

GOD'S ARRAIGNMENT OF THE
PREACHER

(Concluded from last issue)

Let me give you a concrete example of the change grace can make in a popular preacher's vision and ministry:

When I was pastor in the town of Tully, N. Y., a good many years ago, I attended a conference held at Tully Lake Park, under the auspices of the Christian Missionary Alliance. The most prominent speaker at that conference was Dr. Wilson, who some time before had been the popular pastor of a great church in a Canadian city.

He told his own story how he wrote his sermons with homiletical skill and rhetorical elegance, memorized them and delivered them with splendid oratorical effect. He had a wealthy and cultured congregation that was proud of their pastor. He attended their dances and belonged to their clubs, drank wine moderately and was indeed a hail fellow well met. He had a lovely rectory and ample salary. His place in the social circle was well established, and he had religion enough, or pride enough to keep him moral.

But down in his heart there was at times an awful feeling of the emptiness and hollowness of it all. He could not read the Word of God without feeling condemned for his lack of real heart devotion and fellowship with God. The Spirit of the Lord strove with him. One night as he was returning from his popular service he came to a street meeting held by the Salvation Army. And that was in the day when the Army had fire and real blessing. This proud doctor of divinity stopped to listen, and heard something that gave God another chance to speak to him. He heard young girls and young men from the box, tell of the wonderful change God had wrought in their hearts and lives, that had made their whole vision different. Old things had indeed passed away and all things had become new.

He heard men tell how they had been saved from the power and love of sin as manifested in drunkenness and vice. They had a joyousness and gladness of countenance and a sincerity of expression that compelled this poor hungry popular preacher to say: "This is indeed of God." Time and again did he hang around that meeting. Finally he went inside the rude barracks. And soon he was found at the mourner's bench where harlots and drunkards had knelt, to pour out his heart to God for spiritual satisfaction. Needless to say he received it. God came first in regenerating grace and later in sanctifying power. He was completely changed.

How did his great church take it? The people were scandalized. He who had been so popular now became a reproach to them. Some of course stood by him, but soon he was turned away, and when he spoke at Tully Lake he was a mission worker in the slums of New York City. But there was a radiant joy on his countenance. No word of dissatisfaction. All praise to God that his eyes had been opened and that his proud heart had been humbled and his estimate of things completely changed.

What was his previous condition? He was an unregenerated man in the pulpit trying to do the work of the Lord. Many preachers have never known what a change of heart means, and many others have lost their first love be-

cause they have failed to go on to sanctification.

It is sad indeed to see men in the ministry who evidently have never had a real experience of grace, but sadder by far to see those who once were alive to spiritual things, with a real passion for souls, lose it and become conformed to worldly standards, marching with the worldly crowd and thinking themselves to be growing in grace.

God's command to the Laodicean pastor was "Buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich!" Rich how? In the estimation of his carnal relatives? O no! They would call him a failure, especially if he exhorted them to get wholly sanctified. Rich how? In the estimation of the worldly church? O no! He would have few calls from such. To that church he would be a most dangerous man. The carnal pastor when he employs an evangelist wants to know whether or not he is safe. That means often, will he be so mild and regular that he will not upset the worldly programme of the church and create a situation that the pastor may not be able to handle after the meeting is over. Hence in many churches I have seen a so-called revival followed immediately by an amateur theatrical performance, that would kill out all the influence of the Holy Ghost that had been set in motion. The latter move was to save the converts from becoming too religious to be handled by the worldly church.

But the people love to have it so. This is the line of least resistance. This is the way of building that shows quite big from the standpoint of statistics and number. Folks that would resent false dealing from a medical doctor that involves the health of their body will pay a worldly pastor more for giving them spiritual opiates than they will pay for the true remedy for sin.

Who is able to withstand the tide? Only the man that is determined to go the true way by the grace of God, willing for the Judgment to attest the matter of his success or failure in the ministry. But even here and now he has a soul-satisfaction that is worth more than all the commendation of worldlings, and a consciousness of being in the centre of the will of God that makes the lowliest place more desirable to him than the seat of the mighty and the proud. He possesses the gold tried in the fire and is rich in grace and love and victory.

BIBLE REGENERATION

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."—Jesus.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus 3:5.

Webster defines the word "regenerate" as follows: "To generate or produce anew. To cause to be spiritually born anew, or to become a Christian. Born anew; changed from a natural to a spiritual state."

The soul's regeneration is a great mystery, so much so that the natural mind does not comprehend it. The master-minds for ages have tried to master its meaning, and have given a variety of opinions, but due to the lack of personal regeneration and Holy Ghost inspiration they have fallen far short of a true comprehension. "But the natural man re-

ceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—I. Cor. 2:14. No one but those who have been enabled by the Spirit's conviction, and godly sorrow, accompanied by repentance and faith (which are the prime factors that produce the new birth, or regeneration), can understand or know the true meaning of such an experience.

Many theories and things have been substituted for salvation, but they all fall short of the mark, and leave the deceived souls in a cold, barren, sinful condition. The soul can not pass from a dead and defiled state by a person performing good works, sect joining, card signing, water baptism, or simply saying, "I will accept the Lord as my personal Saviour." Such procedure does not remove sin or enable one to live a victorious, godly life. The following explanation shows in part the effects of regeneration or the life we can and do live, if we are truly saved and fully follow the Lord:

Regenerated souls do not commit sin. They may and do at times feel the secret stirrings of impatience, pride, fear, lust, envy, unbelief, etc., shut up in their hearts; but the very thought of yielding is so repulsive to their new-born nature that (by the help of the Spirit) they bring every thought into captivity to the will of God, and thus overcome the outward temptation. "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not." "Whosoever committeth sin is of the devil." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (I. John 3:6-9; 5:18).

They are saved from the love of the world: such as a desire for wealth, fashionable dress, worldly notoriety, worldly associates, and worldly amusements, such as horse and bicycle races, fairs, baseball games, "socials," Sunday visiting, etc. "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (James 4:4; I. John 2:15; 5:4).

They have victory over depraved appetites and habits; such as the use of morphine and opium, chewing, smoking and snuffing tobacco, adultery, fornication, unbridled passions, etc. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections [passions] and lusts."—Gal. 5:24; Eph. 5:3. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John 8:36.

They are saved from unholy and unprofitable conversation; such as obscene and foolish stories, jesting, joking, gossiping, engaging in or sanctioning that which does not edify or minister grace to the hearers. (Prov. 10:19; Eccl. 5:2 Eph. 4:29; 5:3, 4).

They are saved from hatred, ill-will and revenge, such an evil speaking, back-biting, scolding, fault-finding, etc. "Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you."—Luke 6:27-31; Eph. 4:31; Jas. 1:26.

They are saved from dishonesty; such as cheating, driving close bargains, taking advantage of others, evading the truth, exaggeration, carelessly leaving bills unpaid, etc. "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."—Luke 6:31; Psa. 15:5.

They have peace and joy. Not the peace (relief) that comes from rejected light, or a stifled conscience, but peace which "passeth all understanding," that "floweth as a river." "Joy unspeakable and full of glory." "Being