

Pastor  
and  
People

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R. T. Williams

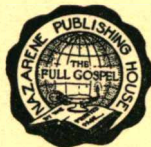
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# *Pastor and People*

By

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Temptation, A Neglected Theme  
Relationships in Life  
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and the Ethics



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## INTRODUCTION

Experience in the General Superintendency of the Church of the Nazarene through many years has revealed to me the vital importance of a right relationship between the pastor and the people. The mere fact that no rift or division has ever occurred in any local church that did not find cause or occasion in this relationship is my chief reason for writing this little book.

No disturbance has ever extended beyond a local church. This is due to the fact that we are a united people doctrinally. We have never had a heresy trial nor a disturbance, even locally, over our fundamental beliefs. Differences of opinions on water baptism have gone undiscussed, because we have been so busy, preaching and emphasizing the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Our few divisions in local churches have been without necessary cause. All have been avoidable. In the future we hope to escape all strains in local churches, by carefully guarding the relationship between pastor and people. This is not necessarily a weakness. It is our strength, but one's strength often becomes his weakness. The strong convictions in pulpit and pew can become cause for disagreement, even over things entirely insignificant.

The message in this book is to both pastor and layman. Included with "pastor" is every minister, pastor or evangelist, even those in preparation.

My earnest prayer is that every preacher and layman in the church will read the message with open mind and heart. If I can in this way improve one relationship, or prevent one division, I shall be well rewarded for this effort.

From every reader I would appreciate an expression, either of approval or disapproval. As ministers and laymen, together we stand, or together we fall.

R. T. W.

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# *Pastor and People*

## CHAPTER ONE

### PASTOR AND PEOPLE

The Church has been identified definitely with every advanced step of civilization. In fact it has always led the way and furnished the inspiration for all human progress. Civilization is, to a very large extent, the product of Christianity, promoted through the Church. When the Church has prospered, all institutions and departments of life have felt the effects. Those who have read and observed history and who take time to interpret current events understand the significance of the Church, with its influences upon the home and the state.

God is the builder of the Church, its Head, its Leader, and its Preserver. Therefore He must be given prominent recognition in any discussion or consideration of this institution.

The Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Since His words can be depended upon, we may be assured that the Church is here to stay through all governmental changes, revolutions, wars and persecutions. It will never pass away. In this fact are comfort and consolation.

Throughout the centuries the Church of Jesus Christ has passed through untold suffering and blood-

shed. Millions have died in defense of the truths of Christianity. The Church has been the defender of the faith and the evangelistic influence that has carried the gospel through the centuries. The Church will never be destroyed. That is the promise of God, and His Word cannot fail. The persecutions now going on in some of the so-called civilized countries of the world will not succeed in destroying the Church in those countries. Some forms of ecclesiastical oppression and priestcraft may be crushed, but out of the ruins of decadent ecclesiasticism will spring up new branches of the true Church, which will grow and bear fruit unto eternal life.

Christ is the Head of the true Church, and loves it. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." This statement reveals Christ's love for the Church.

There are essentially two definitions of the word "church." *First*, the Church of Jesus Christ is universal, consisting of all the people, men, women and children of all races, who are born of the Spirit. Membership in this Church is not by the way of card signing or water baptism. Nationality, morals, culture, education are not doors into this kingdom. There is only one way in, which is through Jesus Christ, the

new birth, the birth of the Spirit. He that would try to enter in by any other door is a thief and a robber. This universal Church is large in membership. In it are all members of all denominations who have been genuinely converted and born of the Spirit. These are truly the sons of God and members of the universal Church.

Usually when one speaks of the church he has in mind some particular denomination, such as Methodist, Nazarene, Baptist. Thus, in addition to the universal Church, which consists of all converted people and peoples, there is the denominational group called a church. The latter like the former should be only converted people, but, sad to say, this is not the case. People cannot get into the universal Church without the new birth, but anyone can, and many do enter the denominations through card signing, water baptism, good resolutions, and in some rare instances selfish intentions.

Regardless of this weakness of the denominations there are more good and religious people in them than on the outside. In fact, comparatively few "born again" Christians are found outside the denominations.

In this discussion we are confining ourselves to the smaller sphere, namely, the denominations. Consequently our remarks will be directed to living, breathing human beings who are, or should be, not only members of a denomination but also of that great universal Church of "born again" people.



It is apparent that church membership consists of two groups, preachers and laymen. Hence the importance of pastor and people. No church exists without both.

In rare instances I have observed congregations of laymen trying to get along without a pastor, but this has never been and can never be done. The preacher is in the divine plan for the church, and as much a part of it as either of the two wheels of a cart is a part of the cart. I have observed a few congregations economizing by dismissing a pastor for a period of time, hoping to use the money that would be required to pay a salary, to apply on a church debt, or other church expenses. It was believed that in this way the congregation could more quickly adjust its finances and pay off its obligations, but what were the results? Any thinking person can imagine. Less money came into the treasury, fewer people attended church and the entire congregation became less spiritual and consequently less interested, and soon the organization with all its departments began falling to pieces. The church cannot succeed without a leader—a pastor.

In some cases a preacher has been known who seemed to think, and that foolishly, that the church could exist and prosper without laymen. This feeling on his part was apparent by the fact that he drove the people away, instead of trying to hold them. When a layman did not agree with him he marked him as an enemy, and began to oppose him, humiliate

him and make him feel unwelcome and uncomfortable. The preacher manipulated him out of all official relationships, and in some cases went so far as to request him to leave the church, or have the church board remove his name from the roll. In doing this the pastor offended the relatives and friends of this member, and made enemies for himself. Soon it was necessary for him to oppose others who had become unsympathetic with his conduct, and thus his situation became more complex, finally causing him completely to fail as pastor and leader.

A church without a pastor is a misnomer; likewise a pastor without people. There can be no church without both the minister and the laymen.

## CHAPTER TWO

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PASTOR AND PEOPLE

The importance of a proper relationship between pastor and people becomes apparent when one realizes that both are essential to the existence and success of the church. Division and strife can end only in disaster to the entire group. When trouble arises in any local church congregation it soon centers about the pastor, if it does not perchance arise there. It is a sad fact, and undebatable, that the preacher is the cause or the occasion of every local church division among our people. He may not be the cause. The cause of trouble often is carnality in the hearts of some of the laymen of the congregation who have failed or refused to be sanctified wholly through the baptism with the Holy Ghost, or who have lost the blessing. But whatever the cause of trouble, it will finally place itself in the lap of the pastor. Being the leader of the people he cannot escape the impact of trouble that arises among them, regardless of cause. Unfortunately he must face this fact. It is fatal for him either to deny or evade this responsibility.

Occasionally the pastor is the cause of trouble and division in the local church. His lack of love, patience and wisdom, his lack of training, or even a lack of deep spirituality, may be at the root of his

trouble. I have known preachers who forced the people by his spirit and attitude either to worship him as if he were infallible and almost a god, or to oppose him and be marked as an enemy. In this case every church member is either definitely for the preacher and everything he does, or definitely against him and his leadership. His spirit and attitude practically compel them to take one or the other position. He makes no allowance for neutral grounds. Every member must be definitely a friend or an enemy. A preacher with this psychological and sociological attitude can be the cause of divisions. Mere disagreement in judgment is not sufficient reason for breaking fellowship.

A careful survey of each local church of the Nazarene would reveal that no division has ever occurred that did not center about its pastor. He being, as I have stated before, the cause or the occasion of all divisions. Consequently, this is the vital point to be watched in every local church. If a breakdown or division occurs in the organization it will occur here. How careful, therefore, should pastor and people be in all their relationships.

It is not necessarily serious for some of the congregation to feel the need of a change of pastorate. In this conviction they might be right or wrong, but all should remember that our church is democratic, with majority rule an underlying principle. Fellowship should never be broken among the people because of a pastor, for broken fellowship from this,

or any other cause, is hard to mend. It might be debatable whether fellowship completely broken is ever entirely healed. It can and should be healed, but seldom is. When division arises over the pastor, whether he is to blame or not, and when fellowship is broken among the people, the pastor can move on to other fields; but the people are compelled to live in their situation, therefore they should be given first consideration.

It is doubtful that a division can ever occur in the local church without completely wrecking a few people, especially the young, who are too tender and unexperienced to pass through this abnormal and unhappy condition without permanent scars and bruises, if not complete wrecking of their faith.

The success or failure of any local church depends more upon the proper relationship between the pastor and the people than upon any other one thing, except the personal salvation of the members of the church. How carefully, therefore, should this relation be watched and guarded at all times, both by pastor and people. It might be well to analyze in this respect the responsibilities of the two.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PASTOR

The pastor is the human leader, the guide, the shepherd of the people. The pastor is supposed to be a definitely called and commissioned person, trained for leadership and soul saving. Possibly no one lives of whom more is required and who carries more responsibility.

*First*, he is a preacher. He is called and trained to preach, and must be able to do so effectively, to succeed in the ministry. The pulpit is the minister's throne. Whatever he does or does not do, he is a preacher. He is that first, last and all the time.

I once recommended a very capable man to a congregation for pastor. I was dealing specifically with the church board. I told the board at length of this man's qualifications, especially emphasizing his educational equipment. I told them that he had completed high school, that he had gone through college, obtaining the Bachelor of Arts degree, that he had gone to the university and there had obtained his Master degree, that he had gone to a famous theological seminary and obtained a degree there, that he had done considerable work on his Doctor of Philosophy degree, and that in addition to all of this he was a splendid teacher and Spirit-filled. After telling these board members that this particular man

had almost enough diplomas to paper a bedroom, one brother slowly asked, "Can he preach?" This man was right. That question should be asked concerning every preacher. "Can he preach?" If he cannot preach, he is not a preacher. He is something else.

Soon his pews will be empty, and those who stand by do so from a sense of loyalty, which is right, not because they enjoy the sermons. Visitation, courtesy and love for the people are essential concomitants but neither these nor other things can ever take the place of the pulpit and sermon. God speaks to the people through the voice of the preacher. After the labor and toil of the week, they come to the house of God for a message from heaven. They must not be disappointed. To meet this responsibility the pastor should pray and study in preparation to stand before the people.

*Second*, a preacher must be a specialist in religion. It is not only required of him that he influence others to be religious, he must himself be a living example of all the gospel he preaches. It is one thing to preach, another to practice. The statement, "Do not as I do, but do as I say," will not stand the test of the ministry. The preacher must not only preach high spiritual standards, but he must possess them in his own character and life, that others may see the embodiment of the virtues he advocates.

*Third*, the preacher is a financier. The idea, entirely too common, that the preacher has no business ability is unjust and indefensible. The preacher is a

business man; otherwise he cannot finance his church. Regardless of the ability of a church board or the efficiency of a board of stewards, the preacher has to create an atmosphere in the church, and among his people, that makes it easy for them to give their money for the support of the church. This is the highest type of salesmanship known. It does not require great ability to sell an automobile when the car is needed and wanted. The preacher has to talk the people into a frame of mind and heart where they will give their money, receiving in return nothing more than consolation and ease of conscience for having done their duty.

The facts are that the preachers of our church and all other churches have made a far better showing in financial leadership than many bankers of the country. During the dark depression days only a few hundred churches became bankrupt, while banks failed by the thousands. I defend the preacher against the slander that he is a poor business man. He cannot be slothful in business and succeed in the ministry.

To raise money is no easy task. It not only requires ability but courage. Sad to say, the last thing that people put on the altar is their money, and it is usually the first thing taken off. If a congregation is sensitive, it will be so at this point. It is easy to offend people in pressing them to do their duty in matters financial, but the preacher is obliged to do his duty. This requires skill and a fearless heart.



Being human, he craves the good will of everybody and recoils from all thought of wounding his friends. Still he must do his duty. The very layman who finds fault with him for pressing church finances would be the first to criticize if the church could not meet its obligations. A pastor must finance his church, which can be done only through the generosity of his God-fearing people.

*Fourth*, the preacher is a soul winner. If he is not he is in the wrong job. He is a worker sent into the harvest field with the ripened grain, to cut the products of the field. If he saves no grain he is not worthy of his hire. The preacher is a soul winner. If he saves no souls he is only a club leader, or a manipulator of a sociological group. He dare not fail to lead people to Jesus Christ in definite salvation.

Humanity is sick physically, mentally and spiritually. Few people are absolutely well. Some need a doctor for sick bodies. Others need a psychiatrist for mental complexes and reactions, while still others need the touch of God for soul ills. I sometimes wish I were a physician, a psychiatrist, and a preacher all in one. Why? To be better able to diagnose all diseases. The doctor is inclined to blame all trouble on a sick body. The psychiatrist traces all troubles to a disordered mind. The preacher traces human ills to a wrong will or a carnal heart. All are partly right and somewhat wrong. The body often needs

help, the mind is frequently off center and many souls need a divine cleansing.

The altar is an important place, but it is not the cure for all human ills. Salvation comes nearer to being the remedy for all human disease, physical, mental and spiritual, than any other. It helps the body. It corrects many mental complexes. It cures the soul of sin. Nevertheless it is a mistake to think a trip to the altar makes every man whole in the full sense of that concept. Not long ago I dealt with a young woman who had been to the altar repeatedly and was discouraged. Her trouble was mental. I helped her to see that wrong conceptions of truth were the unsettling influences in her soul. Seeing this, she was immediately able to exercise that faith essential to a triumphant experience and life.

If the preacher could only see that he is often dealing with sick people instead of mean, or stubborn people, he would be far more patient and efficient in his work. Charity would take the place of hard, legalistic attitudes so quick to condemn. One's trouble might be traceable to a sinful soul, or to a sick mind, or shattered nerves. To properly diagnose each patient is an art to be coveted.

*Fifth*, a pastor is an adviser and counselor. People come to him for about everything except the removal of the appendix or a brain operation. In fact if he is not a surgeon he is a psychiatrist. If he does not deal with the brain, at least he deals with the mind. The most intimate things of life are re-

vealed to the preacher and to the doctor. If there is any difference, the preacher is led into more of the secrets of the people than the doctor himself. The advice and counsel given by the preacher, in the main, must be sound. He cannot always be correct but his average must be good. In other words he must succeed oftener than he fails in telling the people what to do in solving their most delicate, intimate and perplexing problems.

It is a high compliment to a pastor for his people or the public to feel safe in revealing to him their spiritual needs. This is evidence of confidence in his integrity and judgment. They believe that he can help them and that he will keep their secrets as a sacred trust. Many a preacher has done himself and others great harm by being unethical at this point. Secrets are revealed to him that should never be divulged even to his own family. For a preacher to be unethical in this sacred matter disqualifies him for the highest type of spiritual leadership.

*Sixth*, the preacher is a mixer and a leader. The ministry is no place for a hermit or an introvert. I do not mean by this that he should have none of the characteristics of the mystic or introvert, but I mean that he must have enough of the extrovert to make him balanced, so that he can live not only within the cloister of his own mind, but equally as well without. In his study he can be a student and there enter into the holy of holies with God. When he comes from his study he must mix with the multitude, weeping with

those who weep and rejoicing with those who rejoice, knowing how to make contact with the public. A man who is liked in the pulpit should also be liked on the street.

An unfriendly person will not win friends. If any substitution could be made successfully for preaching, it would be friendliness. The former is the chief means of mass evangelism, the latter an essential to personal evangelism. Sinners usually admire the personality of the preacher before he can lead them to Christ.

It would be impossible to use the space here to enumerate all of the requirements and qualifications of the preacher which are essential to success in his holy calling. Therefore we have mentioned only a few.

Possibly nothing is more important in the preacher than the ability to keep the right relationship between himself and the people whom he serves. How can this be done?

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE ATTITUDE OF THE PREACHER TOWARD THE PEOPLE

A proper relationship between pastor and people is made possible only by a right attitude of one toward the other. First, let us consider the attitude of the pastor toward the people. It is obvious that no one but the pastor can determine what his attitude will be. This is his own exclusive and personal responsibility.

Jesus emphasized in one terse statement the full responsibility of the pastor to his people. "A good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

This statement implies love, love in the heart of the shepherd for his sheep, a love so deep, and high, and broad that it will protect the sheep unto death. A minister to succeed in his leadership of the people must not endure them, but love them. I once heard a man say he would rather associate with animals than with people. That was his natural disposition. The grace of God had changed him. Otherwise he would have been utterly impotent in his calling. The sheep know the feeling of the shepherd toward them. If he has hatred in his heart they will know it. If he is indifferent they will know it. If he loves them they will know it. It is impossible for one's attitude toward another to be concealed. It will show

itself in the eye, or in the gesture, or in one's acts. If not in these ways it will at least be interpreted by one's spirit. We often feel what we cannot see or hear. There is an unexplained communication between personalities. Behind the mask of a hypocritical smile and handshake is felt the coldness of an unfriendly spirit.

If two young people are in love they will find a way to express that love to each other.

People who sit in the congregation before the preacher do three things, at least. *First*, they look at him, his form and face, his clothes, the color of his hair, his gestures. They take into consideration his entire appearance. *Second*, they hear what he says or at least pretend to, and I think they usually do, for when the preacher says something that is questionable the people always seem to catch it. They look at the preacher and they hear him. *Third*, they feel his personality. I sometimes think what they feel has more effect upon them than what they see and hear. What a preacher is never can be concealed from the congregation. They know him far better possibly than he thinks. The humblest man of a local church, though unacquainted with logic and the principles of psychology, can interpret effectively the spirit of a preacher. Every preacher should bear in mind at all times that people look at him, hear him and feel him. Reading and listening to the radio are less effective than hearing the preacher deliver his message. The reader can only read. He

cannot see the writer nor can he feel him, with any degree of satisfaction. The listener to the radio can hear, but cannot feel the speaker. The members of the congregation can hear and see the speaker and effectively feel the impact of his spirit and the power of his personality. If the preacher loves them they will see it, and hear it, and feel it.

One of the most beautiful statements delivered by our Lord is this, "My sheep know my voice." It is evident that this quality, which makes for understanding, is love.

For many years I read the following statement with little effect. "Even as I have loved you so love ye one another." One day I read the statement with understanding and was shocked and convicted, because I felt in my heart that I was not living up to the true meaning and full import of this statement. "Even as I have loved you so love ye one another." I readily concede that the command given here applies to all Christians, whether laymen or ministers, but it seems to me that it has special significance for the minister of the gospel, the shepherd of the sheep. If Christians generally are obliged to love one another to this extent it would certainly be mandatory for the preacher to love the people in this measure.

In my judgment a burning passion of love in the heart of the preacher for the members of his congregation is the first essential of success. His love must be deep and broad enough to reach every one—

the faithful and the unfaithful, the loyal and the disloyal, those easily entreated and the stubborn, the lovable and the unlovable, the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate; his love must apply to all.

The preacher must not only love his people, but be willing and ready to sacrifice for them. With this statement I have no little difficulty for it is questionable whether sacrifice is possible in the presence of love. In other words sacrifice made in love ceases to be sacrifice. No father or mother will consider service to a child sacrificial, however great the self-denial might be. Nevertheless, there is unquestionably a sacrificial element in the ministry. The statement stands that "A good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." He is always ready to step between them and danger. If division arises over him he will step down and out, being ready and willing to be sacrificed if such sacrifice can save his people. If he is opposed, rightly or wrongly, he would rather suffer than have his people break fellowship on his account. Trouble can be expected sooner or later in any local church where the preacher is not willing to sacrifice himself in the interest of his people. All preachers will admit this readily, but not all will act accordingly in the crisis. The unselfish will, while others will contend that it is to the best interest of the church for them to remain. In case of disagreement or division the selfish pastor will claim that the people who are not for him are carnal and trouble makers, that they have run other preachers



off, and if he leaves they will treat the next one in like manner. And in some cases he is correct, but he should be willing to listen to advice from his District or General Superintendent, or others not personally concerned in the situation. If the preacher has in his heart the sacrificial spirit, desiring the prosperity of his people above his own wishes and ambitions, he will listen to advice and sacrifice himself in the interest of peace and harmony.

The consecration of every true minister includes the possibility of his own personal humiliation and loss in the interest of those whom he serves. The Good Shepherd loves his sheep and makes that fact known to them by his willingness to lay down his life in their behalf. *Third*, the preacher is the servant of the people. Is this not implied in the statement, "A good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Love is included. Sacrifice is included. Service is included. The shepherd watches over the sheep day and night. He leads them into green pastures and beside the still waters. He is their servant.

One smiles when he hears the politician pleading with the voters to elect him to office, telling them he desires to be the servant of the people. Much is heard about the servant before election, but this idea is usually forgotten soon after the election. How often has one stood in the office of one of these "servants of the people" and waited and waited for service, and then been treated as if he were an intruder. Possibly you went to the highway department to pay

for the privilege of operating your automobile, waiting at the entrance of the office until those inside saw fit to accept your money and give you your license plates. "A servant of the people," an oft-repeated phrase, but everyone knows who does the serving. The theory is that government serves the people. The fact is, the people too often serve governments. It starts one way, it often ends the other. In the case of the minister there is or should be genuine service.

A friend of mine purchased a ticket at a railway station. The agent evidently was a little unfriendly to the ministry and said to my friend, "What right have you fellows to ride on half fare?"

My friend replied, "The railroad grants ministers this gracious courtesy which is sincerely appreciated, because of the service we try to render. Did you ever stop to think," said he, "that the services of a minister can be had by anyone at any time without compensation? If you get sick and the doctor comes, he must be paid. If you die the undertaker will bury you. He must be paid. But the preacher can be called day or night to visit the sick bed, to comfort the broken-hearted, to preach funerals, all without charge. He is one man who never presents a bill for special services. Even when he marries the young he accepts what is given him. He sets no price on this or other service."

The railroad agent replied, "I never thought of

it in that way and appreciate your calling my attention to these facts.”

Yes, the preacher is truly a servant of the people. He is a true shepherd of the sheep. His time is not his own. He is always ready to help those who need the assistance he is able to give. The man or the woman unwilling to serve should never disgrace the sacred calling of the ministry.

The true pastor is absorbed completely in the interests and lives of his people. He has a right to happiness and the comforts of life. At the same time his consecration to this holy ministry requires him to sacrifice himself, if such becomes necessary, for the salvation and happiness of the people. He cannot think too much about himself and succeed. His position must be on the altar, so he will not be thinking of the day of recall. One rule should govern his entire life, the rule of duty. He should fear to do wrong, but never quail when facing duty. If I were to advise a minister it would be this, “Do your duty at all times and accept the consequences.” The weakness of the politician is his fear of displeasing certain voters. This constant fear is a handicap to him in the performance of efficient and conscientious duty. If every office holder in the municipal, state and national governments would do his duty, thinking only of the good of the people instead of his own welfare, our country always would be safe. This same principle may be applied to the preacher. The minister who loves God and immortal souls and is

dedicated to the performance of duty, never worrying about himself, is likely to have less trouble in his relationships with the people than a person who is concerned for his own protection and promotion. The minister who loves his congregation commensurate with the command of Jesus, that we should love one another as He loved us, will escape many of those personal difficulties common between pastor and people.

A pastor must be worthy of the confidence of his people. He has no right to demand respect from them unless he is worthy of respect. He has no right to expect them to follow him unless he is worthy of their confidence. Any leader must recognize the two aspects of leadership. Commands should be obeyed. However it is the duty of the commander to give orders that are reasonable, just and right. The preacher is ordinarily a man of strong convictions and may be misled into thinking that every incidental matter is a fundamental issue in which he must take his stand. One principle will always serve as a very safe guide when one is in doubt. Eliminate self-interest and think only of those whom one serves. An unselfish heart usually is possessed of wisdom, but a selfish mind is blind, even to its own best interest.

I have heard ministers abuse the people for not coming out to the preaching services, or find fault because their ministry did not seem to be acceptable. Why so? Those being served at the table, who do not relish the food set before them, may be in need of

a physician, however the lack of appetite may be due to the poor quality of food or service.

If people do not enjoy the sermons preached by the pastor they may be at fault, or the pastor may be at fault. In such cases the wise preacher will first investigate himself carefully before finding fault with his people.

One of the common complaints made against a Nazarene preacher who is not succeeding is his failure to feed the people. You have heard this expression, "We are starving to death." It has been my observation over years of experience with our people that the average layman of the Church of the Nazarene is hungry for the true gospel, and does not object to straight preaching. He wants the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He may object to some pet notion or personal opinion of the preacher, but his mind and heart are open to the Word of God. If he did not want the truth it is unlikely he would be identified with a church of such high standards.

Every preacher has a right to expect the full co-operation of the membership of his church in all things, financial and spiritual, but in return must himself be worthy of their whole-hearted co-operation.

*First*, the character of the preacher should embody Christian graces, such as love, kindness, courtesy, humility, longsuffering, mercy, justice, purity

and unselfishness. He has a right to expect the people to follow him when they find within him those Christian characteristics that inspire admiration, confidence and courage. Too much cannot be said concerning the importance of a preacher's character. What he is stands out so prominently that it has a pronounced effect upon everything he says.

His life must be exemplary. "Follow me as I follow Christ," is a good rule for the life of any good Christian, especially the preacher. "Be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." This includes the whole activity of a Christian. It is a sad day in the local church for both pastor and people when ethics in the life of the leader do not measure up to the high standards of the Bible and the church manual.

Much is involved in the leadership of the pastor. It is not enough for him to be unimpeachable in character. A man might be morally and ethically good, and yet very ineffective as a leader. Vision is required in leadership. A man might want to do, and yet see nothing to do. Have you not heard men say something like this: "I have gone about as far with these people as I can go. There seems to be nothing else for me to do"? When the pastor feels this way he should move. Without vision the people perish. Leadership implies vision which is easily misinterpreted. Vision in reality is seeing what ought to be done, what can be done, and a way to do it. Leader-

ship must not fall very far short of this high goal. A leader must keep a step ahead of his followers. He must be able to see something to do and a way to do it. Thus he is able to inspire his people with courage and keep their energies constantly employed. A church, to be progressive, must be given a vision and inspired to intense activity. The hope for this lies in the preacher. He is the leader.

Leadership implies wisdom. A leader is not expected to be infallible. The only man who never makes a mistake is he who does nothing. Only the dead are free from errors. It is better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing. The fewer the mistakes made the better, for mistakes in leadership are essentially a handicap to progress. One must be sufficiently wise in leadership to lift him above the line of mediocrity. The importance of wisdom is taught in the Scriptures. We are invited to pray for wisdom. The New Testament exhorts Christians to pray for leaders in civil government, for wisdom is needed in leadership, whether in government or religion.

Leadership implies unselfishness. This we have stated before but repeat for emphasis. "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." The pastor who can inspire the people by the quality of his character, by the high ethical standards of his life, and by his wise and unselfish leadership is bound to succeed. The leader has a right to expect the cooperation of his congregation, and at the same time

the people in the congregation have a right to demand of him those qualities that inspire confidence.

Have we considered the value of the layman? What could we ministers do without him? He feeds and clothes our families, educates our children, furnishes us homes and cars to drive. He gives us the opportunity to carry out our divine commission. He loves us, prays for us, and gives us the finest atmosphere and fellowship the world has for ourselves and families.

There is no group like Christian people, filled with the Spirit and devoted to God and Christian service. Let no man speak lightly of our God-fearing laymen. They are the most wonderful people on earth, loyal, devoted, earnest, sacrificial and a most pleasant group to lead and serve.

How often would I have been discouraged, and tempted to quit the fight, if I had not seen before me that crowd of loyal souls looking at me as if they believed in me and were counting on my faithfulness. Fail them? No, not for the world. The minister would better be dead than fail this wonderful crowd. What do we owe them? The best we have, all we have. They believe our message, and follow our leadership. This attitude calls for the best the preacher has.

True there are a few, very few, laymen who are not spiritual, trouble makers. This group is so overshadowed by that great majority who would follow Christ and the pastor to death, they really be-



come inconsequential. Why listen to one poor fellow who is never happy, but fault finding, when there are scores who would give, and do give their very all, to promote the gospel they love? Is this boasting, when we praise these faithful members of the church? Yes, we are boasting in the Lord, for these are the products of the glorious gospel of our Lord. The glory is to Him now and forever.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ATTITUDE OF THE PEOPLE TOWARD THE PASTOR

We have stated in the previous chapter that it is vital for the preacher to have a proper attitude toward his people, as essential to harmony and success. It is equally important for the people to have a proper attitude toward the pastor.

Two distinct attitudes may be assumed by the church. The first is, that the pastor is a hired man or an employee. One can readily see that this is the "employer and employee psychology." This attitude, though not distinctly wrong is certainly inappropriate in religion, and below the standards of the Holy Scriptures. In this concept the people take the position that they have employed the preacher and have a right to dismiss him at will. No church has ever been known to succeed with this conception of its responsibility to the pastor. In a church of this nature there is a disposition to stand before the parsonage with a time clock and force the pastor to keep a record of hours spent in service. This is useless and foolish, inasmuch as the preacher is subject to the call of the people twenty-four hours in the day. He can never claim his time as his own. Why, ask him to keep a record of his time when it is all spent with and for the people.

This conception leads to frequent changes in

pastorate. Cravings for new things develop. A new voice in the pulpit every few months is demanded. The result is lack of deep spirituality, unity and progress in the local church. The churches that grow and prosper are those that enjoy the blessings of long pastorates. Frequent changes reveal restlessness, instability, lack of devotion, or disloyalty. All of which may be expected when a local church assumes the attitude of an employer and feels at liberty to dismiss the pastor at will. The attitude is not common among our churches, and yet is prominent enough to be condemned.

The second attitude, the right one, is that the preacher is God's divinely called and commissioned shepherd. It is an accepted fact throughout the history of the Christian Church, that God calls certain men and women to preach and to lead the people in spiritual things. It will be a sad day when men enter the ministry without a divine call. The ministry is so sacred that no man should ever presume to stand in the pulpit and proclaim words of eternal life without the knowledge of a definite call from God. The anointing of the Holy Spirit for the preaching of the gospel demands respect from the people.

Throughout the Bible emphasis is given to God's anointed. In one case, David fleeing from Saul, was forced to make an apology because of disrespect he had manifested for him. Saul was backslidden and rejected of God and seemingly deserved respect from no one. Nevertheless young David, after he had

hidden in the cave and humiliated the king by cutting off a piece of his garment, was compelled to make apology. He had disrespected a man who once had been anointed and the honored of God.

I do not contend that the people should honor a backslidden preacher, but I do think the example just given intends to show the attitude people should take toward the ministry.

The laws of our church and the principles of democracy make it possible for the people to call and dismiss a preacher. This is right. But a right should never be abused. Democracy is not a license to lawlessness. A right to call a preacher does not imply the right to dismiss them without a cause. True a few preachers stay too long, after their work is done, refusing to move on without a call. This is a distinct exposition of a lack of faith and courage on the part of a pastor. When his work is done he should move, whether or not he has a place to go. The cause of God is more important than his own interests. However it is utterly cruel for a congregation to vote a preacher out whose ministry and leadership are succeeding, for no other reason than desire for a change. A few people in congregations are unethical and unmerciful enough to dismiss a pastor through personal prejudices. At the time of the recall they found an opportunity to strike back and did so without just cause. The results are a threatened division in the church and cruelty to a man who has done his duty. God will not bless this attitude.

The layman may ask, "What shall I do with regard to my pastor?" May I suggest two things: *First*, examine your own "better judgment." Do you believe the pastor is doing well, that the church is succeeding under his leadership, that he is liked by the people of the church and by the public? Candidly, is there any sound reason for his removal. *Second*, examine your motive, are you unselfish, utterly unselfish, seeking only the glory of God, the good of the people and of the pastor? Is your heart free of prejudices and wrong intentions?

The preacher is not a hired man. He is not subject to dismissal without a good reason. He must not be cruelly treated by the congregation. He has a life to live, a reputation to sustain, a work to do, a ministry to fulfill, a family to support. He is not only the servant of God, he is human and has feelings and common rights. Those rights cannot be disregarded with impunity by anyone, any more than can the rights of the people be disregarded by the preacher, without his having to pay the penalty for his misconduct.

What is the right attitude for the people to take toward the preacher? Whatever attitude that is, it is to be religious, for the church is an institution of religion, and its very atmosphere is religious, ethical.

*First*, it is an attitude of love. We have always heard it said the first lesson for a pupil to learn in school is to love the teacher. Love creates an atmosphere for understanding, information and co-opera-

tion. We can best understand those we love, and can co-operate with them whole-heartedly, and easily believe what they tell us. If a layman does not love his preacher something needs to be done about it. Either the preacher needs to change, so as to be more lovable, or else the layman needs more love in his heart. "My sheep know my voice," said Jesus. "A stranger they will not follow." In a normal church this is a common expression, "We love our pastor." By normal church I mean one that is united, spiritual and aggressive. No church is normal with a strained relationship between people and pastor. Love should remove all strain and friction and promote co-operation and progress.

It is the prerogative and duty of the laymen to encourage the pastor. I once had a layman in a District Assembly arise and ask the chair if the church issued a booster's license. I had to reply in the negative, but I told him that if we had such license, he would certainly be eligible to receive it, for he had boosted for everything that contributed to the effectiveness of the church throughout the assembly. He was a great spirit. He boosted the pastor of his own church. He boosted the District Superintendent. He boosted the General Superintendent. He asked for a larger budget for his church. He prayed for greater revivals. He was like a war horse charging into battle. He wanted to do something.

Yes, he was a booster. His pastor said to me privately, "I could not get along without him. If I need a boost, he is the first man to give me a word of encouragement. God bless him!"

Few laymen know the real struggles of the pastor. It is the business of the pastor to encourage the people, consequently few laymen consider the necessity of vitalizing the spirit of the pastor. It is assumed that he is on top himself, always victorious, and needs help from no source, except from God. And it is a good thing that the Lord does help him, for occasionally others forget to do so.

Many a Sunday night the preacher comes home to lie awake and wet his pillow with tears, feeling that he has failed. He preached the best he could but his people forgot to tell him that they appreciated and enjoyed his sermon. He went home wondering. True he should think of only one thing, his duty, regardless of consequences, yet the preacher is human, and likes to know from the people themselves, how they react to his messages. He *acts* and he needs their *reactions*.

Young preachers in their first pastorate have been made or broken by the attitude of the people. Many are the beginners who have needed encouragement just at the time of great temptation, a temptation to discouragement. Failure to get it broke them. There is a story told of a young man whose first charge was a country circuit. He was entertained in the home of a farmer. The farmer's wife graciously

prepared the young pastor a good supper, consisting of ham and eggs, hot biscuits, fruit and vegetables. The young pastor when invited to supper excused himself saying, "I cannot preach well just after eating." The farmer went to the table and with the family ate supper, after which all walked together up the road to the country church. That night the young man preached his first sermon to his congregation, and was in the brush from beginning to end. He made a poor showing. After the family and the young preacher had returned home for the night, they were sitting quietly before the fire, no one talking. After moments of silence, the old farmer slowly turned his head toward the young preacher and said, "Well, young man, you might as well have eaten." That was a hard and cruel blow to the young preacher. No one knew better than he that he had failed. His heart was already heavy and well-nigh broken. He needed a warm handshake, a pleasant smile, and an encouraging word, none of which he received. Doubtless that night he wet his pillow with tears.

As a young preacher I resigned from the ministry many times. I told God that I should never have undertaken to preach, that someone else could have done it better. One night in a revival meeting I had a very hard time in my message. I preached the best I could but seemed to have no anointing, unction, or freedom. My mind was sluggish, my sentences clumsy, and my words confused. Nothing



seemed to go easy. The wheels of the chariot were mired down. At the close of the service a brother said to me, "That was a good message, I enjoyed it." To which I replied, "Give me all the credit, brother, because I did it by myself; the Lord had nothing to do with it." I left the church with a resignation in my heart—a resignation from the ministry. Till after midnight the Lord kindly argued with me, insisting that I try it at least once more. To this I reluctantly consented, but felt ashamed ever to appear before the people. The next night was wonderful. The Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I preached with ease, confidence, and victory. After the service I asked the same brother how he liked that message. He replied, "Fine." Smiling, I said to him, "Was this not better than last night?" He said, "I think it was." "Give God the credit," said I, "for the message tonight. Last night I did it. Tonight God did it. What a difference!"

These experiences nobody can explain. I was conscientiously faithful, equally so, both nights. Thus the need of encouragement from the people. The preacher is human and is helped by the favorable reaction from those to whom he gives his ministry.

There is a story in the life of the noted Abe Mulkey of Texas, an evangelist of the Methodist Church. Doctor Mulkey was known far and wide as an outstanding preacher and soul winner. On one occasion he and his wife, always referred to by him as Louisa, while traveling through the country

attended church on Sunday night where a young Methodist preacher was serving his first pastorate. Just as the young man read his text, Doctor Mulkey and his wife walked down the aisle to the front seat. The young minister, seeing him was almost paralyzed with fright and immediately urged Doctor Mulkey to take the pulpit. This the doctor refused to do, saying, "I came to hear you." The young man was soon in the brush. Seeing the situation the great evangelist whispered to his wife, "Watch me get him out of the brush, Louisa." Then he began to give audible encouragement. "That is fine; that is true; say it again; amen!" The young man became easy and confident and preached the rest of his sermon with great liberty.

A nod of the head, an amen, a smile from the congregation is an encouragement to the preacher. Every layman in some way should boost the pastor.

This is all, of course, predicated upon the assumption that the pastor is really and truly feeding the people. I have never taken the position that a church should be sacrificed to give a pastor a place. In any and every case the people are more important than the pastor. If either must be sacrificed in the interest and progress of the church, it must never be the people, always the pastor.

Assuming that the pastor is giving his congregation a spiritual ministry, they can encourage him in no better way than obediently walking in

the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ in quest of spiritual values.

Proper financial support for the pastor is one of the outstanding responsibilities of the people. No preacher can do his best while financially embarrassed. We have a rule in the church, that a minister to be in good standing must meet his financial obligations honorably. The laymen heartily agree with this rule, for they know full well that the baneful influence of the preacher who owes embarrassing bills will react unfavorably upon the church throughout the community.

Occasionally it has been my sad duty as a church official to call for the credentials of a minister on this account. When I do so I wonder in my heart if some layman or group of laymen may be held responsible at the judgment for the loss of his ministry. Would it not have been possible for him to have paid his bills and continued in the ministry if the congregation served had done the full measure of its duty? Was his failure due to his own carelessness or was it due in part to lack of sympathy and support from those who failed in their obligations? This matter is not to be taken lightly. There are two sides to most questions, including this one.

In the early church the financial responsibilities of the local church were accepted and borne by the laymen, the pastor being left free to deal with spiritual realities. Doubtless the preacher was never entirely divorced from the finances of the church in

matters of advice and counsel, but the burden of the financial side of the church was carried by the laymen, while the preacher gave himself to prayer, to study, visitation, to the preaching of the Word and the evangelization of souls.

Few people believe it is best for the preacher to make his own living while he is pastoring a church. Few believe it possible. Ultimately he will either give the major part of his strength to his own livelihood, or to the church. If he does the first the church will fail. If he does the second, his personal finances will fail. "The labourer is worthy of his hire." The pastor who assumes the responsibilities under God to save souls of the laymen of his community will have little time for other things. To visit the sick, to marry the young, to bury the dead, to comfort the disconsolate, to lead sinners to Christ, to keep the saints spiritual and on the way to heaven, is a full time job for any pastor.

The local church is obligated to fix an amount for the pastor's salary. This amount should be adequate for the comfort and health of pastor and family, so he can devote his time, energies and efforts to the church.

In a certain District Assembly while speaking on pastors' support I asked if there was a farmer in the congregation. Several stood. I asked one of them if he worked mules on his farm. He said he did. Then I asked him how many ears of corn a day would be required to keep a mule in the barn lot with

nothing to do but fight flies and merely live, doing no work of any kind. The man replied, "I think three ears of corn a day would keep a mule alive under these conditions." Then I asked him how many ears of corn a day it would require to furnish the mule with sufficient strength to pull plows and wagons and do all necessary work on a farm which a mule could do. He stated that it was his opinion that thirty ears of corn a day would be required. Then I asked him which would be more sensible and economical. The answer was anticipated. Said he, "It would pay to feed the mule sufficiently to get service." Correct.

I do not mean to compare a pastor with a mule; however it is economical, sensible and practical to give the pastor adequate financial support and care.

A story is told of a colored preacher who had served the pastorate of a colored church for a year. At the end of a year the church held a recall meeting. The pastor was re-elected by a very satisfactory vote. He arose to give his answer and said, "Dear brederen, a year ago I come here as de shepherd of dis flock, and I is served you throughout de year to de bes ob my ability. I thanks you for dis honorable recall, but befo' I accepts it I wants to say a few words. When I fust come here I visited one o' de sisters and she gimme some pig's feet and I et dem and dey was good. And den I visited anoder sister and she give me some pig's feet and I et dem and dey was good. All this year you is been giving me

pig's feet, pig's feet, pig's feet. I appreciates all you is done fo me, but befo' I accepts de call for anoder year I wants to say one thing. If I is to be your preacher nex' year, I is going to have to eat higher up on de hog."

This humorous Negro story is not without point. The pastor and his family deserve the comforts of life for their happiness, and health, for greatest efficiency and usefulness.

Support of the pastor should not stop with the limits of a stipulated salary, otherwise much of the romance in the relationship between the people and the pastor is missed. If nothing is done for the pastor and his family in addition to the small and inadequate salary paid him, these sacred relationships become too mechanical, cold-blooded and businesslike. There must be an element of romance in the church, which must not be destroyed by the limitations of business principles. "If your brother compels you to go a mile, go two." The first mile counts in the fulfillment of duty, but the second mile adds good will, friendship and the warmth of romance.

The Bible demands a tithe of everyone, also gifts and offerings. The tithe meets the limits of the law. The gifts and offerings extend beyond the limits of the law into the realm of grace and victory. Any wife appreciates a home, clothes and food. But her joy and satisfaction are increased by flowers, or a box of candy, which are not considered mandatory or

essential. These little extra touches add scintillation and zest to life.

The same principle works similarly in the relationships of the church. How many laymen have taken time and gone to the trouble to investigate the condition of the pastor's family, to learn whether the children are properly clothed and nourished? The special gift of a necktie, a pair of shoes, or a suit of clothes for the pastor would add not only to his comfort but to the quality of his spirit, and increase his efficiency. These little extra touches and expressions of friendship bring joy both to the giver and receiver.

The pastor faces two major financial problems. One the support of his family, the other the purchase and upkeep of his automobile. Possibly the majority of preachers are obliged to buy their cars on the instalment plan, and remember, "Instalments make the months short and the years long." One pastor told me with deep concern that he could support his family without difficulty were it not for the necessity of a car. The last payment on a car is usually followed immediately by the first payment on another. By the time the car is paid out it is worn out. Why the automobile? The answer is simple. In this country and most others a pastor without an automobile is far less effective than he would be with one. A car is a necessity to the pastor of a church. The original investment is considerable, to which amount must be added the upkeep and the oper-

ation of the machine, all of which are borne by the pastor with his limited income. The more he uses his car to visit the sick, to bury the dead, to make new contacts for the church, to call upon members, the poorer he is. The car is never removed from the garage without cost to the pastor. Every local church should provide a definite amount to be given the pastor for the operation of his car, to enable him to do a maximum amount of work for God and the church. This is a good investment but should not be at any time considered a part of the pastor's compensation. He uses his car little for himself. It is enough for him to purchase the car without having to furnish oil and fuel for its operation. May I appeal to the laymen everywhere to make special provision in this matter because it is just to the preacher and the duty of the local church.

If I could, I would pledge every minister of the church to give to his people his best—his best mentally, his best spiritually, his utmost strength and his entire time. If I could, I would pledge every layman to give joyfully that support to the ministry that lies within his power. With a proper relationship always existing between pastor and people, the church cannot fail. This relationship must be mutual. It can never be one-sided. However efficient the minister may be, he cannot succeed without the laymen. However devoted the laymen may be, they cannot succeed without the preacher. Together they stand, or together they fall.



Oh, that any injustices in this relationship forever might disappear. Is this possible? Indeed it is. The method is simple and unfailing. How can it be done? The answer is, let everyone be fair, frank and sincere. Let everyone do what is right. Let the preacher treat the people as he would have them treat him. Let the people treat the preacher as they would have him treat them. Let both live under the Golden Rule, in the spirit of the great commandment, and all will be well.

Then church divisions will end. Pastor and people will pull together for a common cause. If there is a widespread feeling in the church that the pastor is a misfit, and that his work is done, such will be conveyed to him and he, being a gentleman, will move on, leaving the people united in beautiful Christian fellowship. A minority or small group will not assume the responsibility of forcing the pastor to leave while the majority want him to remain. If this minority feel that he should go they should have cause for their contention. If the majority feel that he should remain they too should have cause for their position. If the two groups cannot agree, an unselfish pastor will decide whether his continued presence will end in broken fellowship. If he is uncertain he can call in his District Superintendent and his General Superintendent for impartial and disinterested advice.

Nothing should ever be allowed to divide a church. In rare instances there is a small, conten-

tious group that will not work in harmony with the church. They should be saved if possible, but if not, the church must move on.

Let everyone do right.

## CHAPTER SIX

### INCENTIVES TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE

The relationship between pastor and people is supported by incentives to service. It is obvious there must be some fundamental reason on the part of both the pastor and people for their sincere effort to work together. There must be a common cause, a common end to be sought, and some sustaining inspiration for both. That end is Christian service.

What is the incentive in their hearts to serve? Why are pastor and people so vitally interested in promoting the church with all of its necessary departments, Sunday school, Young People's Society, Missionary Society? Why organize a church? Why buy a lot and erect a building? Why attend Sunday school week after week? Why preach? Why support a pastor? Why pay budgets, local, district, and general? What is the incentive in the heart of the pastor to preach and lead people into divine truth? What is the incentive in the heart of the layman that causes him to give time and money for the promotion of the church with all of its departments? This is a great question.

Confusion at this point is general, because of the many reasons for giving service. For example, a minister will have concern for his own living and for that of his family. Clothes, food and shelter are

necessary. The matter of compensation will have a place in his thinking. He must pay his bills and live on his income. The larger the income the greater comforts for himself and family. An adequate salary is desirable. The evangelist while holding a revival meeting, praying for souls and laboring to lead them to Jesus Christ, may think occasionally of his offering. He may even be concerned. He has obligations that can be met only through his offerings. He cannot be condemned for praying God to bless his offerings in order that he might be adequately protected against the embarrassment of unpaid bills. No one would condemn the preacher for these considerations, yet all can see the danger of his becoming too much interested in material things.

The layman is justified in praying God to bless his business, the planting and harvesting of his wheat, his work in shop, or factory. Any position in which one is engaged should be sufficiently important to pray about. But why should the farmer want a good crop, or the business man success? What is the incentive in the heart of the minister in his preaching, and in the heart of the layman in carrying on his business?

There are two groups of incentives to Christian service, which, if properly understood and classified, make clear the why for all we do. *First*, incidental incentives, which are practically innumerable. Without desire to succeed the pastor would not invest his life. He knows full well that if he raises the budget,

increases his membership, keeps his church spiritual, has revivals, and otherwise succeeds in the work of the church there will be greater demands for his ministry. Success means a greater circle of influence and usefulness and increased compensation for his work. Is it wrong for him to desire a bigger church, with a larger field of usefulness and more income?

Such incentives could scarcely be condemned as wrong, but they are incidental and should be subordinated to incentives of higher quality. This leads us to consider the second group of incentives, which are fundamental. Of these, there are only two. Let us place these two on one side of a line and all the others on the other. When this is done confusion disappears and it becomes clear to all why we serve God and the church. It becomes clear why pastor and people seek a right relationship. Both work together for a common cause. The incidental incentives to Christian service, we repeat, are many; such as clothes, food, shelter, a car, salary, reputation, the education of one's family, larger opportunities. The layman appreciates the recognition that comes to him in the local church for the services he renders, such as election to the church board, the superintendency of the Sunday school, the presidency of the W.F.M.S. or of the Young People's Society or other recognition that might be given him by the people. Such incentives might inspire him to give to the local church the highest type of service of which he is capable. For this we cannot condemn him.

In the case of both, however, there must be incentives higher and more sublime than any of these mentioned, fundamental incentives to Christian service, of which there are only two—the *value of human souls* and *love for Jesus Christ*. All incentives will have an effect upon the Christian worker and influence his activities, but certain of them will influence him above others. He is to determine which shall take precedence, the incidental, or the fundamental incentives. On the one side appear that large group, the innumerable group, the incidental group. On the other stand two, only two, the fundamental incentives. All have a voice, and possibly all have legitimate claims. None of them can be condemned. One group is to take a higher place. Which shall it be? Take the minister, for example. Suppose he makes his decisions in the direction of salary, or promotion, subordinating the spiritual to the material. The results are too obvious for discussion. He will soon be unspiritual, a dollar chaser, lustful for power and prestige, and disqualified to feed the people. The church to him is something for his personal exploitation. When he gets all he can in one locality, he is ready to go elsewhere and begin new exploitations for himself, having little thought for the interest of the church or the people. Thank God, preachers of this type in our church are very, very few, and are soon eliminated from pulpit and ministry. Our ministers are unselfish and devoted to the people and to

God. However, they are human, and must be watchful and careful, lest they fall into temptation.

No need exists for confusion over the multiplicity of incentives that influence all of our religious activity, whether we are ministers or laymen, if we take time and pains to classify the incentives into the two groups mentioned. It is foolish to deny that we are influenced by the good opinions of others, by the offer of a better salary, a larger opportunity, a "bigger pulpit," food and clothes. These are legitimate incentives, but incidental and consequently must be kept in a position of subordination, like my body they must be kept under, not destroyed.

Two incentives are to overshadow and control all others, and hush their voices into silence in the presence of these higher values. Incidental incentives need not be watched very much, if the two fundamental incentives are given the big place in one's life. This emphasis on the two bigger values will properly positionize the others. If I do right, there need be little worry about doing wrong. If I go in the right direction, I need have little concern about the wrong road. Traveling the right road eliminates the dangers of the wrong road. When first things are given first place, all things else fall into a lower position. That is automatic.

Time is well spent when given to consideration of these two fundamental incentives to Christian service, whether in the life of the minister or of the layman.

*First*, the value of a human soul. Jesus hit the high mark of values when He asked, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." The soul is placed over against all the world in comparison, and stands up above all material wealth. The death of Jesus on the cross is the divine exposition and estimate of a soul. Would He have died for an unworthy objective? To say so is questioning the wisdom of God. The man who jumps into the river to save the life of his dog and loses his own is considered foolish, as he paid too great a price. This cannot be said of the mother who rushes through fire into a burning building to save her baby and pays the supreme price in doing so. We say, the baby was worth the effort. God gave His estimate of a human soul when He entered sacrificially into death for man's salvation.

Sacrifice and self-denial are not virtues within themselves. They are complete when united with some worthy end. To be poor just for the sake of poverty is not a virtue, but to become poor that others might be rich is different. Sacrifice here is united with a worthy end. Jesus did not die without reason. He met the demands of his own nature, was true to Himself and the needs of a human soul, revealing and emphasizing true values. The good shepherd loves his sheep and highly evaluates them.

The little freckle-faced boy playing in the back alley, with dirty shirt and torn trousers, a toe tied with a rag, and disheveled hair, is worth more than



all the streets and boulevards, parks and monuments, banks and stores, stocks and bonds, houses and land, in the city. Tied up in him are powers, which, if properly developed, may produce an artist, a poet, a statesman, a scientist, or a mighty preacher of the gospel who could change the moral tone of a nation. You cannot measure or compute his value in terms of money. The poor sinner, whose garments smell of the very iniquity of sin, whose face is marred with crime, has within him possibilities of manhood and achievement, such as only God could create. Is he worthy of our effort to save him? The answer is the Bible and the logic of our own minds.

This is the why of the Sunday school, the N.Y.P.S., and W.F.M.S., the budget, the support of the pastor. Church members serve for the sake of both their own souls and the souls of others. This value inspires them through rain and snow, cold and heat, when rested or tired, when appreciated and discounted. It leads them to church and the performance of duty.

The minister, standing in the pulpit looking at his congregation, who sees not his own interests, but the value of the souls in front of him, is safe against all clamor of incidental voices. He will do his duty. He will save the people. He will succeed. He does not count the cost of service, he sees only its value and importance. First he feeds his sheep, then looks to his own basket and store. The faithful and loving mother, serving the table surrounded with

hungry children, gives them the last biscuit, then thinks of herself. Her mother love and the value of her children make her sacrifice sublime and her joy complete.

What Sunday school teacher works untiringly to keep the class one hundred per cent in membership, and then looks for additional pupils? He or she who knows the value of a boy or a girl.

Something in me is hurt when I witness the giving of prizes for the largest number brought to the Sunday school, or to the revival meeting. Not that I object to prizes or rewards. I do not. But is there not some incentive that is higher and deeper than prizes? If I do my duty for a prize, behold I have my reward. But if I work because I sense a high value in service, I shall receive my reward. No person is capable of continued and sustained endurance and loyalty in service without an objective worthy of the exertion of all the energy within him. Incidental incentives will soon spend themselves. Preaching for money will be disappointing, for the income will not justify the long years of service required of a preacher. The layman will tire of the preacher and become weary in continued trips to prayermeetings and church services unless he receives definite help for his own soul and can feel that he is investing his life in something of very high value. Living, breathing, smiling and weeping human beings furnish the worker inspiration for study and toil.

It is interesting to note that a minister rarely ever does his best when called upon to preach at some special occasion. Those who hear him regularly can see the marked difference between the freedom of his soul on this special occasion and in his regular preaching services. There is a reason, which is not hard to find. On a special occasion one is tempted to make a good impression, to "put it over." Unconsciously he has in his mind his own reputation, which he feels must be promoted, or at least sustained. Unintentionally he turns his mind within. He becomes self-conscious and temporarily an introvert. He loses sight of his congregation and thinks of his own sermon and of his own standing. When this is the case he is a disappointment. Something is wrong. The fact is, he became lost in himself and his sermon, instead of being absorbed in the congregation. Real service is objective and extrovertish. It is for another. Preaching is easy when the soul is filled to overflowing with a right estimate of souls for whom Christ died. While in this state of mind and heart, one's preaching is not an effort, but a spontaneous outflowing of the fullness within.

It is tragic for a person to pay his tithes merely to fulfill the law and escape divine punishment. One must go beyond the law of tithing. Otherwise it becomes a cold-blooded duty and irksome. Under these conditions one is likely to lapse in the matter of tithing. When the plate is passed Sunday morning the dollar one contributes should represent immortal

souls. We give, not to pay the budget, but to save souls. The local budget, the District Budget and the General Budget are paid for world evangelism. Erecting buildings, paying debts, supporting pastors, sending missionaries around the world and in general carrying on the work of the church, for any reason less than the salvation of immortal souls, is insufficient motive for Christian service.

I am a believer in rewards for work well done, and in this I am in harmony with the Bible. A number of references are made in the New Testament to the day when the saints shall be rewarded for services well done. Even this must not be our high motive and incentive for Christian service. I must save the souls of men for their own sake, whether or not I am rewarded for this effort. The value of a human soul is sufficient reason within itself for my doing my best.

Does the preacher see value when he preaches? Does he realize the great, untouched masses are a gold mine? Do the laymen who sit in the congregation have a right view of their neighbors, and do they see the importance and value of their leader who is giving his life for them and their families?

Jesus explained the normal passion for the heart of a Christian in these words, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," or in these words, "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

With this passion the most unlovable person in the community reveals loveliness, the ugliest neighbor becomes transformed into something of beauty, the most repulsive becomes attractive and alluring. O that Christians might see the value in human personality that caused the Father to give his Son, and the Son to send the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come.

The pastor will never do his duty through years of service without a proper sense of values. The layman will never be able to take a right attitude toward the preacher and give him proper support willingly and gladly without a realization of his own value and the value of those whom the preacher is serving.

The second fundamental incentive to Christian service is *love for Jesus Christ*. "If you love me, feed my sheep." "If you love me, keep my commandments." These statements give reason for Christian activity. Every Bible student is familiar with that famous conversation between Jesus and Simon Peter regarding love. Jesus said to Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?" Peter answered, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." This question was asked three times and following each affirmative answer the Lord said, "Feed my sheep or my lambs." The proof of love for Jesus Christ is one's service to man.

It is unthinkable that anyone could love Christ and not love the souls for whom Christ died. It is equally true that no one could love Christ and not join Him in His efforts to save those for whom His blood was shed on Calvary. A mere assertion is insufficient evidence of love and loyalty to the Master.

If Christ is the Head of the Church we support the institution because we love Him. If foreign missions are a means of expressing our love to Christ, then we will support foreign missions. This is the great incentive for all we do. We give tithes, pay budgets, go to church, attend revivals, pray about the altar with seeking souls, invite people to church, send missionaries around the world, organize and support Sunday schools, carry on the work of home missions—yes, we support world evangelism, all for the one supreme reason, we love Jesus Christ.

This incentive has both sentiment and practical value. Possibly one's most severe trial is human ingratitude. Lack of appreciation is an outstanding weakness of humanity. Strange as it may seem, the average person a recipient of ninety-nine benefits will become an enemy of his benefactor when refused the hundredth request. A beggar knocks at the door every day for a month and always receives food with kindness, but one day his benefactor refuses his request. The beggar becomes furiously angry, instantly forgetting all of the blessings he has received on other occasions.

Some of those who receive most have the least gratitude. Parents have given their lives for children and then suffered the realization in old age that all they had done was forgotten. There is a sting in ingratitude that is hard to bear, and it usually comes to everyone in some form.

Ministers have gone into communities to literally pour out their lives in service and sacrifice to get sinners converted, backsliders reclaimed and Christians sanctified wholly. With small groups of followers they bought lots, erected buildings and carried on the work of the kingdom with much self-denial.

After the church was well established and offered an attractive field in which to labor, then the faithful minister, no longer wanted, had to move. The move did not hurt him so deeply as the ingratitude of those whom he served.

The story might be reversed. Perhaps the laymen had followed the leadership of the preacher, supported the church joyfully and uncomplainingly, giving of their time, means, and energies, when suddenly the pastor, deciding for a new field of labor, leaves them grieved and discouraged. They felt he was the man to lead them, that his work was not finished, but he had a better call and went away. They were tempted to feel the preacher was ungrateful to them, and that he had forgotten the sacrifices they had made in his behalf during the early struggles of the church.

How can the preacher or the people find consolation in such conditions? How can the preacher find consolation when, unexpected by him, he is voted out with no place to go. When leaving town the Lord meets him and a conversation something like this takes place:

The Lord says, "Are you discouraged, are you grieved, do you feel deeply the sting of ingratitude?"

The preacher answers, "Yes, Lord, my heart is broken. I did the best I could. I never scolded the people, I always treated them with courtesy and kindness. I tried to be a good shepherd, always ready to sacrifice for the people. They have forgotten all I did."

The Lord speaks, "For whom did you build this church? For whom did you labor and toil day and night? Did you do it for the people or for me?"

The preacher answers, "Lord, it is for Thee and my love for Thee. I served because I love Thee."

The Lord answers, "Then why complain if you have labored for me, if you toiled and served because you love me? Will I not give you your reward? Pull the curtain down on the past. The work that you have done will stand. You have not labored in vain."

Love for Christ is the main incentive for service. This incentive we always have with us. Whatever happens we love Christ and know He will not forget what we have done in His name. A cup of water given in His name will not lose its reward.



The pastor gives his life in Christian service because he values human souls, and because he loves Jesus Christ. The layman faithfully performs his duty as a church member, attending all means of grace, supporting the church with all of its departments and interests, striving to keep a Christian attitude toward pastor and brethren, all because of the value of souls and the love for Christ that fills his heart.

Many incidental interests may affect us, but are relegated. The two great fundamental incentives to lead us on to greater and greater achievements in Christian service are the value of souls and love for Christ.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SERVICE AND REWARDS

“Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.” Yes, “we are workers together with Christ.” Preachers and laymen are engaged in the greatest task known, the glorious task of helping God save the world. Let no Christian worker feel that he is insignificant or that he is performing a task of little value.

Christian service is an honor. God created the world without the help of man. Throughout the centuries He has preserved the product of His creation without human aid. In the matter of redemption God has depended upon the co-operation of human agencies to save the world. Christ on the cross saved every soul of Adam’s race provisionally, but actually saved no one until the provisions of the atonement were accepted and applied to the human heart. The greatest honor that has ever been offered to any person is the invitation from God to co-operate with Him in making redemption effective in its application to men.

One would feel honored to receive an invitation from the President of the United States to help him operate the government. Such an honor does not come to many, but here is an honor that is infinitely greater, an honor from God to work with Him in the

redemption of the whole world. A minister called of God to preach has the greatest honor that can ever be offered; likewise the layman whose services God employs in the evangelization of men.

The plan of work is God's, not man's. Both preacher and layman are to co-operate with the great Head of the Church. We have no plans, we are not architects. God reserves the right to make the plans for service, and we are to accept His plans as wise, and give whole-heartedly our co-operation in working them out.

God has assumed the supreme task of saving every soul of Adam's race through the redemption of Jesus Christ. The work is His, not ours, but we are to co-operate with Him in the work, and in doing so we accept the greatest honor that can ever be bestowed upon men, and are serving in the greatest cause the world will ever know.

*First*, the Christian worker is to co-operate with God in saving his own soul. By this I mean more than becoming converted and sanctified. The salvation of the soul should include the promotion and investment of the whole life. God saves man *from* evil, and *to* righteousness, removing from him the corruption of sin and adding to him divine righteousness. No man will ever be lost who co-operates with the Holy Spirit in his own salvation. God brings light to the mind and warmth to the heart and offers complete redemption to every soul. The only way to be lost is to refuse to give co-operation to the Di-

vine Spirit. *Second*, every Christian worker is to cooperate with God in the salvation of his neighbor. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This is the call to service in world evangelism. It is the enlistment in the Army of God for a lifetime of service. If a man would be great let him be a servant, a servant of God and the people; this is true greatness.

The millions of souls on the earth today are the object of Christ's death and shed blood and should enlist the loyal services of every Christian in their salvation. At home and abroad people are living, dying and going to the judgment. They are in need of help. God cannot save them without the preacher and the layman. This is the explanation for the building and operation of churches, for the sermon in the pulpit and the collection in the pew. The church, consisting of the preacher and the loyal laymen, is performing a task that is glorious. Let no man become discouraged or disheartened in the battle. The work we are doing is of God. It is more important than amassing of wealth or enjoying honors.

There are distinct rewards in Christian service. One is a good conscience. Paul said, "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men." Evidently Paul felt that his very life was involved in service without which his conscience could not feel easy toward God or toward his fellowman. He served God

by serving the people, and through service to men he gave undeniable proof of love for Jesus Christ. The reward was a good conscience. *Second*, in service there is genuine happiness. The Bible says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The smile, the handshake, the gift, the prayer, the help given to someone else results in happiness to the one who gives of himself. No one ever receives happiness who seeks it, but he who does good to his neighbor soon finds himself in a state of happiness. The happiest people that live are the preacher and laymen who love one another and unite in a common cause with God in the salvation of men. In service there is happiness.

Preachers and laymen do not have to die to receive all of their reward. The very presence in the church of sinners "saved by grace," and of young people developing strong Christian character and efficiency in service are great rewards.

But the greatest reward of all will be the kind words from the lips of our Master in "that day." "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." The preacher will forget his disappointments, his tears, his self-denials, the ingratitude suffered from unappreciative friends in the presence of people who have gathered from the east and west, the north and south, to call him blessed because of the service he has rendered. The words of commendation from the Master will more than repay him for all he has done

Those loyal laymen who waded through snow and slush to the prayermeeting and the preaching service, who gave money to pay budgets, who prayed earnestly and toiled unceasingly for the promotion of the kingdom and the salvation of souls, will see the travail of their souls and will be satisfied. There, in the presence of the Master, preachers and laymen will shake hands and rejoice in the fact that they co-operated in the work of God, loved souls and Jesus Christ. They will have nothing to worry about. Through all eternity they will reap the rewards for the service they have rendered to God and to men, rewards of fellowship, consolation, and peace, which will never pass away.

Oh, the glory of Christian service here in this world, with all the happiness it brings to us now and will bring to us on the other side. May no preacher or layman become discouraged and tempted to quit the fight. The most glorious days of our lives are ahead of us. Let us arise and work, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Let us work while it is day for the night will soon come when no man can work. We cannot afford to turn away from our task. The job is too important, souls are too valuable, love for God is too precious to be affected by the allurements and temptations of an insecure and perishing world. Let us go on and on in perfect union and co-operation, fired with a burning passion to do something for God and men. All true service begins in personal contact with Jesus. One cannot know Him person-

ally without catching the warm contagion of His spirit for others, and there is a fine fragrance, a gentle warmth about the service that grows out of being with Him. Wherever the spirit of the Lord Jesus sways the heart, there is a passion to serve."

The opportunity before us is unparalleled. The entire world is restless, uncertain, having lost faith, to a large extent in a material philosophy. Only a few years ago it was common to hear religion and God spoken of slurringly. Men had found a way around God. Religion had become obsolete, and God unnecessary. The social, governmental and economic shakeup in the world has changed all this. People are turning from materialism, realizing its uncertainty. Education has failed to turn back the tides of war, crime and poverty. All experimentation in social reform has demonstrated the weaknesses of reformation. Now the cry is for something that will transform, not merely the machinery of humanity, but humanity itself. Social and formal religions have been forced to admit their inability to cope with the situation. They, like materialistic philosophy, have been weighed in the balances and found wanting. There is a cry in the hearts of men for something that offers power to endure and to rise above the perplexities of the day, something vital, dynamic.

This is the day for vital religion. I have seen large and expensive church edifices empty on Sunday night, while the smaller churches, considered insig-

nificant in many cases, were crowded to the door. In the big church were coldness and formalism and empty pews. In the smaller church, marked as the emotional type, were singing, shouting, altar services and full pews. The size of the church is not the factor, for the larger can be alive, or the smaller dead.

The difference is life, power, fire, faith, courage, dynamics, the presence of God. Let no slur at emotionalism discourage your faith. Without feeling, one is dead. Feeling is not religion, neither is religion feeling, but religion without feeling is like a cistern without water. It is empty. This is no appeal for emotionalism, but rather an appeal for the life back of all feelings and expression. The world is hungry, sad, disappointed, and can find comfort in nothing less than religion and God. This is our opportunity to bring the people and God together, while they are dissatisfied with what they have, or with what they do not have.

I subscribe to the belief that we are on the borderland of a great spiritual awakening. Possibly there will not be a world-wide revival, but here and there revivals will break out that will be felt everywhere. Not all churches will have revivals, but those that have the message, the spirit and the technique for revivals will. This should be true of all holiness bodies. In every community are hungry souls who can be won to God and salvation. Let us buy more lots, build more churches, stretch more tents, organize more Sunday schools with all their essential de-



partments, have bigger and better revivals everywhere. Let us go beyond the boundaries of the home circles and extend the kingdom to the ends of the earth. It can be done.

Problems are to be faced. We have always had them, and shall to the end of time. Like the poor, they are always with us. Why worry about problems and difficulties? Where is our faith? Where is our resourcefulness? Where is our God? May God pity the poor fellow who says, "It is too late. The Lord will soon return, the Spirit of God has practically withdrawn from men, and about all we can do now is to gaze upward for the hour of redemption." God help a man whose faith is paralyzed, who has folded up and quit. Does this seem in harmony with God's command to work while it is day? As long as people can be found who are without God there is work to do.

Nothing can be done without effort. Problems are a challenge. "They greatly dare who greatly trust. If our faith were greater, our deeds would be larger. The reason so few of us do not attempt great things for God is simply because we do not trust Him enough." Problems challenge not only our faith, but our own resourcefulness and personal courage. "Resourcefulness is not an accomplishment; it is the innate power of falling back upon oneself for new methods of meeting circumstances. It is invention; it is courage; it is doggedness—the practical expression of a mind that refuses to admit defeat." Oh,

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that we may have more faith in God and our own ability to reach the world through the preaching of the message of salvation!

The dark clouds of war, hanging on the horizon, should stir us to greater effort and sacrifices to extend the work of God among men while the opportunity is here. The near coming of the Lord is inspiration to lead us on to larger endeavors for Christ.