, and to be a tottering old man amidst constant battles? Peace suits age; age agrees not with war's alarms. Had Moses remained the leader of the people, he might have injured the glory of his former days. Have we not seen aged men survive their wisdom? Have not their friends wished that they had closed their career long before? Have we not seen pastors, once able and efficient, holding to their pulpits to the injury of the churches they once edified? Oh that men would have wisdom enough not to undo in their age what they have wrought in their youth! Moses is removed before this evil can happen to him, and it is well. 1966.321

REWARDS

...there is a reward for the righteous...Psalm 58:11

The preacher may not get credit for his work in the statistics which reckon scores and hundreds; but in that other book, which no secretary could keep, where things are weighed rather than numbered, the worker's register will greatly honour his Master. ARM234

Success in the ministry is not the Christian minister's true reward: it is an earnest, but the wages still wait. 671.38

I count it no dishonour to have to lament as Jeremiah did; and in that great day when the Lord rewards his servants, the rewards will not be in proportion to the way in which their testimony was received, but in proportion to the fidelity with which they delivered it. 2436.505

SECOND COMING

...occupy till I come. Luke 19:13

There are good brethren in the world who are impractical. The grand doctrine of the Second Advent makes them stand with open mouths, peering into the skies, so that I am ready to say, "Ye men of Plymouth, why stand ye here gazing up into Heaven?" The fact that Jesus Christ is to come again, is not a reason for star-gazing, but for working in the power of the Holy Ghost. ARM54

SELF-EXAMINATION

...in me...dwelleth no good thing...Romans 7:18

Believe me, young brother, as our years sober us, we become more and more aware of our imperfections, and feel less and less inclined to admire our own performances. ARM228

Better far will it be for us to find fault with ourselves rather than with our people, when there is anything wrong with them. ARM257

We all need the truth to come home to us with personal and forcible application, for we are always inclined to shift unpleasant enquiries upon others. 1932.655

I, as a minister, am bound to examine myself, because there have been eminent preachers of the gospel who, nevertheless, have lived unhallowed lives. No preacher may dare to say, "My office screens me from this test." 2865.17

SEPARATION

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not...2 John 10

I would no more associate with one who denied the faith than with a drunkard or a thief. I would guard my spirituals as jealously as my morals. A loyal man is not at home in the company of traitors. There are associations with the ungodly into which we must needs go, unless we get out of the world altogether; but there are others which are optional, and here we should dare to be scrupulous. A godly minister once said of a certain preacher, "I would not permit such a man to enter my pulpit. I am as jealous of my pulpit as of my bed." I do not think he was too rigid. We should guard ourselves against compromising the truth of God by association with those who do not hold it, especially at such a time as this. ARM311

When a man is himself right, let him not compromise himself by association with those who are not clear in their standing. Why be drawn down by holding on to the wreck which is sinking? Continual consorting with those who have no sympathy with the great truths of the gospel, is running into perpetual peril. For my part, I find association with persons of loose views a thing too painful for me. Worldly-minded men are wretched company for spiritual minds. ARM 392

SEXUAL IMMORALITY

...his reproach shall not be wiped away. Proverbs 6:33

No man becomes bad all at once. True, the single lightning flash slew its victim, but the bolt had not fallen if there had been no previous gathering of the elements into the condition of storm. The overt scandal is only the development of what was in the man,-the root of the evil lies deeper still. When we hear of a man who has ruined his character by a surprising act of folly, we may surmise, as a rule, that this mischief was but one sulphurous jet from a soil charged with volcanic fire; or, to change the figure, one roaring lion from a den of wild beasts. As you would, on your bended knees, cry day and night that no moral catastrophe may occur to you, beware of the sin which leads to it, beware of the backsliding which culminates in it; for if we have not the cause, the effect will not follow. ARM137

Alas! the beard of reputation once shorn is hard to grow again. Open immorality, in most cases, however deep the repentance, is a fatal sign that ministerial graces were never in the man's character. 1LS9

SHEEP STEALING

...not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. 2 Corinthians 10:6

I should reckon it to be a burning disgrace if it could be said, "The large church under that man's pastoral care is composed of members whom he has stolen away from other Christian churches." No, but I value beyond all price the godless, the careless, who are brought out from the world into communion with Christ. These are true prizes, not stealthily removed from friendly shores, but captured at the edge of the sword from an enemy's dominions. We welcome brethren from other churches if in the providence of God they are drifted to our shores, but we would never hang out the wrecker's beacon to dash other churches in pieces in order to enrich ourselves with the wreck. Far rather would we be looking after perishing souls than cajoling unstable ones from their present place of worship. 855.90

We do not regard it to be soul-winning to steal members out of churches already established, and train them to utter our particular Shibboleth: we aim rather at bringing souls to Christ than at making converts to our synagogue. There are sheep-stealers abroad, concerning whom I will say nothing except that they are not "brethren," or, at least, they do not act in a brotherly fashion. SW11

SOUL WINNING

...though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers... 1 Corinthians 4:15

How many souls-ay, notwithstanding that the doctrine is unfashionable, I repeat it,-how many souls, not of creatures which will die out like cats and dogs, but of priceless, immortal beings, are committed to our charge! Since, upon our ministry, under God, hang everlasting things,-life and death, Heaven and hell,-what manner of persons ought we to be? How careful we ought to be as to our inner health! How anxious to be always at our very best! If I were a surgeon, and I had to operate upon a patient, I should not like to touch either the knife or his flesh if I felt bilious, or if my hand was quivering; I would not like to be in any but the calmest, coolest, most forceful condition, at the moment in which the difference of a hair's breadth might touch a vital chord, and end a precious life! God help all soul-physicians to be always at their best! ARM149

If we have brought many to Christ, we dare not boast, for we are humbled by the reflection that more might have been done had we been fitter instruments for God to use. ARM165

It is disloyalty to our Lord if we wish to be soul-winners in order to be thought to be so. ARM266

If you have half a-dozen converts, how greatly you will praise God, if you pass, with that half-a-dozen at your side, safely through the gate of pearl! Certain of us know many thousands whom we have, instrumentally, brought to the Savior; but unless we have a power infinitely greater than our own, how shall we shepherd them to the end? We may announce them as our converts, we may associate with them as workers, and feel thankful for them as fellow-heirs; and yet bitter may be our disappointment, when all comes to all, and they turn aside unto perdition. How grievous to be, to all appearance, rich in usefulness, and on a sudden to find that our converts are like money put into a bag that is full of holes, and that our treasured converts fall out, because they were not truly gathered to the Lord Jesus after all! "Who is sufficient for these things?" We are weak, exceedingly weak, every one of us. ARM327

...we do not consider soul-winning to be accomplished by hurriedly inscribing more names upon our church-roll, in order to show a good increase at the end of the year. SW13

To introduce unconverted persons to the church, is to waken and degrade it; and therefore an apparent gain may be a real loss. SW13

Many are called but few are chosen; it was never intended that the external call should be as narrow as the election; yet there are some ministers whose preaching consists far more of an analysis of soils than of a sowing of seed. 1132.517

Yea, and are there not preachers who appear to be half afraid that some poor non-elect sinner may get into heaven by accident. Hear how they define, and distinguish, and denounce. I confess I have no sympathy with those who would drive men back; far rather would I draw them forward. 1243.389

STUDY

Study to shew thyself approved unto God...2 Timothy 2:15

No man should ever dream that his education is complete. ARM167

If we allow ourselves to go up and down all the week doing nothing, we may not climb the pulpit stairs and dream that the Lord will there and then tell us what to speak. If help were promised to such, then the lazier the man the better the sermon. If the Holy Spirit worked only by impromptu speakers, the less we read our Bibles and the less we meditated on them the better. If it be wrong to quote from books, "attention to reading" should not have been commanded. All this is obviously absurd, and not one of you will fall into such a delusion. GF62

Out of nothing comes nothing. 1LS165

We have an urgent need to study, for the teacher of others must himself be instructed. 2LS4

SUCCESS

For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love...Hebrews 6:10

The minister is not responsible for his success. He is responsible for what he preaches; he is accountable for his life and actions; but he is not responsible for other people. WC75

"Hallelujah!" the angelic choirs resound, "one sheaf from a rock is more honour to God than a thousand sheaves from a good soil; therefore, let him take his seat as near the throne as yon man, who, stooping beneath his many sheaves, comes from some fertile land, bringing his sheaves with him." I believe that if there are degrees in glory, they will not be in proportion to success, but in proportion to the earnestness of our endeavours. If we mean right, and if with all our heart we strive to do the right thing as ministers, if we never see any effect, still shall we receive the crown. WC77

SUSPICION

An ungodly man diggeth up evil...Proverbs 16:27

We are not to be always going about the world searching out heresies, like terrier dogs sniffing for rats, and to be always so confident of our own infallibility that we erect ecclesiastical stakes at which to roast all who differ from us. ARM47

Suspicion makes a man a torment to himself and a spy towards others. Once begin to suspect, and causes for distrust will multiply around you, and your very suspiciousness will create the major part of them. 2LS168

It would be better to be deceived a hundred times than to live a life of suspicion. 2LS170

Suspicion in kings creates tyranny, in husbands jealousy, and in ministers bitterness; such bitterness in spirit dissolves all the ties of the pastoral relation, eating like a corrosive acid into the very soul of the office and making it a curse rather than a blessing. When once this terrible evil has curdled all the milk of human kindness in a man's bosom, he becomes more fit for the detective police force than for the ministry; like a spider, he begins to cast out his lines, and fashions a web of tremulous threads, all of which lead up to himself and warn him of the least touch of even the tiniest midge. 2LS170

SYSTEMATICS

...canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? Job 11:7

Men who are morbidly anxious to possess a self-consistent creed,-a creed which they can put together, and form into a square, like a Chinese puzzle,-are very apt to narrow their souls. Fancying that all truth can be comprehended in half-a-dozen formulae, they reject as worthless every doctrinal statement which cannot be so comprehended. Those who will only believe what they can reconcile will necessarily disbelieve much of Divine revelation; they are, without knowing it, following the lead of the Rationalists. Those who receive by faith anything which they find in the Bible will receive two things, twenty things, ay, or twenty thousand things, though they cannot construct a theory which harmonizes them all. That process of theory-making is an expensive folly, the invention of middle terms is a waste of ingenuity; it were far better to believe the truths, and leave the Lord to show their consistency. ARM23

THEOLOGY

...they who labour in the word...1 Timothy 5:17

I have been charged with being a mere echo of the Puritans, but I had rather be the echo of truth, than the voice of falsehood. It may be want of intellect which prevents our departing from the good old way; but even this is better than want of grace, which lies at the bottom of men's perpetual chopping and changing of their beliefs. Rest assured that there is nothing new in theology except that which is false; and that the facts of theology are today what they were eighteen hundred years ago. ARM10

Be well instructed in theology, and do not regard the sneers of those who rail at it because they are ignorant of it. Many preachers are not theologians, and hence the mistakes which they make. It cannot do any hurt to the most lively evangelist to be also a sound theologian, and it may often be the means of saving him from gross blunders. ARM35

Brethren, if you are not theologians you are in your pastorates just nothing at all. 1LS74

TRUTHFULNESS

...honest in the sight of all men. Romans 12:17

It will destroy our ministries if we begin thinking of the cost of honesty. ARM307

In proportion as a ministry is truthful, other things being equal, God can bless it. Would you have the Holy Ghost set His seal to a lie? Would you have Him bless what He has not revealed, and confirm with signs following that which is not truth? I am more and more persuaded that, if we mean to have God with us, we must keep to the truth. ARM342

I have heard of a little girl, who said to her father, who was a minister, and who had been telling her a story, "Pa, is that real, or is it preaching?" I cannot object to your smiling at my anecdote; but it is a thing to weep over, that our preaching should be suspected of unreality. ARM343

Even in little things the minister should take care that his life is consistent with his ministry. He should be especially careful never to fall short of his word. This should be pushed even to scrupulosity; we cannot be too careful; trust must not only be in us, but shine from us. 1LS16

Good seed will grow even though it was scattered by a leprous hand. Let us beware, however, of speaking truth with a lying lip. 1321.604

ZEAL

...it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing...Galatians 4:18

Time was when we preached with all our might. When we began to preach, what preaching it was for zeal and life! In looking back, it must increase our self-humiliation if we perceive that, in our younger days, we were more real and intense than we are now. We preach much better, so the critics say; and we know that there is more thought and more accuracy in our sermons, and that we use better elocution than we did in our young days; but where are the tears of our early ministry? Where is the heart-break of those first sermons in our first sphere? Where is the passion, where is the self-annihilation that we often felt when we poured out our very life with every syllable we spoke? Now, sometimes, we go into the pulpit resolved that we will do as we did then, just as Samson went out to shake himself as he had done aforetime. He had snapped the cords and bands before, and he was going to do the same again; but the Lord had departed from him, and he was weak as another man. Brethren, what if the Lord should depart from us? Alas for us, and for our work! ARM147

If your zeal grows dull, you will not pray well in the pulpit; you will pray worse in the family, and worst in the study alone. 1LS9

It is not in the order of nature that rivers should run uphill, and it does not often happen that zeal rises from the pew to the pulpit. 2LS146

Appendix A Resources

Nearly all of the books (print and digital) mentioned today can be obtained from the sources below. Ages carries the Spurgeon CD as does Pilgrim, CBD carries our books (search under "Fox River Press") as well as several others by CHS (although many will be edited versions), CVBBS carries a lot of CHS at reasonable prices, and Pilgrim carries the majority of unabridged material although they are the most expensive.

Ages Software

P.O. Box 216
Rio, WI 53960
www.ageslibrary.com

Christian Book Distributors

140 Summit Street
Peabody, MA 01960
1-800-CHRISTIAN
www.Christianbook.com

Cumberland Valley Bible Book Service

133 N. Hanover Street
Carlisle, PA 17013
717-249-0231
www.cvbbs.com

Pilgrim Publications

P.O. Box 66
Pasadena, Texas
713-477-4261
<http://member.aol.com/pilgrimpub>

Appendix B

Recommended reading list

Let me preface this section by saying that Pilgrim Publications is the best source of unadulterated Spurgeon. Avoid Whitaker House and other "popular" editions of Spurgeon's books, most of which are edited and theologically sanitized. Some books even add words and sentences that were not even in the original editions! Even Banner of Truth edited the four volume autobiography of Spurgeon.

I. Biographical

Arnold Dallimore, *Spurgeon: A new biography* (Banner of Truth)
 Bob Ross, *A Pictorial Biography of C. H. Spurgeon* (Pilgrim)
 Lewis Drummond, *The Prince of Preachers* (Kregel)
 Robert Schindler, *From the usher's desk to the Tabernacle Pulpit* (Passmore & Alabaster)
 Robert Schindler, *From the pulpit to the palm branch* (Passmore & Alabaster)
 CHS, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle, its history and work* (Pilgrim)

II. Devotional

CHS, *Morning and Evening* (Numerous publishers, many will be altered and abridged)

III. Ministry

CHS, *An all round ministry* (Published by Banner of Truth and Pilgrim)
 CHS, *Lectures to my students* (Numerous publishers, Pilgrim edition is unedited)
 CHS, *The soul winner* (Pilgrim)
 CHS, *The greatest fight in the world* (Pilgrim)
 CHS, *The down grade* (Pilgrim)

IV. Commentary

CHS, *The Treasury of David* (Numerous publishers including Pilgrim and Hendrickson)

V. Practical

CHS, *John Ploughman's Talk*, (Pilgrim)
 CHS, *John Ploughman's Pictures* (Pilgrim)
 CHS, *The Salt Cellars* (Pilgrim)

VI. Sermonic

The New Park Street Pulpit, Volumes 1-6 (Pilgrim)
 The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, Volumes 7-63 (Pilgrim)
 Bob Ross, *A complete index to C.H. Spurgeon's sermons* (Pilgrim)
 CHS, *Sermons on sovereignty* (Pilgrim)
 CHS, *Spurgeon's sermon notes* (Hendrickson)
 The sword and the trowel (Pilgrim)

VII. Quotations

Kerry J. Allen, *Exploring the Heart and Mind of the Prince of Preachers* (Fox River Press, 2005)

Tom Carter, *Spurgeon at his best* (Baker, 1988, abridged)

VIII. Family

CHS, *Come ye children* (Pilgrim)

CHS, *A good start* (Soli Deo Gloria)

IX. Digital

The Spurgeon Archive (www.spurgeon.org) headed by Phil Johnson has many interesting articles about Spurgeon, as well as hundreds of unedited sermons. The listing of articles can be found at www.spurgeon.org/aboutsp.htm.

Emmett O'Donnell (www.spurgeongems.org) has slightly edited over 2,000 of CHS' sermons which can be found at his website.

The Ages Software CD contains all 3,561 sermons, as well as 70 other books by Spurgeon, but the sermons contain misspellings and are slightly edited.

Wikipedia has a fairly detailed biography of CHS at www.wikipedia.org.

X. Miscellaneous

Iain Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (Banner of Truth)

Iain Murray, *Spurgeon vs. Hyper-Calvinism* (Banner of Truth)

Eric Hayden, a former pastor of the Tabernacle, has also written several useful volumes on Spurgeon.

Appendix C

Sermons on Hell and Judgment

There isn't much sermonic material on the subject of Hell in print today for obvious reasons. Spurgeon rarely preached on the subject of Hell (do we?), but when he did, you will find his descriptiveness and use of language make it very real. I'm including a list of his most potent sermons on Hell and final judgment, which will provide a complete theological study on the subject as well as stir you emotionally. The sermon numbers included will make them easier to access.

- 66 The resurrection of the dead
- 344 Tender words of terrible apprehension
- 410 Not now, but hereafter!
- 423 The weeding of the garden
- 444 The portion of the ungodly
- 486 The sinner's end
- 518 The bridgeless gulf
- 524 The saint's horror at the sinner's Hell
- 594 An awful premonition
- 602 The smoke of their torments
- 650 Judgment threatening
- 682 Future punishment a fearful thing
- 723 The root that beareth wormwood
- 823 Noah's flood
- 859 The old way of the wicked
- 915 Sinners bound with the cords of sin
- 1125 The world on fire
- 1234 The final separation
- 1590 The barrier
- 2704 Flee from the wrath to come
- 3377 The greatest wonder of grace
- 3393 Wheat in the barn

Appendix D

Spurgeon and Eschatology

Spurgeon's statements on eschatology were not always clear or well developed for one main reason: he didn't think the effort was worth expending when there were so many other pressing needs. At any rate, Iain Murray and Banner of Truth, along with the current pastor of the Tabernacle, Peter Masters, are attempting to paint CHS as amillennial. This is simply not true. Spurgeon was a covenantal pre-millennialist, as evidenced by his many quotes referring to Christ's bodily return and thousand year literal reign on earth which separates the two resurrections. For a detailed study on the subject by Dennis Swanson, go to the Spurgeon.org website. The final word on the subject is CHS himself. Contrary to the statements that he was "changing" his position as he matured, in the book on the down grade controversy, page 85, quoting from the August 1891 issue of the *Sword and the Trowel*, CHS signed his name to a doctrinal statement that said, among other things, "Our hope is the personal, pre-millennial return of the Lord Jesus in glory." This was signed less than one year prior to his death. Some have said that he embraced this position only shortly before death, but in a book review dated 1875, he agreed with a pre-millennial position put forth by the author.

Appendix E

What Spurgeon would say to and about the contemporary church

Some preachers remind me of the famous Chinese jugglers, who not long ago were everywhere advertised. One of these stood against a wall and the other threw knives at him. One knife would be driven into the board just above his head, and another close by his ear, while under his armpit and between his fingers quite a number of deadly weapons were bristling. Wonderful art to be able to throw to a hair's breadth and never strike! How many among us have a marvelous skill in missing! "Be not afraid," says the preacher, "I am never personal. I never give home-thrusts." Stand quite still, my friend! Open your arms! Spread out your fingers! Your minister has practiced a very long while, and he knows how to avoid troubling you in the least with truth too severely personal. Brethren, cultivate that art if you desire to be damned, and wish your hearers also to be lost; but if you want to be the means of saving both yourselves and them that hear you, cry to your Lord for faithfulness, practicalness, real heartmoving power. Never play at preaching nor beat about the bush; get at it, and always mean business. ARM118

Another great evil of the times is the insatiable craving for amusements. That men should have rest from labor, and that they should enjoy such amusements as refresh both body and mind, nobody wishes to deny. Within suitable bounds, recreation is necessary and profitable; but it never was the business of the Christian Church to supply the world with amusements. Did Christ found His Church that it might offer to the public tableaux vivants, and living waxworks? A Dissenting congregation, to my own knowledge, commenced a series of special services with a social meeting, and the evening was spent in various silly dissipations; and among other things the assembled friends played at "Musical Chairs"! I do not know whether you understand what that childish game means. Think of ministers of the gospel and officers of a church playing at "Musical Chairs"! There is a bill extant which states that, next week, there is to be a "Punch and Judy" show in the same place of worship (so-called)! This is to go on side by side with the preaching of Thy bleeding sacrifice, O Christ of God! No, brethren, let me correct myself; the preaching of Christ usually ceases when these frivolities come in. These things are so opposed in spirit that one or the other will have to be dropped; and we know which it will be. What is to be next done in our chapels? To what length of tomfoolery will ministers of the gospel yet go? Amusements beneath the contempt of idiots have been tolerated in our schoolrooms. It has not come to that yet with us, personally; but, brethren, we ourselves have to battle hard against it, for the people are all agog for these vanities, and there are so many societies and institutions more or less remotely connected with our churches that it is difficult for us to keep them all from wandering. Brethren, we are not here to play away our time, but to win souls for Jesus and eternal bliss. By the solemnities of death, and judgment, and eternity, I beseech you, keep yourselves clear of the follies, the inanities of the day. ARM293

What the man preaches does not matter now; he must draw a crowd, or please the elite, and that is enough. Cleverness is the main thing. One would think they were looking for a conjurer rather than a pastor. Whether he preaches truth or error, the man is held in admiration so long as he can talk glibly, and keep up a reputation as a speaker. If we had truer piety in members and deacons, pretenders would soon take their wares to other markets. Alas! I fear there has been great laxity in the admission of members, and the quality of our churches has become defiled and debased by "the mixed multitude," among whom all manner of evil finds a congenial

dwellingplace. Unhappy leader, who has an Achan in his own camp! Better that Demas should forsake us, than that he should abide with us, and import the world into the church. How many ministers are weak for warfare with sin because they are not supported by a godly people, and their hands are not held up by praying brethren! ARM295

I used to think that we had only to preach the gospel, and the people would throng to hear it. I fear I must correct my belief under this head. If the gospel does not attract men, nothing will; I mean nothing which can do them good. ARM296

Whence this distaste for the ordinary services of the sanctuary? I believe that the answer, in some measure, lies in a direction little suspected. There has been a growing pandering to sensationalism; and, as this wretched appetite increases in fury the more it is gratified, it is at last found to be impossible to meet its demands. Those who have introduced all sorts of attractions into their services have themselves to blame if people forsake their more sober teachings, and demand more and more of the noisy and the singular. Like dram-drinking, the thirst for excitement grows. At first, the fiery spirit may be watered down; but the next draught of it must be stronger, and soon it is required to be overproof. The customary gin-drinker wants something stronger than the pure spirit, deadly though that draught may be. One said, as she tossed off her glass, "Do you call that gin? Why, I know a place where, for threepence, I can get a drink that will burn your very soul out!" Yes, gin leads on to vitriol; and the sensational leads to the outrageous, if not to the blasphemous. I would condemn no one, but I confess that I feel deeply grieved at some of the inventions of modern mission work. ARM297

We are getting into the condition into which Germany fell not long ago. To this day, when talking with a German who is about to join our church, I usually find that he has lived in a country town. The devout German villager still attends public worship, but in the large towns a practical atheism is supreme. Why is this? The ministers have done it. They preached the people out of their faith in the Scriptures; they taught them to be doubters. The most mischievous servant of Satan that I know of is the minister of the gospel, who not only doubts the truth in his own soul, but propagates doubt in the minds of others by his criticisms, innuendoes, and triflings with words. Some ministers believe nothing except that nothing can be believed. Such a man's conscience is withered. In some modern ministers, the faculty wherewith to believe is extinct; they have played with words till they cannot be true if they try. ARM297

What can they do who are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth"? True progress is out of the question when everything is moving, road as well as carriage. There is a story told of a man who married his fourth wife, who had brought him money. The like had been the case with each of her predecessors. A friend said to him, "You seem to make a good thing of your wives, whether they live or die." "Alas!" answered the much-married man, "what with the expense of marrying them, and the expense of burying them, there is not much profit about them after all." I should think it is much the same with the new creeds with which men fall in love one after the other. What with the trouble of learning the new doctrine, and the trouble of very soon burying it to make room for another, there is not much profit. Weaving comes to nothing if it be constantly pulled out again. ARM301

Doubtless there are some in our ranks who ought not to be there. This is to their own hurt, to the dishonor of the Lord Jesus, and to the injury of the church itself. Unconverted member's lower the whole tone of the church. How low that tone has now become, let spiritual men judge for themselves. If the members were converted, they would make short work of many of the ministers; but the people are like their priests. Many are the letters of sympathy which my protests upon this matter have drawn forth. It is clear that lax doctrine and lax living are pretty frequently associated. A weeping Hannah writes me concerning her husband who has been for years a lay preacher, but who now spends his evenings far into night at the billiard-table, for which he acquired a taste when he went in for new theology and religious entertainments. Many have, gone from the prayer-meeting to the amateur theatricals of the Mutual Improvement Society, and thence to the playhouse itself. This seems to be natural, if not inevitable. Oh, that we had a purer membership to work with! Do what we may, Judas will come in; but let us not invite him: let us not make it easy for a betrayer of Christ to be comfortable with us. To mix up the world with the church, is a crime; it brings with it an awful curse, and acts upon godliness as a blast and a mildew. Let the door of the church be opened to all sincere souls, but closed against all whose hearts are in the world. It is not even for the worldling's good that he should hold the form of godliness while he is a stranger to its power. As you love your Lord, and value men's souls guard well the entrance of the church. ARM310

There never was a more restless time than now. What is being done to-day will affect the next centuries, unless the Lord should very speedily come. I believe that, if we walk uprightly and decidedly before God at this time, we shall make the future of England bright with the gospel; but trimming now, and debasing doctrine now, will affect children yet unborn, generation after generation. Posterity must be considered. I do not look so much at what is to happen to-day, for these things relate to eternity. For my part, I am quite willing to be eaten of dogs for the next fifty years; but the more distant future shall vindicate me. I have dealt honestly before the living God. My brother, do the same. Who knows but what thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? If thou hast grit in thee, quit thyself like a man. If thou hast God in thee, then thou mayest yet do marvels. But if not, bent, doubled up, proven to be useless, thou shalt lie on that foul dunghill which is made up of cowards' failures and misspent lives. God save both thee and me from that disgrace! ARM360

Appendix F
Divine Sovereignty

The sermon following is one of my favorites, both enlightening and encouraging. It was preached when CHS was only 21 years old and is Number 77 from the New Park Street Pulpit. It has been transferred from the Ages CD and so may have several word variations from the original and misspellings which I have not corrected. If you are fairly new to Spurgeon's sermons I think you will enjoy this one.

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

NO. 77

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING,

MAY 4, 1856,

BY THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON,

AT NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL, SOUTHWARK

"Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? - Matthew 20:15

The householder says, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" and even so does the God of heaven and earth ask this question of you this morning, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" There is no attribute of God more comforting to his children than the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty. Under the most adverse circumstances, in the most severe troubles, they believe that Sovereignty hath ordained their afflictions, that Sovereignty overrules them, and that Sovereignty will sanctify them all. There is nothing for which the children of God ought more earnestly to contend than the dominion of their Master over all creation—the kingship of God over all the works of his own hands—the throne of God, and his right to sit upon that throne. On the other hand, there is no doctrine more hated by worldlings, no truth of which they have made such a foot-ball, as the great, stupendous, but yet most certain doctrine of the Sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah. Men will allow God to be everywhere except on his throne. They will allow him to be in his workshop to fashion worlds and to make stars. They will allow him to be in his almonry to dispense his alms and bestow his bounties. They will allow him to sustain the earth and bear up the pillars thereof, or light the lamps of heaven, or rule the waves of the ever-moving ocean; but when God ascends his throne, his creatures then gnash their teeth; and when we proclaim an enthroned God, and his right to do as he wills with his own, to dispose of his creatures as he thinks well, without consulting them in the matter, then it is that we are hissed and execrated, and then it is that men turn a deaf ear to us, for God on his throne is not the God they love. They love him anywhere better than they do when he sits with his scepter in his hand and his crown upon his head. But it is God upon the throne that we love to preach. It is God upon his throne whom we trust. It is God upon his throne of whom we have been singing this morning; and it is God upon his throne of whom we shall speak in this discourse. I shall dwell only, however, upon one portion of God's Sovereignty, and that is God's Sovereignty in the distribution of his gifts. In this respect I believe he has a right to do as he wills with his own, and that he exercises that right. We must assume, before we commence our discourse, one thing certain, namely, that all blessings are gifts and that we have no claim to them by our own merit. This I think every considerate mind will grant. And this being admitted,

we shall endeavor to show that he has a right seeing they are his own to do what he wills with them-to withhold them wholly if he pleaseth-to distribute them all if he chooseth-to give to some and not to others-to give to none or to give to all, just as seemeth good in his sight. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?" We shall divide God's gifts into five classes. First, we shall have gifts temporal; second, gifts saving; third, gifts honorable; fourth, gifts useful; and fifth, gifts comfortable. Of all these we shall say, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"

I. In the first place then, we notice GIFTS TEMPORAL. It is an indisputable fact that God hath not, in temporal matters, given to every man alike; that he hath not distributed to all his creatures the same amount of happiness or the same standing in creation. There is a difference. Mark what a difference there is in men personally (for we shall consider men chiefly); one is born like Saul a head and shoulders taller than the rest-another shall live all his life a Zaccheus-a man short of stature. One has a muscular frame and a share of beauty-another is weak, and far from having anything styled comeliness. How many do we find whose eyes have never rejoiced in the sunlight, whose ears have never listened to the charms of music, and whose lips have never been moved to sounds intelligible or harmonious. Walk through the earth and you will find men superior to yourself in vigor, health, and fashion, and others who are your inferiors in the very same respects. Some here are preferred far above their fellows in their outward appearance, and some sink low in the scale and have nothing about them that can make them glory in the flesh. Why hath God given to one man beauty and to another none; to one all his senses, and to another but a portion? why, in some, hath he quickened the sense of apprehension, while others are obliged to bear about them a dull and stubborn body? We reply, let men say what they will, that no answer can be given except this, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." The old Pharisee asked, "Did this man sin or his parents, that he was born blind?" We know that there was neither sin in parents nor child, that he was born blind, or that others have suffered similar distresses, but that God has done as it has pleased him in the distribution of his earthly benefits, and thus hath said to the world, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"

Mark, also, in the distribution of mental gifts, what a difference exists. All men are not like Socrates; there are but few Platos; we can discover but here and there a Bacon; we shall but every now and then converse with a Sir Isaac Newton. Some have stupendous intellects wherewith they can unravel secrets-fathom the depths of oceans-measure mountains-dissect the sunbeams, and weigh the stars. Others have but shallow minds. You may educate and educate but can never make them great. You cannot improve what is not there. They have not genius, and you cannot impart it. Anybody may see that there is an inherent difference in men from their very birth. Some, with a little education do surpass those who have been elaborately trained. There are two boys educated it may be in the same school, by the same master, and they shall apply themselves to their studies with the same diligence, but yet one shall far outstrip his fellow. Why is this? Because God hath asserted his sovereignty over the intellect as well as the body. God hath not made us all alike, but diversified his gifts. One man is as eloquent as Whitfield; another stammers if he but speaks three words of his mother tongue. What makes these various differences between man and man? We answer, we must refer it all to the Sovereignty of God, who does as he wills with his own.

Note, again, what are the differences of men's conditions in this world. Mighty minds are from time to time discovered in men whose limbs are wearing the chains of slavery, and whose backs are laid bare to the whip-they have black skins, but are in mind vastly superior to their brutal masters. So, too, in England; we find wise men often poor, and rich men not seldom ignorant and vain. One comes into the world to be arrayed at once in the imperial purple-another shall never wear aught but the humble garb of a peasant. One has a palace to dwell in and a bed of down for his repose, while another finds but a hard resting-place, and shall never have a more sumptuous covering than the thatch of his own cottage. If we ask the reason for this, the reply still is, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." So, in other ways you will observe in passing through life how sovereignty displays itself. To one man God giveth a long life and uniform health, so that he scarcely knows what it is to have a day's sickness, while another totters through the world and finds a grave at almost every step, feeling a thousand deaths in fearing one. One man, even in extreme old age, like Moses, has his eye undimmed; and though his hair is grey, he stands as firmly on his feet as when a young man in his father's house. Whence, again, we ask is this difference? And the only adequate answer is, it is the effect of Jehovah's Sovereignty. You find, too, that some men are cut off in the prime of their life-the very midst of their days-while others live beyond their threescore years and ten. One departs before he has reached the first stage of existence, and another has his life lengthened out until it becomes quite a burden, we must, I conceive, necessarily trace the cause of all these differences in life to the fact of God's Sovereignty. He is Ruler and King, and shall he not do as he wills with his own. We pass from this point-but before we do so we must stop to improve it just a moment. O thou who art gifted with a noble frame, a comely body, boast not thyself therein, for thy gifts come from God. O glory not, for if thou gloriest thou becomest uncomely in a moment. The flowers boast not of their beauty, nor do the birds sing of their plumage. Be ye not vain ye daughters of beauty; be not exalted ye sons of comeliness; and O ye men of might and intellect, remember, that all you have is bestowed by a Sovereign Lord: he did create; he can destroy. There are not many steps between the mightiest intellect and the helpless idiot-deep thought verges on insanity. Thy brain may at any moment, be smitten, and thou be doomed henceforth to live a madman. Boast not thyself of all that thou knowest, for even the little knowledge thou hast has been given thee. Therefore, I say, exalt not thyself above measure, but use for God what God has given thee, for it is a royal gift, and thou shouldst not lay it aside. But if the Sovereign Lord has given thee one talent, and no more, lay it not up in a napkin, but use it well, and then it may be that he will give thee more. Bless God that thou hast more than others, and thank him also that he has given thee less than others, for thou hast less to carry on thy shoulders, and the lighter thy burden the less cause wilt thou have to groan as thou travellest on towards the better land. Bless God then if thou possesseth less than thy fellows, and see his goodness in withholding as well as in giving.

II. So far most men probably have gone with us; but when we come to the second point, GIFTS SAVING, there will a large number who will go from us because they cannot receive our doctrine. When we apply this truth regarding the Divine Sovereignty to man's salvation, then we find men standing up to defend their poor fellow creatures whom they conceive to be injured by God's predestination. But I never heard of men standing up for the devil, and yet think if any of God's creatures have a right to complain of his dealings it is the fallen angels. For their sin they were hurled from heaven at once, and we read not that any message of mercy was ever sent to them. Once cast out, their doom was sealed; while men were respited, redemption sent into their world, and a large number of them chosen to eternal life. Why not quarrel with Sovereignty in

the one case as well as the other. We say that God has elected a people out of the human race, and his right to do this is denied. But I ask, why not equally dispute the fact that God has chosen men and not fallen angels, or his justice in such a choice. If salvation be a matter of right, surely the angels had as much claim to mercy as men. Were they not seated in more than equal dignity? Did they sin more? We think not. Adam's sin was so willful and complete, that we cannot suppose a greater sin than that which he committed. Would not the angels who were thrust out of heaven have been of greater service to their Maker if restored, than we can ever be? Had we been the judges in this matter we might have given deliverance to angels but not to men. Admire then, Divine Sovereignty and love, that whereas the angels were broken into shivers, God hath raised an elect number of the race of men to set them among princes, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Note again, the Divine Sovereignty, in that God chose the Israelitish race and left the Gentiles for years in darkness. Why was Israel instructed and saved, while Syria was left to perish in idolatry? Was the one race purer in its origin and better in its character than the other? Did not the Israelites take unto themselves false gods a thousand times, and provoke the true God to anger and loathing? Why then, should they be favored above their fellows? Why did the sun of heaven shine upon them while all around the nations were left in darkness, and were sinking into hell by myriads? Why? The only answer that can be given is this, that God is a Sovereign, and "will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."

So now, also, why is it that God hath sent his word to us while a multitude of people are still without his word? Why do we each come up to God's tabernacle, Sabbath after Sabbath, privileged to listen to the voice of the minister of Jesus, while other nations have not been visited thereby? Could not God have caused the light to shine in the darkness there as well as here? Could not he, if he had pleased, have sent forth messengers swift as the light to proclaim his gospel over the whole earth? He could have done it if he would. Since we know that he has not done it, we bow in meekness, confessing his right to do as he wills with his own. But let me drive the doctrine home once more. Behold how God displays his Sovereignty in this fact, that out of the same congregation, those who hear the same minister, and listen to the same truth, the one is taken and the other left. Why is it that one of my hearers shall sit in yonder pew, and her sister by her side, and yet that the effect of the preaching shall be different upon each? They have been nursed on the same knee, rocked in the same cradle, educated under the same auspices, they hear the same minister, with the same attention-why is it that the one shall be saved and the other left? Far be it from us to weave any excuse for the man who is damned: we know of none: but also, far be it from us to take glory from God. We assert that GOD makes the difference-that the saved sister will not have to thank herself but her God. There shall even be two men given to drunkenness. Some word spoken shall pierce one of them through, but the other shall sit unmoved, although they shall, in all respects, be equally the same both in constitution and education. What is the reason? You will reply, perhaps, because the one accepts and the other rejects the message of the gospel. But must you not come back to the question, who made the one accept it, and who made the other reject it? I dare you to say that the man made himself to differ. You must admit in your conscience that it is God alone to whom this power belongs. But those who dislike this doctrine are nevertheless up in arms against us, and they say, how can God justly make such a difference between the members of his family? Suppose a father should have a certain number of children, and he should give to one all his favors, and consign the

others to misery - should we not say that he was a very unkind and cruel father? I answer, yes. But the cases are not the same. You have not a father to deal with, but a judge. You say all men are God's children; I demand of you to prove that. I never read it in my Bible. I dare not say, "Our father which art in heaven," till I am regenerated. I cannot rejoice in the fatherhood of God towards me till I know that I am one with him, and a joint heir with Christ. I dare not claim the fatherhood of God as an unregenerated man. It is not father and child-for the child has a claim upon its father-but it is King and subject; and not even so high a relation as that, for there is a claim between Subject and King. A creature-a sinful creature, can have no claim upon God; for that would be to make salvation of works and not of grace. If men can merit Salvation, then to save them is only the payment of a debt, and he gives them nothing more than he ought to give them. But we assert that grace must be distinguishing if it be grace at all. O, but some say is it not written that "He giveth to every man a measure of grace to profit withal?" If you like to repeat that wonderful quotation so often hurled at my head, you are very welcome, for it is no quotation from Scripture, unless it be an Arminian edition. The only passage at all like it refers to the spiritual gifts of the saints and the saints only. But I say, granted your supposition, that a measure of grace is given to every man to profit withal, yet he has given to some a measure of particular grace to make that profit. For what do you mean by grace, which I put out, to profit? I can understand a man's improvement in the use of grease, but grace improved and made use of by the power of man I cannot comprehend. Grace is not a thing which I use; grace is something which uses me. But people talk of grace sometimes as if it was something they could use, and not as influence having power over them. Grace is something not which I improve, but which improves me, employs me, works on me; and let people talk as they will about universal grace, it is all nonsense, there is no such thing, nor can there be. They may talk correctly of universal blessings, because we see that the natural gifts of God are scattered everywhere, more or less, and men may receive or reject them. It is not so, however, with grace. Men cannot take the grace of God and employ it in turning themselves from darkness to light. The light does not come to the darkness and say, use me; but the light comes and drives the darkness away. Life does not come to the dead man and say, use me, and be restored to life; but it comes with a power of its own and restores to life. The spiritual influence does not come to the dry bones and say, use this power and clothe yourselves with flesh; but it comes and clothes them with flesh, and the work is done. Grace is a thing which comes and exercises an influence on us. "The sovereign will of God alone Creates us heirs of grace Born in the image of his Son, A new-created race." And we say to all of you who gnash your teeth at this doctrine, whether you know it or not, you have a vast deal of enmity towards God in your hearts; for until you can be brought to know this doctrine, there is something which you have not yet discovered, which makes you opposed to the idea of God absolute, God unbounded, God unfettered, God unchanging, and God having a free will, which you are so fond of proving that the creature possesses. I am persuaded that the Sovereignty of God must be held by us if we would be in a healthy state of mind. "Salvation is of the Lord alone." Then give all the glory to his holy name, to whom all glory belongs.

III. We now come, in the third place, to notice the differences which God often makes in his Church in HONORABLE GIFTS. There is a difference made between God's own children-when they are his children. Note what I mean: One hath the honorable gift of knowledge, another knows but little. I meet, every now and then, with a dear Christian brother with whom I could talk for a month, and learn something from him every day. He has had deep experience-he has seen into the deep things of God-his whole life has been a perpetual study wherever he has been.

He seems to have gathered thoughts, not from books merely, but from men, from God, from his own heart. He knows all the intricacies and windings of Christian experience: he understands the height, the depths, the lengths, and the breadths of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. He has gained a grand idea, an intimate knowledge of the system of grace, and can vindicate the dealings of the Lord with his people. Then you meet with another who has passed through many troubles, but he has no deep acquaintance with Christian experience. He never learned a single secret by all his troubles. He just floundered out of one trouble into another, but never stopped to pick up any of the jewels that lay in the mire-never tried to discover the precious jewels that lay in his afflictions. He knows very little more of the heights and depths of the Savior's love than when he first came into the world. You may converse with such a man as long as you like, but you will get nothing from him. If you ask why is it, I answer, there is a Sovereignty of God in giving knowledge to some and not to others. I was walking the other day with an aged Christian, who told me how he had profited by my ministry. There is nothing humbles me like that thought of yon old man deriving experience in the things of God, receiving instruction in the ways of the Lord from a mere babe in grace. But I expect that when I am an old man, if I should live to be such, that some babe in grace will instruct me. God sometimes shutteth the mouth of the old man and openeth the mouth of the child. Why should we be a teacher to hundreds who are, in some respects, far more able to teach us? The only answer we can find is in the Divine Sovereignty, and we must bow before it, for has he not a right to do as he wills with his own? Instead of being envious of those who have the gift of knowledge, we should seek to gain the same, if possible. Instead of sitting down and murmuring that we have not more knowledge, we should remember that the foot cannot say to the head, nor the head to the foot, I have no need of thee, for God hath given us talents as it hath pleased him.

Note, again, when speaking of honorable gifts. Not only knowledge, but office is an honorable gift. There is nothing more honorable to a man than the office of a deacon or a minister. We magnify our office, though we would not magnify ourselves. We hold there is nothing can dignify a man more than being appointed to an office in a Christian church. I would rather be a deacon of a church than Lord Mayor of London. To be a minister of Christ is in my estimation an infinitely higher honor than the world can bestow. My pulpit is to me more desirable than a throne, and my congregation is an empire more than large enough; an empire before which the empires of the earth dwindle into nothing in everlasting importance. Why does God give to one man a special call by the Holy Ghost, to be a minister, and pass by another? There is another man more gifted, perhaps, but we dare not put him in a pulpit, because he has not had a special call. So with the deaconship; the man whom some would perhaps think most suitable for the office is passed by, and another chosen. There is a manifestation of God's Sovereignty in the appointment to office-in putting David on a throne, in making Moses the leader of the children of Israel through the wilderness, in choosing Daniel to stand among princes, in electing Paul to be the minister to the Gentiles, and Peter to be the Apostle of the Circumcision. And you who have not the gift of honorable office, must learn the great truth contained in the question of the Master, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?"

There is another honorable gift, the gift of utterance. Eloquence hath more power over men than all else besides. If a man would have power over the multitude, he must seek to touch their hearts, and chain their ears. There are some men who are like vessels full of knowledge to the brim, but having no means of giving it forth to the world. They are rich in all gems of learning,

but know not how to set them in the golden ring of eloquence. They can collect the choicest of flowers, but know not how to tie them up in a sweet garland to present them to the admirer's eye. How is this? We say again, the Sovereignty of God is here displayed in the distribution of gifts honorable. Learn here, O Christian man, if you have gifts to cast the honor of them at the Savior's feet, and if you possess them not, learn not to murmur; remember that God is equally as kind when he keepeth back as when he distributeth his favors. If any among you be exalted, let him not be puffed up; if any be lowly, let him not be despised; for God giveth to every vessel his measure of grace. Serve him after your measure, and adore the King of Heaven who doth as he pleaseth.

IV. We notice in the fourth place, the gift of USEFULNESS. I have often done wrong in finding fault with brother ministers for not being useful, I have said you might have been as useful as I have been had you been in earnest. But surely there are others even more earnest, and more efficient: others laboring as constantly, but with far less effect. And, therefore, let me retract my accusation, and in lieu thereof assert that the gift of usefulness is the result of God's Sovereignty. It is not in man to be useful, but in God to make him useful. We may labor ourselves with all our might, but God alone can make us useful. We can put every stitch of canvass on when the wind blows, but we cannot make the wind blow. The Sovereignty of God is seen also in the diversity of ministerial gifts. You go to one minister and are fed with plenty of good food: another has not enough to feed a mouse; he has plenty of reproof, but no food for the child of God. Another can comfort the child of God, but he cannot reprove a backslider. He has not strength of mind enough to give those earnest home strokes which are sometimes needed. And what is the reason! God's Sovereignty. One can wield the sledge hammer but could not heal a broken heart. If he were to attempt it, you would be reminded of an elephant trying to thread a needle. Such a man can reprove, but he cannot apply oil and wine to a bruised conscience. Why? Because God hath not given to him the gift. There is another one who always preaches experimental divinity; and very rarely touches upon doctrine. Another is all doctrine, and cannot preach much about Jesus Christ and him crucified. Why? God hath not given him the gift of doctrine. Another always preaches Jesus-blessed Jesus; men of the Hawker school-and many say, oh! they do not give us experience enough; they do not go into the deep experience of the corruption which vexes the children of God. But we do not blame them for this. You will notice that out of the same man will at one time flow streams of living water, while at another time he will be as dry as possible. On one Sabbath you go away refreshed by the preaching, and the next you get no good. There is Divine Sovereignty in all this, and we must learn to recognize and admire it. I was preaching on one occasion last week to a large crowd of people, and in one part of the sermon the people were very much affected; I felt that the power of God was there; one poor creature absolutely shrieked out because of the wrath of God against sin; but at another time the same words might have been uttered and there might have been the same desire in the minister's heart, and yet no effect produced. We must trace, I say, Divine Sovereignty in all such cases. We ought to recognize God's hand in everything. But the present is the most godless generation that ever trod this earth, I verily believe. In our fathers, days there was hardly a shower but they declared that God caused it to fall; and they had prayers for rain, prayers for sunshine, and prayers for harvest; as well when a haystack was on fire, as when a famine desolated the land; our forefathers said, the Lord hath done it. But now our philosophers try to explain everything, and trace all phenomena to second causes. But brethren, let it be ours to ascribe the origin and direction of all things to the Lord, and the Lord alone.

V. Lastly, GIFTS COMFORTABLE are of God. O, what comfortable gifts do some of us enjoy in the ordinances of God's house, and in a ministry that is profitable. But how many churches have not a ministry of that kind; and why then have we? Because God hath made a difference. Some here have strong faith, and can laugh at impossibilities; we can sing a song in all ill weathers-in the tempest as well as in the calm. But there is another with little faith who is in danger of tumbling down over every straw. We trace eminent faith entirely to God. One is born with a melancholy temperament, and he sees a tempest brewing even in the calm; while another is cheerful, and sees a silver lining to every cloud, however black, and he is a happy man. But why is that? Comfortable gifts come of God. And then observe that we ourselves, differ at times. For a season we may have blessed intercourse with heaven, and be permitted to look within the veil? But anon, these delightful enjoyments are gone. But do we murmur on that account? May he not do as he will with his own? May he not take back what he has given? The comforts we possess were his before they were ours.

*"And shouldst thou take them all away,
Yet would I not repine,
Before they were possessed by me
They were entirely thine."*

There is no joy of the Spirit-there is no exceeding blessed hope-no strong faith-no burning desire -no close fellowship with Christ, which is not the gift of God, and which we must not trace to him. When I am in darkness and suffer disappointment, I will look up and say, he giveth songs in the night; and when I am made to rejoice, I will say, my mountain shall stand fast for ever. The Lord is a Sovereign Jehovah; and, therefore, prostrate at his feet I lie, and if I perish, I will perish there. But let me say, brethren, that so far from this doctrine of Divine Sovereignty making you to sit down in sloth, I hope in God it will have a tendency to humble you, and so to lead you to say, "I am unworthy of the least of all thy mercies. I feel that thou hast a right to do with me as thou wilt. If thou dost crush me, a helpless worm, thou wilt not be dishonored; and I have no right to ask thee to have compassion upon me, save this, that I want thy mercy. Lord, if thou wilt, thou art able to pardon, and thou never gavest grace to one that wanted it more. Because I am empty, fill me with the bread of heaven; because I am naked, clothe me with thy robe; because I am dead, give me life." If you press that plea with all your soul and all your mind, though Jehovah is a Sovereign, he will stretch out his scepter and save, and thou shalt live to worship him in the beauty of holiness, loving and adoring his gracious sovereignty. "He that believeth" is the declaration of Scripture "and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." He that believeth in Christ alone, and is baptized with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, shall be saved, but he who rejecteth Christ and believeth not in him, shall be damned. That is the Sovereign decree and proclamation of heaven - bow to it, acknowledge it, obey it, and God bless you.

No One Is Holy Like the Lord

Doug McLacklan



Dr. Douglas R. McLachlan was educated in three different institutions: (1) Moody Bible Institute (1964 - Diploma); (2) Pillsbury Baptist Bible College (1967 - B.A.); and (3) Central Baptist Theological Seminary (1970 - M.Div.). He was also awarded the degree of Doctor of Divinity from San Francisco Baptist Theological Seminary in May of 1985. From June of 1987 through May of 1994 Dr. McLachlan served on the staff of Northland Baptist Bible College as Chairman of the Department of Bible and Graduate Studies. In the spring of 1994 he accepted the call to once again become the pastor of Fourth Baptist Church and president of Central Seminary. The church, seminary and Christian school relocated to their present campus in Plymouth under his leadership in 1998. He has pastored at Fourth Baptist Church for the past 13 years. He retired as president and professor at Central Seminary in May of 2004, where he has since served as Chairman of the Board. Dr. McLachlan will begin a part-time ministry at Northland Baptist Bible College this fall teaching a couple of Bible and Pastorology classes. During the winter and spring months, he will participate in pastor's conferences, traveling and speaking with Dr. Les Ollila and Dr. Matt Olson.

The whole of God's Word compels us to acknowledge God's bright and burning holiness. As Hannah said in her prayer of gratitude for the gift of Samuel: "No one is holy like the LORD."

(1 Samuel 2:2) This perhaps explains why the biblical word used to describe God more than any other is the word "holy." As sons and daughters of the holy God, we are called to bear the likeness of our Father: "As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct." (1 Peter 1:15)

Sorting out the story of Isaiah's encounter with "The Holy One of Israel," in a time of national crisis and impending disaster, takes place in five graphic stages. Each stage is instructive to our own God-relationship, our own spiritual journey.

1. The Prophet's Vision – What Isaiah Saw (vv. 1-4)

2. The Prophet's Conviction - What Isaiah Felt (v. 5)

3. The Prophet's Confession – What Isaiah Admitted (v. 5)

4. The Prophet's Redemption – What Isaiah Experienced (vv. 6, 7)

5. The Prophet's Commission – What Isaiah Pledged (v. 8)

God Working in China

Tony Fox



Dr. Tony Fox received a B.A. and M.A. in Bible, as well as a Ph.D. in New Testament Interpretation from Bob Jones University. After serving two years as an assistant pastor, Dr. Fox spent nine years on the mission field in Warsaw, Poland, where he co-founded and directed The International Baptist Seminary of Warsaw. Through that institution, many men throughout Eastern Europe received ministerial training and have started churches and Bible colleges in areas ranging from Poland to Siberia. Upon his return to the U.S., Dr. Fox served four years as the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Northland Baptist Bible College. During that time he initiated and moderated the China Round Table

meetings of 2002 and 2003 for the purpose of fostering a networked ministry-approach toward China among fundamental churches, Bible colleges, Christian universities and seminaries. Since the summer of 2005, Tony has been directing a unique effort to provide much needed ministerial and theological training for underground pastors and church planters in China. His wife, Pam, and their three sons, Caleb (18), Joshua (14) and Ben (11) are serving with him on to raise support for the continuation and expansion of their ministry to the underground church in China.

China Round-Table Forum Information and Recommendations

On December 7th, 2002, several missionaries (both former and current) met at Inter-City Baptist Church in Detroit to discuss the approaching serious challenge of missionary work in mainland China. The format of the forum was a round-table discussion, moderated by Dr. Tony Fox. The principal participants consisted of two former missionaries in Eastern Europe and three current missionaries in China.

BURDEN:

The general consensus among Fundamentalist missionaries who pioneered fields in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism is that we as a movement were ill-prepared for that great opening. Although we experienced individual "successes" in missions work in Eastern Europe, the lack of coordination caused us to enter late compared to other groups, including cults. For example, Jehovah's Witness missionaries had been active within Poland for fourteen years before the first resident Fundamentalist missionary entered. The result is that today the second largest religion in Poland, after Roman Catholicism, are the Jehovah's Witnesses, currently outnumbering evangelical (in the broadest sense) believers by a 6 to 1 ratio.

The lack of coordination among Fundamentalists resulted in another detrimental phenomenon. New-evangelical groups, which entered with much more of a network, grabbed the lion's share of

influence among the existing churches in Eastern Europe. The result is that today the overwhelming spirit of the great majority of Baptist churches in Eastern Europe is an ecumenical one. Also, many youth groups in these churches have been inundated with contemporary worship influences from the West, along with a de-emphasis on preaching and teaching. The current attitude among much of the youth in Eastern European churches is that not to engage in contemporary worship is laughably old world. They have no concept that there are thousands of Baptist churches in America who reject contemporary worship and emphasize sound preaching and teaching. However, because of our lack of coordination, that reality was never able to be communicated on a large scale to them.

We now face a potentially greater open door than Eastern Europe: China. With approximately one-fifth of the world's population (approx. 1.3 billion), China will be the largest opening in the history of the Great Commission. In addition to its size, China's own propagating potential also warrants our attention. The house-churches (underground churches) have been booming over the last few decades as the Gospel has spread quickly. Some predict the number of believers in China already to be 80 million. At the same time, western business periodicals are buzzing with the reality that China is quickly on its way to becoming an economic superpower. China's lightning prosperity is noticeable to anyone who visits major cities in China's southern free economic zones, which exhibit China's financial potential, if and when the nation as a whole may allow free enterprise.

The combination of China's explosive growth of house-church believers combined with an exploding economy could lead China to become the next great missionary nation of the world, fueled by indigenous wealth. If and when religious and economic freedom comes to China, Chinese missionaries may have the means and open doors to reach the rest of Asia in a way that we Caucasians never could.

Our understanding is that currently the house-churches are purposely not very connected to one another for security reasons. However, we believe that connections will rapidly develop once the bamboo curtain falls. Based on experience from Eastern Europe, we believe that whichever western ministerial philosophy is able to influence the Chinese churches first could very well be the prevailing evangelical ministerial philosophy both in China and wherever Chinese missionaries might carry the Gospel in the future.

The potential of China's opening merits our attention, perhaps in a greater way than any single nation's opening has in our past. To not learn from our mistakes in Eastern Europe and determine to prepare for and approach China differently may prove to be disastrously irresponsible. Surfing the web sites of other religious groups and viewing their current activity in and preparation for China dramatically demonstrates that Fundamentalism once again is in danger of being at the back of the pack. Our commitment to the Gospel and the absolute truth of God's Word combined with the astronomical potential of impacting Chinese Christianity's ministerial philosophy, evangelistically and theologically, ought to compel us not to repeat the same mistakes of lateness and lack of coordination that occurred with Eastern Europe.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

We wish to submit these unanimous recommendations for consideration for any Fundamental church, school, or mission board interested in missionary work in China. We recognize that these recommendations are only foundational and general in nature. We hope they will help to start a process of further dialogue and recommendations as more knowledge and experience in China are gained from increasing sources.

We recommend the following:

I. Concerning a unified Fundamentalist effort:

- Commitment to coordination among Fundamental churches, schools, mission agencies and missionaries in providing information and in promoting ministry opportunities in China;
- Commitment to cooperation with those presently involved in Fundamental ministries in China to facilitate strategic positioning of those being called to ministry in China now and in the future;
- Pastoral leadership in communicating to Fundamental fellowships, missions agencies, schools, etc. a strong desire and expectation for such cooperation and coordination to take place at the risk of once again defaulting to more coordinated new-evangelical groups

II. Concerning prioritizing work with already existing house (underground) churches:

The current work of the Holy Spirit among the house churches is evident. While recognizing that there are certain defects within the house church movement which are cause for concern, we have hope that many of these churches will respond to biblical teaching presented wisely. At this stage, we encourage American church planters to participate wherever and whenever possible with the house churches rather than existing independently from them, including:

- Encouraging biblical evangelism (both in fervency and methodology);
- Utilizing American Christian ladies in support roles, especially in conjunction with male missionary leaders, to disciple the numerous female church leaders away from positions of church leadership;
- Utilizing male missionaries to encourage and train Chinese men for church leadership.

III. Concerning Ministerial and Theological Training:

- Providing courses in DVD format to send immediately to house churches;
- Sending in Bible teachers to the house churches as soon as competent translators are available/found;
- Encouraging men to make long-term commitments toward teaching/training ministries in China, necessitating current cultural adaptation and language acquisition in preparation for effective ministry once China's doors open fully;
- Checking materials written in Chinese through designated individuals with ministry experience in China and expertise in the Chinese language.

IV. Concerning Establishing Training Institutions:

- Emphasizing partnership in accordance with principles of indigeneity in order to avoid dependence on Western resources for ongoing operational expenses, but allowing flexibility for help with specific, one-time projects;
- Committing to placing Chinese men in leadership positions in the institutions from the beginning so as to avoid the question of "turning over" these schools to nationals, as well as to encourage national ownership of these ministries from the beginning. This would not preclude the involvement of Western missionaries, churches and institutions to provide needed and desired expertise or prevent Westerners from serving in said institutions alongside, but not over, the nationals;
- Supporting current teaching points outside of the mainland (e.g., Hong Kong, Taiwan) which presently can provide theological and ministerial training to mainlanders having access to these areas.

V. Concerning the Three Self Patriot Church (See attachment describing this denomination):

Although there may be exceptions within certain local contexts, and although cordial relationships with individual believers within the Three Self Patriot Church may want to be maintained, nevertheless in the current circumstance, we recommend that no official, organizational connection be made with the Three Self Patriot Church movement for these reasons:

- An already permeating liberal theology;
- Strong ties with the communist government (apparently much stronger than was the case with registered churches in Eastern Europe);

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- The potential of jeopardizing credibility with the house churches.

VI. Concerning Ministry Awareness:

- The promotion within Fundamental churches of prayer for the evangelism of China and for the edification of already existing Chinese brethren;
- The promotion of a burden for China through encouraging pastors to participate in survey trips with the hope that they will communicate their burden to their churches;
- The raising of awareness among college and graduate students through short-term ministries and college courses.

Respectfully submitted,
The Members of the China Round Table Forum

China Round-Table Forum 2

Information and Recommendations

HISTORY:

On December 7th, 2002, several missionaries (both former and current) met at Inter-City Baptist Church in Detroit to discuss the approaching serious challenge of missionary work in mainland China. The format of the forum was a round-table discussion, moderated by Dr. Tony Fox. The principal participants consisted of two former missionaries in Eastern Europe and three current missionaries in China.

Springing from the firm and unanimous agreement that American Fundamentalist missions is headed for the same mistakes in China that took place in Eastern Europe in the 1990s, the participants of this first China Round-Table Forum (CRT 1) recommended and admonished that further dialogue be held among three sectors within Fundamentalism: (1) pastors/churches, (2) missionaries/mission boards, and (3) institutions of higher education (i.e., Bible colleges, Christian universities and seminaries).

As a result, on September 13th, 2003 the China Round-Table Forum 2 (CRT 2) was convened. Representatives from eight institutions of higher education met at Bethel Baptist Church in Schaumburg, IL to discuss more definitively what role our institutions can have both in assisting the training of the current and future leaders of the massive house-church movement in China, as well as preparing this generation of current American Christian college students for the massive challenge presented by the quickly increasing opportunities of missionary work within China.

Since this second forum, two of the participants were able to travel to China and make contact with believers.

BURDEN RESTATED:

The general consensus among Fundamentalist missionaries who pioneered fields in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism is that we as a movement were ill prepared for that great opening. Although we experienced individual "successes" in missions work in Eastern Europe, the lack of coordination caused us to enter late compared to other groups, including cults.

This lack of coordination among Fundamentalists resulted in another detrimental phenomenon. New-evangelical groups, which entered with much more of a network, grabbed the lion's share of influence among the existing churches in Eastern Europe. The result is that today the overwhelming spirit of the great majority of Baptist churches in Eastern Europe is an ecumenical one. Also, many youth groups in these churches have been inundated with contemporary worship influences from the West, along with a de-emphasis on preaching and teaching. The current attitude among much of the youth in Eastern European churches is that not to engage in contemporary worship is laughably old world. They have no concept that there are

thousands of Baptist churches in America that reject many current forms of contemporary worship and emphasize sound preaching and teaching. However, because of our lack of coordination, that reality was never able to be communicated on a large scale to them.

We now face a potentially greater open door than Eastern Europe: China. With approximately one-fifth of the world's population (approx. 1.3 billion), China is the largest opening in the history of the Great Commission. In addition to its size, China's own propagating potential warrants our attention. The number of house-churches (underground churches) has exploded over the last few decades due to the quick spread of the Gospel. Serious predictions of the number of believers in China already range from 50 million to 80 million, reflecting the quickest growth of the Church since Pentecost in the first century. At the same time, western business periodicals are buzzing with the reality that China is quickly on its way to becoming an economic superpower. China's lightning-quick prosperity is most noticeable in the major cities of China's southern free economic zones. These cities exhibit China's financial potential, which largely depends on if and when the nation as a whole opens its doors entirely to free enterprise.

The combination of China's explosive growth of house-church believers with a booming national economy could lead to China's becoming the next great missionary nation of the world, fueled by indigenous wealth. If and when religious and economic freedom comes to China, Chinese missionaries may have the means and open doors to reach the rest of Asia and the Middle East in a way that we Caucasians never could.

Our general understanding is that currently the house-churches are, by western standards, not doctrinally defined, nor very connected to one another for security reasons. However, we believe that firmer connections will rapidly develop as the Chinese government increasingly allows more latitude for the churches. Based on experience from Eastern Europe, we believe that whichever western ministerial philosophy is able to influence the Chinese churches first could very well be the prevailing evangelical ministerial philosophy both in China and wherever Chinese missionaries might carry the Gospel in the future.

The potential of China's opening merits our attention, perhaps in a greater way than any single nation's opening has in our past. The need is great for the Fundamentalist movement as a whole to learn from our experience in Eastern Europe and determine to prepare for and approach China differently. Surfing the web sites of other religious groups and viewing their current activity in and preparation for China dramatically demonstrates that Fundamentalism once again is in danger of being at the back of the pack. Our commitment to the Gospel and the absolute truth of God's Word, combined with the astronomical potential of impacting Chinese Christianity's ministerial philosophy, both evangelistically and theologically, ought to compel us neither to be delinquent nor to lack coordination concerning missionary work in China.

Hence, the China Round Table Forums were formed from the urgent burden that the time has arrived for serious and coordinated discussion among Fundamentalists concerning missionary work in China.

PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS:

For security reasons the two missionaries currently involved in ministries within mainland China requested that their identities not be included in these written materials. Both of these missionaries were sent from Fundamental churches in the U.S. The participants of the China Round Table 2 Forum were:

- Neal Cushman, Northland Baptist Bible College (Dunbar, WI)
- Ted Daub, Maranatha Baptist Bible College (Watertown, WI)
- Stephen Davis- Calvary Baptist Seminary (Lansdale, PA)
- Chuck DeCleene - Faith Baptist Bible College (Ankeny, IA)
- Dan Ebert- Clearwater Christian College (Clearwater, FL)
- Tony Fox- Northland Baptist Bible College (Dunbar, WI)
- George Houghton, Faith Baptist Bible College (Ankeny, IA)
- Pearson Johnson, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary (Detroit, MI)
- Dan Morrell, Pillsbury Baptist Bible College (Owatonna, MN)
- Brad Smith, Bethel Baptist Church (Schaumburg, IL)
- Mark Vowels, Bob Jones University (Greenville, SC)
- 1st missionary to China- coordinator who brings 40-80 college-age young people to work in mainland China each summer. He has traveled extensively throughout mainland China.
- 2nd missionary to China- Bible teacher who grew up in Taiwan, received his ministerial training in the U.S., and is presently serving in Taiwan and mainland China. Because of his fluency in Mandarin (the dialect of the majority of Chinese), this missionary has unique access to the house- (underground) churches in the mainland.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this second forum was to act upon the momentum created by CRT 1 by bringing together a certain sector within Fundamentalist ministry, institutions of higher education, in order to:

- (1) learn about the present and future ministry needs in China,
- (2) dialogue in "think-tank" fashion concerning cooperative ways to meet these needs, and
- (3) commence a network of sharing information, ideas, etc. concerning current and future ministry within China.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

We recognize that the recommendations below are made on the basis of our current partial understanding and experience concerning the situation within China. This being the case, we submit these with the knowledge that further dialogue and networking are needed as we gain experience in and understanding about China. Nevertheless, working off of the light the Lord has given us so far concerning the situation within China, we unanimously submit these recommendations with the hope of providing an initial framework for Fundamental institutions of higher education to begin cooperatively working toward the gargantuan opportunities awaiting us in China.

I. Prioritizing discipleship and leadership training:

In approaching missionary work in China, we must be willing to think unconventionally. Historically, Fundamental western missions have emphasized evangelism and church planting within any given foreign field. However, how should we view our role in a field where literally millions of conversions have taken place and hundreds of thousands of churches have sprung up so rapidly that they are not well-grounded in theology and are extremely susceptible to cults, charismatic practices, etc.? Indeed, even now we often hear reports of China's house-churches falling into such error. For whatever reason, the Lord has chosen for the Gospel to spread throughout much of China apart from western missionary help up to this point. These Chinese believers and churches are realizing more and more their need for doctrinal grounding--and are looking to the West for assistance.

Therefore, we ought to view our greatest priority as taking what the Lord has already planted in China and watering it. We believe that the most urgent need is for us to assist, as the Lord provides opportunity, by providing theological and ministerial training for the numerous leaders of the already existing house-churches.

Also, because several of the house-churches are led by women (largely out of ignorance and lack of Biblical teaching), sisters in Christ from the West are needed to befriend and help steer their Chinese sisters away from authority positions to make way for male leadership. We see a unique and enormous role for both single and married western Christian ladies in China.

II. Employing a three-tiered approach toward assisting the development of the church in China:

American missionary involvement in China should operate on several primary levels for maximum effectiveness:

- First, there must be teams of qualified teachers who provide ministerial and theological training by extension to the leaders of the house churches. Typically, these teachers will

work in pairs or in groups of three to provide intense training in a compressed time frame. The first and second groups of people in this paradigm will develop the contacts whereby the teachers can come and provide this biblical education. Ideally, these teachers will be fluent in Chinese and will have sufficient understanding of the culture to enable them to maximize their communication. Eventually, the situation in China will be ready for resident teachers. However, at this time the need is so immediate and so great that our institutions should sense a compulsion to seek ways to send teachers in now, even if only for a week at a time, who could help train the house-church leaders through qualified translators.

- Second, there must be a vast number of qualified English language teachers whose primary responsibility missiologically will be to make contacts and to present the gospel. Westerners are the most desired to fill this role because the Chinese are highly interested in learning English directly from westerners. This activity would primarily require short-term (1-3 years) commitment. Recent graduates from our educational institutions could best fill this need, although the stability and mature impact of middle-aged and elderly couples are crucial as well. The latter provides the necessary oil for the machinery of the former to function well and with diminished friction. We must encourage both groups to be willing to invest years of their lives in China for the cause of Christ. The greatest part of the funding for these individuals will come from the language schools where they teach. We currently should encourage students in our institutions to pursue qualifications that would enable them for this type of ministry.
- Third, an increasing number of missionaries residing in China who have learned/are learning the Chinese language and culture are necessary. Their primary responsibilities will be to disciple believers and to befriend, encourage and provide council for house churches. These missionaries may begin their service in China by teaching English. Once they establish themselves they should focus their attention on discipling converts and counseling house churches. In most cases, the missionaries themselves will not be the leaders of the house churches because of political and strategic concerns. However, their long term, American church-funded, presence in China will enable them to develop contacts among the house-church leaders which will translate into influence upon the developing Christian community.

This three-tiered approach to American missions in China will require proactive recruiting of short-term English teachers, revitalized thinking regarding the role of American missionaries in church planting endeavors, and careful selection of theological teachers. It is a colossal task for an enormous opportunity.

III. Using a Common, Unified Curriculum:

China presents another unique circumstance in that very few Chinese translators have a solid understanding of theological terms and concepts in both the Chinese and English languages. Therefore, we recommend that the translation of any written materials be sent to a qualified person to evaluate the accuracy. Such a person is available and was a participant at both CRT forums. We would welcome being introduced to others who would be so qualified.

Below is a tentative curriculum, which is presently being utilized to train current and future pastors in Eastern Europe. Courses should be modified, added, etc. as progressively we obtain a better understanding of the needs in China:

- Core courses (18 courses)

- OT Backgrounds
- NT Backgrounds
- Hermeneutics
- Philosophy of Ministry
- Dispensationalism
- Doctrine: Introduction to Doctrine & Bibliology
- Doctrine: Trinity
- Doctrine: Man, Angels and Sin
- Doctrine: Salvation
- Doctrine: Church
- Doctrine: Eschatology
- Daniel
- Revelation
- Preaching: Inductive Bible Study and Homiletics
- Discipleship
- Counseling
- Christian Home
- Church History

- Electives (16 courses)

- Personal Evangelism
- Christian (Local church) Education
- World Religions
- Genesis
- Major Prophets
- Minor Prophets
- Parables
- Gospel of John
- Acts
- Romans
- Ephesians
- Galatians
- Pastoral Epistles
- Hebrews
- James
- Ethics

At the appropriate time, courses on Church Polity, Biblical Languages, etc. should be added.

Once a curriculum has been fully translated, these courses should be assembled and available electronically for web access.

A list of potential oral translators should be assembled. Consideration should be given to reimbursement for travel expenses and honorarium.

House church groups might be asked to pay for the printing of materials or asked to have them printed if possible.

Courses may not necessarily follow the normal scope and sequence used in our institutions. Availability of lecturers and materials must be taken into consideration. Flexibility is the key at this time.

The input of Chinese believers may lead to curriculum changes. However, once a core is agreed on, those courses must be taken for program completion.

A certificate of achievement may be offered through one or the other of our institutions.

Lecturers should be encouraged to do some preliminary reading in order to understand better the Chinese culture (e.g. *Encountering the Chinese* by Hu Wenzhong and Cornelius Grove; *The Chinese* by Jasper Becker; *Harmony in Conflict* by Richard Hartzell; *Jesus in Beijing* by David Aikman, etc.).

Lecturers should be encouraged to provide written feedback after teaching in order to help others better prepare and avoid cultural mistakes.

IV. Collecting and networking information among our institutions:

The China Round-Table Forum plans to provide a platform for continuing collective participation. Because of the nature of our fellowship—a group of like-minded, but organizationally independent ministries—and because of the immensity of the task in China, a network needs to be formed to facilitate communication and cooperation between our churches and colleges. This network will include a web site, with both a collection of general information about the forum and the country, as well as password-based segments for forum participants. The network will seek to provide the framework in which communication can take place and be utilized to encourage local churches in being involved in the China effort, including helping to finance the needs of those on the field.

The China forum network also will seek to provide regular updates regarding ministry plans and progress in the China effort to both churches and schools for prayer and promotion of opportunities. In the future, Lord willing, the network will provide a forum for the continuing coordination of efforts for missionaries on the ground in China.

The website is on schedule to be developed by February of 2004 by Inter-City Baptist Church. All former China forum participants will be allowed to register for the network and can submit names of others who demonstrate a vested interest in ministry in China. However, because of the potentially sensitive nature of the information, extreme caution will be necessary concerning the sharing of certain information. Registrants will be kept to a strategic minimum and must receive a unanimous vote of acceptance from the members of a registration committee.

V. Preparing effectively within our own institutions:

Although it is understood that Christian institutions of higher education must work within their, usually very limited, budgets, we nevertheless call upon such institutions to recognize actual and potential ministry in China as necessitating immediate attention concerning curriculum strategies for preparing the next generation of American, as well as non-American, servant-leaders. Institutions should endeavor to seek possibilities to provide courses in the Chinese dialects, as well as Chinese history, culture, etc. A survey of catalogues from secular American universities and colleges demonstrates that they indeed are already providing such courses, which fit their educational objectives.

We also call upon brothers- and sisters-in-Christ of means to consider help in funding such courses and programs within Fundamental institutions of higher education.

We also call upon such institutions, whenever possible, to utilize gatherings (e.g., Presidents' prayer advances, Bible faculty summits, etc.) to pray specifically for our cooperative ministry concerning China. In addition, we encourage consideration for a future prayer advance specifically for China involving personnel of academic institutions.

VI. Involving pastors and local Churches:

Ideally, the broadest impetus and support will come from local churches in the western world. If pastors and congregations catch the vision and urgency of leadership training in China, a wider base of prayer, personnel, and financial resources could be available to expedite the flow of theological training to Chinese believers. American pastors could be mobilized through regional and national conferences, DVD/video distribution, and selected "vision trips" to China to visit the house-churches.

VII. Agreeing on a working latitude toward each other:

Much consideration needs to be given to the historical circumstances surrounding the house-churches before we, as American Christians, endeavor to assist them. Failure to do so may result in hasty judgments on our side that would unnecessarily alienate the Chinese Christians

themselves from us, as well as discourage others among us from legitimate and needful missionary work to help the Chinese Christians.

First, we must take into account that the Chinese churches arose during the past five decades apart from western missionaries. The result is twofold: (1) they arose almost entirely indigenously without any kind of contact with other cultures of Christianity, and (2) they had virtually no access to western Christian thought and theological training. These factors had a positive and negative effect. Positively, the Chinese house-churches were untainted from many western aberrations and carnal influences. Negatively, the Chinese churches are in danger of following heretical teachings and unbiblical practices that may have been avoided had their leaders had access to theological training.

For us American Fundamentalists to "write off" any connection to house churches at this time when they have not had the opportunity to hear and respond to correct teaching in areas of doctrine and practice would be premature and irresponsible. In essence, we as a movement would default any potential influence upon the Chinese house-churches to other groups of western churches.

As we are now looking at this enormous number of Chinese churches emerging out of isolation, a group that may very well become the largest of any nation and may very well be the great missionary power of the 21st century, it is of the utmost importance that we American Fundamentalists have the wisdom and humility to learn from our collective experiences in Eastern Europe. There is a difference between compromise and latitude in this context. Compromise is the dilution of a Biblical principle. Latitude, on the other hand, recognizes that the cultural and historical applications of a given Biblical principle may not be identical between two different national contexts, and thus gives room for brethren to flesh out Biblical truth in a foreign context without suspicion.

American Fundamentalism is a cultural and historical application of Biblical principles of separation. However, for us to go to churches of another culture which are emerging out of isolation and demand at the beginning that they understand and adhere to the same network of alliances that we have developed through several decades is to fail to recognize their stage of growth, as well as the ecclesiastical battles of their culture. Rather, we must view our responsibility as teaching them Biblical principles of separation--not the American historical, cultural application of it, which we refer to as "Fundamentalism."

In light of the historical, crucial time we find ourselves as the Chinese churches begin to open their doors for us to train them, and with remembrance of what occurred during the previous decade in Eastern Europe, we call upon American Fundamentalists to give latitude, without compromise of Biblical principles, to those who are and will be working with the underground churches in these areas:

- (1) Separation. A natural development of the practical outworking of Chinese ecclesiastical separation needs to take place within their own culture. Although we understand that the house-churches do not follow western Christianity's traditional denominational lines, the nature of the connections between the churches remains somewhat unclear at this

time. As the house-churches are allowed more freedom, it is inevitable that decisions will need to be made concerning association. However, the Chinese house-churches must be allowed to make these decisions themselves concerning their own context-- not a western one. The result will be a truly indigenous separated church based on solid Biblical conviction. We learned in Eastern Europe that such conviction cannot simply be borrowed from our American historical experience. It must be developed and forged through their own battles.

- (2) Aberrant teaching. The young existence of the Chinese church lacks the centuries-old experience of the western church's struggle and debate for doctrinal purity. The great majority of church leaders have never enjoyed systematic doctrinal education up to this point.

Our understanding is that the present doctrinal moorings of the house-churches are rather loose by our standards. The situation is very different from Eastern European churches in the 1990s, which, because of their profound Christian history, had a much better grasp of basic systematic doctrinal truths than the Chinese churches seem to have. Much patience will be required on our part as we endeavor to give milk to churches and church-leaders whom we ourselves did not evangelize and bring to Christ. Each individual church (or group of churches) and church-leader (or group of church-leaders) will need to be dealt with individually concerning time-lines for adherence to doctrinal truths. Latitude should be given to the missionary on the local level to make this determination.

Respectfully submitted,
The Members of the China Round Table Forum 2

The Glory of the Ministry

Steve Thomas



Pastor Thomas has served at Huron Baptist Church since 1983. He has over twenty years experience in the ministry. He holds the Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary and brings a thorough knowledge of the Bible to the teaching ministries of the church. He displays a passion for the clear, accurate, and relevant communication of the word of God. Pastor Thomas and his wife Sheree have two children.

2 Corinthians 2:14-17

Introduction: In the midst of a rather dreary letter, Paul breaks forth into an exuberant expression of thanksgiving for his role in the gospel ministry. Our text begins a digression that extends from 2:14-7:4. The theme of this digression has aptly been called "the glory of the ministry."

"Take Home Truth": Always give thanks for your role in the gospel ministry.

I. Express thanksgiving because the ministry is a triumphant work. (2:14-16a)

A. It is triumphant because Christ is already the victor. (14a)

B. It is triumphant because of the outcome of our task. (14b-16a)

1. Our message reveals the character of God. (14b)

2. Our message reveals the character of men. (15-16a)

II. Demonstrate thanksgiving by treating the ministry as a serious work. (2:16b-17)

A. Approach the ministry with humility. (16b)

B. Pursue the ministry with integrity. (17)

1. Never to be consumed with self.

2. Always be conscious of God.

Therefore,

Speak with sincerity and . . .

Speak with authority.

Total Commitment

Doug McLachlan

In 1964, when I graduated from Moody Bible Institute, I was privileged to represent the men of my class by preaching at graduation. My title was “Total Commitment.” I tried to describe a kind of commitment that would shape our lives in three directions: total commitment to the Savior, the Scriptures, and the Sacrificial Spread of the Gospel. These commitments have been the consuming passion and rudder-setting principles of my Christian life ever since. I do not mean that I have achieved them in any ultimate sense (I surely have not), but that I have always and energetically aspired to them. I still do! I hope that I always will.

Total commitment is Paul’s subject material in this text. Romans 12:1 & 2 is one of those benchmark passages that unpacks for us the radical implications of what it really means to be a Christian. In some settings today its message is unwelcome even inside the body of Christ. The reason is that this text will not allow us to succumb to apathy, surrender to lethargy, indulge in hypocrisy or relax into atrophy. On the contrary, it calls us to the highest levels of dedication and devotion to God and His work in our postmodern world.

Philip Graham Ryken makes a stunning statement when dealing with this text. He says,

“Not many people are willing to offer themselves as living sacrifices. The price is too high! Discipleship demands everything we have, which is more than most people are willing to pay, including many Christians.”

Yet this is precisely the kind of commitment that Paul calls us to in this passage.

In Romans 12:1 & 2, Paul defines for us several key components of total commitment:

1. The Ground of Total Commitment – “the mercies of God.”

2. The Shape of Total Commitment

a. The _____ of the Body (v. 1)

b. The _____ of the Mind (v. 2)

3. The Focus of Total Commitment – “the will of God”