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THE SUBJECT AND THE OBJECT OF THE GOSPEL

Annual Sermon preached before the Southern Baptist

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Evening session
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Text: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints,
is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the
unsearchable riches of Christ." --Ephesians iii.8.

First and foremost of all Christ's servants in the work
and triumphs of Christianity stands the Apostle Paul. And yet the
most marked characteristic of his wondrous life was his humility.
If any man might have presumed to profess "sinless perfection,"
Paul was that man; but he would have regarded such profession as
an unspeakable blasphemy. See how he speaks of himself: "Unto
me who am less than the least of all saints." A few years before
he designates himself as "the least of the apostles." And just a
few years later he confesses that he is the "chief of sinners."
As he grew in the experimental knowledge of God's grace, he also
grew in humility and self-distrust. Humility always obtains in
proportion as men see the goodness and greatness of God. It was
so with Job and Jeremiah, and Isaiah. It is ever so. These men
who do not know whether Christ is much, are certain to think them-
selves much. Those whom God greatly honors in service are those
whom He first greatly humbles.

"God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble."
And when He gives grace to the humble He gives all other grace.
"Only by pride cometh contention." Pride was the chief ingredient
in the sin that turned angels into demons. If Satan ever again
knows what it is to hope, it surely must be when he sees Christ's
preacher inflated with his own proud conceit, for he remembers that

this was the snare whereby he fell into eternal condemnation.

Well pleased is our great Master when He sees the becoming grace of humility adorning the lives of His servants. Both by precept and example, He magnified its beauty and power. His whole earthly life was the illustration and demonstration of His saying: "I am among you as one that serveth." And constant was His reiteration of the great truth, "Whosoever would be first among you let him be servant of all." The true motto for all His people is that spoken by John: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Notwithstanding the lowly view Paul had of himself, he greatly magnified God's grace in making him a preacher of the Gospel. Everywhere Paul went, his life bore out the saying, "I magnify mine office." The preacher who does not should at once give up his office.

Nothing can take the place of the Christian ministry. The progress of civilization, the making of many books, the increase of schools and learning, the marvelous triumphs of the press--mighty as are all of these agencies,--they can never supersede the divinely sent preacher. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Let not Christ's minister for one moment lose sight of the divineness of his mission. Of such preacher some one has truly said: "He holds a Divine commission, he proclaims a Divine revelation, he is animated by a Divine purpose, he accomplishes a Divine result, he is dependent upon a Divine Spirit." If the preacher will but be true to his sublime and Divine appointment, he shall stand among men without rivalry or competition--earth's mightiest man. In the great crises of the past, matchless has been the influence wielded by God's prophets and preachers. When all other voices have failed,

they have rallied the wavering people to the standards of truth and righteousness.

It was the golden-mouthed Chrysostom who became the oracle of the hour in the days when Antioch was smitten with terror. It was the flaming Augustine who rallied his fellow countrymen from despair and breathed into their lives new hope and purpose, when imperial Rome lay bleeding and trampled beneath the heel of an invading oppressor. It was the plain, yet invincible Luther, who, when reeking corruption reigned in the papal court and spread its blight over all Europe, spoke forth words that echoed as the thunder and were piercing as the lightning, stirring a revolution that thrilled all Christendom and marking a new epoch in the civilization of the world.

As in the past so shall it be in the future, that God's foremost instrument is His preacher, in both the civilization and the evangelization of the world.

Let it also be said in passing that there was an element in Paul's preaching that must needs be in all effective preaching. It was his tone of authority. He believed with all his heart his message, and as God's ambassador he delivered it without quailing, for one moment, under any fire. "There's untold power in him who knows his mission is a thing of God's own willing, and that it cannot fail, though doubts may shroud in cloud the transient hour." It is conviction that convinces. Earth's last place for stammering and indefiniteness is the pulpit. Christ's ambassador is to proclaim his Master's message rather than to defend it. He is a witness rather than an advocate. Christianity is nothing if it is not dogmatic. It has no reason for its existence if it is not sublimely

positive. It is not a conundrum to be guessed at, or a theory to be speculated upon, but it is a divine revelation which is to be implicitly accepted and followed with the deepest heart-throb of our lives. Christ's preacher is not here primarily to teach Christian evidences or apologetics, but his message is like that of the prophet of old--"Thus saith the Lord."

To be continually on the defensive is contrary to the very genius and purpose of the Gospel. The preacher is to be concerned mainly with the preaching of positive truth rather than the refutation of passing error. Let not the last blatant attack of infidelity against the Bible be noticed overmuch. It is not the chief business of God's minister to answer the last fool who has escaped from the mortar in which he was brayed. The Gospel faithfully preached is its own best defense. Let us who preach remember that we speak by divine authority; not theories, but facts; not what we don't know, but what our souls do know to their profoundest depths. I give it as the humble but deepest conviction of my heart that the overmastering necessity of the modern pulpit is a return to that dogmatic tone of authority that characterized the apostles in the preaching of the Gospel, and that must be found in all effective preaching the world over. O my brethren, if we shall but magnify our office as did Paul and be content just to be faithful preachers of Christ, blessed, eternally blessed, shall be the results of our ministry.

"'Tis not a cause of small import,
A preacher's care demands;
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled the Saviour's hands."

Paul was saved for a specific purpose--he was called unto a great mission. It is so with all the redeemed of Christ. What was Paul's mission? He tells us in our text:"That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Let two thoughts growing out of the text engage our attention.

First. The subject-matter of the preacher's message.

Second. The ministry is the heaven-appointed exponent of the mission of every redeemed soul.

The first thought of our text is:

I. The subject matter of the preacher's message. From the day when Paul first stood up as a witness for Christianity, until that eventful day when he laid his head upon the block as a martyr for the truth, he unwaveringly held to one great theme, and that theme was salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. Once in his long ministry he seemed somewhat to leave his theme. It was when he contended with the philosophers of Athens in his oration on Mars Hill. And there, beyond all other places, did his labors prove most feeble. It is significant that immediately afterwards when he came to Corinth he "determined not to know anything among them, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Always and everywhere he is careful thus to go on record: "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord." The heaven-appointed center for all true preaching is Jesus Christ, and to leave that center is to lose the dominant power and purpose of the Gospel.

The plan of human redemption, with Christ as the great keystone in the mystic arch, is the culmination and perfection of God's infinite mercy, wisdom and love. To bring it to the attention of man, to vitalize it and make it a reality to him, all the provi-

dences of God have been directed for 6,000 years. From the hour that the smoking blood of man's first offering rose from the sacrificial altar down through the ages to the tragedy of Calvary, every act of worship, every command of God, and every providence were so many sign-boards pointing to that last and supreme act in God's wonderful plan. Calvary has been the focal point upon which all the powers of darkness have hurled their darts, and it has been the glorious prism that has caught the light of heaven and sent its refracted rays into the thick darkness of earth. To make a world, to create a system, to swing into space this mighty canvas, was the work of a word.

But the plan of man's redemption required the highest effort of the divine mind. It vacated the throne of the Son in heaven and brought the "mighty God" to earth to dwell among men. In the fullness of time, God sent Him forth and yonder He lies the infant of Mary in Bethlehem's manger. For thirty and three years He walks the earthly way "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." "He is despised and rejected of men." They plot for His destruction. The last night of His life has come and He is betrayed into the hands of His enemies. A mock trial is hurriedly had, and He is adjudged to die upon the cruel cross. The awful hour for His death has come and hellish malice nails Him to the shameful tree. Between heaven and earth He hangs, suffering, bleeding, praying, dying. His head has fallen upon His breast. He is dead. They take Him down and now earth's darkest night has come--the Lord of life and glory lies silent in the grave. The fiends of ~~darkness~~ now rise up and hope begins to bloom in hell, for the Sun of Righteousness has been eclipsed! Ah, wait! Sing not too fast, ye legions of the pit!

The dark night will pass away and there will dawn a victorious morning. The morning has dawned. The fallen Conqueror breaks the bands of death and puts the grave beneath His feet. Before a gazing world He ascends on high, leading captivity captive, and gives gifts to men. And now again He is on His throne, where He reigns and loves and waits, to give salvation to any one who will only dare to trust Him.

My brethren in the ministry, if Christ has given unto us the grace of preaching, though like Moses we may have but a stammering tongue, yet in view of what man's redemption cost, in view of its divine authority and purpose, shall we ever in any presence, under any earthly pressure, for any kind of reason, so far forget our heaven-appointed mission, so grieve our dear Redeemer, so wrong a dying world, as to preach anything else except the riches of the Lord Jesus Christ? Preach philosophy, or science, or culture, or worldly wisdom, or beautiful platitudes, preach merely to please men or entertain? Sooner far let us commend to the lips of a famishing child a painted glass filled with painted water; or to a starving castaway apples of Sodom; or to a heart-broken mother a poem on the North Pole; or to a dying sinner the fables of Aesop.

Here, brethren, is our message made out for us. It is Jesus Christ--in His divine personality, in the spotlessness of His humanity, in His offices as Prophet, Priest and King, in the atoning efficacy of His death, in the power of His resurrection, in the prevalence of His intercession, in the certainty and purpose of His coming again.

Does some one venture to say that this theme is "too narrow?" Before he does, let him remember that "the foolishness of God is

wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Let him remember also that Christ on the cross is the harmony of every doctrine of divine revelation. There is seen the enormity of man's sin and its infinite punishment. There the mercy and truth of God meet together, and there His justice and love are made to shine with eternal glory. This theme "too narrow?" It is an infinite ocean ever expanding before Him who seeks to know its meaning. Well does Paul say of it that it is "unsearchable." In Christ is seen the procuring cause of man's justification, redemption, sanctification and glorification forever with God. In Him is infinite knowledge for every student, and comfort for all broken-heartedness, and forgiveness for every penitent wanderer. This is the only balm in Gilead that will surely heal the health of earth's sorrowing, sinsick people. We "daub with untempered mortar" when we dare to preach anything else for the healing of the sorrow and sin of a ruined world. Man's sinfulness is ever the same, and Christ's Gospel is ever the same, and this message alone will break up the fallow ground of a sinful heart and turn it to God. Wherever it has gone, from king to barbarian, it has turned men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.

Why should we preach Christ and Him only? Because this is the "only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," and it is to save souls that we are called into Christ's service. Every other duty of the preacher is incidental to this one supreme and all-controlling object of the Gospel. Yet all the preachers in the world left to themselves could not bring to repentance one child of sin. Christ must save and Christ alone. He left us the supreme lesson in homiletics when He said, "And I,

if I be lifted up from earth, will draw all men unto Me." It is the attractive power of the cross, gleaming like a search-light through the words and thoughts of the preacher, that kindles a fire on the altar of the sinner's conscience, and turns him to God. It is only of Christ that the Divine Spirit testifies, and utterly futile, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots," are all our efforts, if we do not have the Holy Spirit's fructifying presence and power.

Paul knew whence came his power. He knew that with all his strength of wisdom and learning, left to himself, he was as powerless to save a soul as an atom floating in the sunbeam is to quench the sun. Salvation by any human merit was to him a criminal doctrine. He preached salvation by the Lord. In every message he boldly avowed the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth, in whom dwelled all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He was God manifest in the flesh, God over all, with unquestioned and absolute right to the loyalty and love of every human heart. Christianity does not ask for compliments. Christ is all and in all. We are not of those who believe in a Congress of Religions where Christ may receive little if any larger attention than Brahma, or Buddha, or Mohammed, or Joseph Smith; or where it may even be conceded that Christianity is the best form of religion, provided it be also understood that all the other religions contain essential and saving truths. No, with all our souls we will denounce such treason against Jesus Christ. Christ is God, or He is the arch-deceiver of the ages. And for every theory against His Deity, whether it be Socinian, Sabellian, Unitarian, or what not, we will say to their advocates: "Gentlemen, your theories are unutterably contemptible to us, and we will have none of your bouquets about Christ's 'splendid humanity' while you

scoff His Deity." But our challenge shall be:"If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him."

We should preach Christ and Christ only, because we have no warrant or authority for preaching anything else. Paul wrote to the Galatians: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And then in the very next breath, in order more deeply to impress this fundamental truth with the curse attendant upon its violation, he repeats the awful sentence:"As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Ah, brethren, like Paul, we will have no "other gospel," for if salvation through the atonement of Christ shall fail, then all has failed, for this is the very ultimatum of God. To be sure "other gospels" are abroad these latter days, but we shall unwaveringly hold to the one--"Christ and Him crucified." And though many are seeking to be rid of that word "crucified," to us the great central fact of our redemption is that "Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree." Salvation by His blood shall ever be our theme--we will know no other. We are not ignorant of the "other gospels" that are now being offered as substitutes for the one. We have the gospel of philosophy, the gospel of culture, the gospel of science, the gospel of sociology, the gospel of refined humanitarianism that is stealthily finding its way into some pulpits and is gilding much of our modern literature as it softly talks about "reconstructed manhood." We know about them all, and we know that with all their keenness of speculation and polish of learning and profundity of philosophy, not one of them has ever regenerated a single soul. We are not of those who

have concluded that the old gospel of the cross is unsuited to the advanced thought and aesthetic taste of these cultured times. Not philosophy, nor culture, nor sociology, nor humanitarianism, in fullest possible measure, can save lost men. Underneath them all, the human heart will still sin on and sigh for Emanuel's peace and pardon. The old, old story uttered by lips touched by a live coal from off God's altar and driven home to men's consciences with the voice of divine authority--this and this only can make the spiritual wilderness to blossom as the rose. It was such preaching by George Whitefield that, more than all things else, stirred the heart of the calculating Franklin, and sent terror to the soul of the sceptical Hume. This was the theme of Spurgeon for nearly forty years, and under his ministry, more than any other in his generation, lost men came flocking to God as doves to their windows, and great Christian enterprises sprang up like magic, and the ever-increasing philanthropy and spiritual power of his church has been the wonder of this century.

In contrast with such preaching, shall I say a word about the trivial and sensational themes of some modern pulpits? Many of them make us blush for very shame, for they are a travesty upon the high calling of Christ's ambassador. Take this series of sermons for instance-- mind you, of sermons: Shakespeare, Business, Courting, The Scolding Wife, The Husband Who Stays Out Late at Night, The Bicycle, The Two-headed Woman, Jack and the Beanstalk, Tan Shoes and Negligee Shirts, Did Man Come from the Monkey? Ah, when the preacher will thus pose as a mountebank and turn the sanctuary of God into a show-house, do you wonder at Sidney Smith's saying? It was this: "There are three orders in creation, men,

women, and preachers." All such sensationalism in the pulpit is worse than sawdust. It is born of the secular and smacks of the street, and is a burning shame upon the Christian ministry. If the history of preaching proves anything, it proves that the preacher can have no deep and permanent grasp of power except as he holds up Christ and the great doctrines inseparable from Him. No other preaching will even secure lasting morality, not to speak of regeneration.

Surely if any man who ever lived might have hoped for good results from preaching something else than Christ, Paul might have so ventured to try it. He was deeply versed in all the learning of the East, a great logician, a brilliant rhetorician, having a fervid fancy, a soaring imagination, and a magnetic power over men. He might easily have brought to his feet the proud Pharisee, the stoical Scribe, the curious Greek, and the credulous Barbarian. But at his feet he knew that they would have been no better off, no nearer salvation than if they had never heard his voice. He could have interested and pleased them, but he declared: "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." "I preached philosophy and men applauded; I preached Christ and men repented."

My brothers, we are not here to win men by cleverness of speech. We are to be concerned, not that men may see our handsome bow and arrows and our skilful use of the same, but that we may hear the cries of the wounded of the Lord: "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" You have heard of certain preaching as an "intellectual treat", as something "perfectly grand," and all that. Our mission as preachers means nothing of the sort. If our preaching causes men to think that intellect or anything else is

even to be compared with the saving of an immortal soul, then are we guilty of treason against the Gospel of God's Son.

Paul had no time to deal in platitudes. To him the world was lost. On the brow of every unsaved man the awful judgment of God, "condemned already," was written in letters of Stygian blackness. This condemnation was to Paul no idle dream, but it was a present, awful reality, the contemplation of which burned in his bones like a fire and made him "count not his life dear unto himself" if only he might preach unto a lost world the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

Paul might have taken to the lecture platform to be what they now call a "moral reformer." He might have spent his days declaring against the popular sins of avarice, pride and formalism; or against the abuses and corruptions of government, and raised a world-wide riot against Roman usurpation and tyranny. He might have poured the vials of his wrath upon hypocrisy, extortion, licentiousness, and the whole category of common sins; but instead of all this, he steadfastly clung to the one sufficient theme, "Christ and Him crucified." There is now a great itch abroad in the land demanding "reform." From theology clear down to a city council, there must be an overhauling of things. The air is filled with screaming voices who propose to adjust the discordant elements of both Church and State. The rivers of reform must wash out the Augean stables everywhere, and scorching denunciation must be hurled against sin, whether in places high or low. And shall not Christ's preacher faithfully rebuke sin everywhere? Ah, yes, but His is a far larger gospel than merely that. The preaching that has Christ for its center will work every reform, and such reform will be per-

manent. Rightly did some one say that the proof of Christ's greatness was that He could stand before the Roman empire and never strike it. He struck deeper than external conditions--He struck the hearts of men. Though corruption reigned on every side and sin was defiant, yet He pointed men, not to outward conditions or questions, but to the eternal verities of God. The emphasis of His message was put upon God and not upon man. It was so with the twelve; it was so with Paul; it was so with John the Baptist; it was so with God's prophets of old; it is so with every successful winner of souls.

All sins are included in the one sin of the rejection of Christ. For this reason, Paul knew--and the truth is overwhelming, eternal, divine--that though he could drive all men from their sins outwardly, yet they would still be lost eternally, without "Christ in them the hope of glory." He knew that it was worse than useless to drive all these devils out of the heart, if there was not a "strong man armed" to keep them out. Otherwise the "last state of man would be worse than the first." He knew that if He preached Christ, the power of God unto salvation, and He was received into the heart, the expulsive power of this new affection would triumph over all sin and save the soul from death.

Fathers and brothers, in the divine vocation of the ministry, especially my young comrades in this holy warfare, let us not be triflers in our heaven-appointed mission. Contemptible is the memory of Nero--he fiddled while Rome was burning. Aeropus, of Macedonia, was one of the most insignificant kings in history, because he spent his time whittling on trifles while the supreme interests of his kingdom were disregarded. How like them both is the preacher who expends his energies upon secular and transient

themes, never touching the great center of truth, and having an indifferent regard to the momentous interests of eternity. May our fidelity to Jesus be far more sublime than that of the French soldiers who so loved their Emperor that, though wounded and dying on the field of battle, with one last effort they would turn upon their elbows and cry out as he passed: "Long live the Emperor!"

O my brothers, it matters little what shall become of us if only we shall exalt the name of Christ. Our ease, our worldly prospects, our reputation, all may go for naught, if only always and everywhere we may know only this--to exalt the name of Christ.

"Happy if with my latest breath

I may but speak His name;

Preach Him to all, and gasp in death,

Behold, behold, the Lamb!"

But now, more briefly, let us look at the second thought deduced from the text:

II. The ministry is the heaven-appointed exponent of the mission of every redeemed soul. As Paul was saved for a specific purpose and called into a great mission, so is it true of every redeemed soul in the kingdom of God. Salvation is often too narrowly defined. It not only saves from, but it saves unto. It not only bestows unspeakable benefits, but it imposes world-wide obligations. It not only has reference to ourselves, but we are made Christians in order that we may instrumentally make other Christians. Paul's life was one sublime effort to be true to the last command of Christ: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." That command has never been revoked, nor in any wise modified, and is as binding upon us as it was upon Paul or upon those that heard

it as it fell from the Master's lips on Olivet.

Christianity is essentially and fundamentally missionary. He who reads God's Word aright sees that the missionary idea is the very essence of divine revelation. It proclaims this truth with ten thousand tongues of fire. If you could but banish from the Gospel the missionary idea it would never give forth another sound. No sinner would ever again be invited to Christ. No Bible would ever again be printed or circulated except as a money venture. And the whole scheme of Christianity would collapse under the superincumbent weight of an inordinate and all-prevalent selfishness.

Missions is not simply an organ of the church, but the church itself is the organ for missions. To this end the church was made--for this cause Christ brought it into the world. The work of missions therefore is not a little optional annex to a church, but it is as essential to the true work of the church as is the heart essential to the human body.

What is Christ's Church? It is His body, the instrument of His purpose of which He is the head. It is the business of the head to direct and control the body. Christ, the great Head, is lawgiver and director over His body, the Church. The mission of Christ's Church must be identical with the mission of Christ Himself. What was His mission? Find that out and you will know the mission of every church and every individual Christian. He Himself so tells us: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Here is the great source of the church's authority and purpose. And a church could furnish no other evidence half so strong that she is not a New Testament church as the refusal or disinclination to obey Christ's last and all-inclusive commandment. And a preacher, even though he may have been baptized and may talk much about "soundness in

become our hindrance if it be not inflamed and impassioned by the Spirit of Christ.

What shall be our motive for this great work? The first and supreme motive for all missionary work is the command of Jesus Christ. Surely this is an all-sufficient reason. No Christian has the right to cavil or halt one second here. Even though a thousand objections to the work might be presented, and though it were shown that it would take uncounted resources, both of men and money, to reach one single heathen, yet the duty to obey would not be altered one iota. Our Saviour and King commands world-wide evangelization, and disobedience to such command for any cause is bald treachery to our trust as Christians, and cold treason against Jesus Christ.

There are many other reasons for obedience to such command, but they are unnecessary except as they may awaken our zeal and strengthen our faith. There are the motives of gratitude, and chivalry, and sympathy, the marvelous missionary triumphs already achieved, and still other motives, potent and urgent. But underlying all these motives and springs of action is the plain, unchangeable command of Christ.

At the bloody battle of Ivry, Henry IV of France said to his soldiers: "When you lose sight of your colors, rally to my white plume. You will always find it in the way to glory." So when every other motive to missionary effort fails, this one--loyalty to Christ's command--stands firm as the adamantine hills. And loyalty to Christ, we have always made bold to say, is the fundamental principle in our denominational life. We reject utterly all assumed authority from any human source whatsoever. "One is our Master, even Christ." We boldly repudiate the right of pope or council,

or anybody else, to ignore Scriptural baptism, or change that ordinance in any respect from the Christ-given pattern.

O my brethren, I pause and tremble as I ask what shall be said of our loyalty to Christ's last but all-inclusive command? Take the figures: One billion human beings are without the Gospel; forty millions die every year; one hundred thousand die every day; four die every time we breathe; and yet, Southern Baptists are giving only a few cents a member a year for their eternal salvation! I wonder if that is the one-thousandth part of our proper loyalty to Christ on the question of money! I wonder if hundreds of men in this Convention should not this hour be preaching the Gospel in the regions beyond!

We shall not cease to make much of orthodoxy, but I would write it this night in letters of living fire that true orthodoxy is lacking in any preacher or church that can close the ear against the Macedonian cry of earth's perishing millions and maintain an indifferent concern to our Master's command to "go." There is a heresy of inaction as well as of precept. How much better is faith without works than works without faith? There is such a thing as a dead orthodoxy. We may orate eloquently about creeds and engage in endless discussion over the fine points of ecclesiasticism, but above all this stands out the living Word of God: "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only." "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments." I plead for a living orthodoxy, not a dry, dead dogma, out of which has gone all the blood and heart-beat, leaving only a grinning, ghastly skeleton behind, but an orthodoxy, every pulsation of which can be felt and which is the incarnation of practical loyalty to God.

Our great people, well is it known, are sublimely set for the defense of the faith once delivered and as sublimely set against all heresy. God be thanked! May we always stand for the simple faith of the New Testament and declare that there is a difference, yea, even an impassable gulf, between truth and error. But when we do this, let us remember that the "life is more than meat and the body more than raiment." Let us remember that the deadliest of all heresies is the anti-mission heresy. And let us remember that the anti-mission heresy is the black plague of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Brethren, the hour comes to our people, and even now is, that the landmark that most of all needs resetting is the restoring of a predominant mission spirit to all our people. Let it be understood throughout all of our borders, from the blue waters of the Chesapeake to the silvery sands of the Rio Grande, that we regard as our life business the evangelization of the world. That all our denominational enterprises have utterly missed their purpose, if they do not stand for the central truth of Christianity. Let this be true of our denominational papers, of our Christian colleges, of yonder matchless Theological Seminary. Oh, when we have as much Christianity as we have orthodoxy, then will we soon take the world for Jesus!

It is said that over the door of the Alhambra, and old Moorish palace, on the one side, carved in stone, was a book, and on the other side, reaching out to clasp the book, was a hand. In connection with this there was a legend that some day the hand would clasp the book and then the Alhambra would fall. That old Moorish palace may be taken as a symbol of the dark kingdom of evil in the

earth--Satan's Alhambra, for whose subjugation and destruction God's people go forth to war. When will Satan's stronghold be beaten down and the victory of God's people be complete? It will be when the hand clasps the Book. The hand is the hand of Duty and the Book is the book of Doctrine, and when duty and doctrine go forth united in the fullness and power of meaning intended of God, then shall the Alhambra of sin speedily totter to its everlasting doom and Christ shall be exalted Lord over all forevermore!

Brethren, I believe that the hour of destiny has come to our people. The voice of God's providence rings out louder than the voice of many waters, "Go forward!" Every Red Sea of difficulty has been divided and the gates to all the nations stand ajar. A little while ago the obstacles everywhere seemed insuperable. An impassable wall surrounded China. The ports of Japan were entirely sealed. The Dark Continent was impenetrable, even to the explorer. The isles of the ocean were thronged with cannibals more to be dreaded than all the dangers of the sea. Now the doors swing wide open to every people. Japan is white to the harvest. India is restless to hear of Jesus. The great men of China yearn to know the oracles of God. Mohammed's crescent wanes and the shrines of every false religion now are tottering and their idols begin to crumble into dust. The nations are impressible as the wax. The signs of the times, the policies of governments, the majestic march of events, are all instinct with divine meanings and are the true burning bush whereby God is mightily revealing Himself to the world. At last, even the very elements of nature have all been laid under tribute for the forwarding of the chariot. We stand facing the opportunity of the ages. My brothers, in the presence of such matchless oppor-

tunities, in this day of the right hand of God, ought not every man of us to cease from all minor things and join in the sublime effort at once to give the Gospel to the world?

A French drummer boy was once urged by a fleeing officer to "beat a retreat," and the boy replied: "Sire, I cannot beat a retreat, but oh, I can beat a forward march that would make the dead fall into line." O Baptists of the South, let us from this Convention beat a forward march, the spirit of which shall penetrate our churches like a flame of fire, and this year call forth men and money in such wondrous fashion as shall fill the whole earth with astonishment and demonstrate that our only concern this side of heaven is to be loyal to Jesus Christ. Brethren, I believe that even Satan himself marvels at our slowness. Israel took forty years to make a journey that ought to have been made in a few days. We are doing that very thing today. One thousand of our churches in the South ought to support one missionary each for the coming year. God give us obedience to such heavenly vision!

For a long, long while there came on every sighing breeze from the fair isle of Cuba a piteous cry for help. At last our land rose up and with men and money went forth and gave relief. Adown the centuries there has come an unceasing cry in tones of tenderest love: "I thirst." I hear it even now, "I thirst." Whose is the voice? It is the voice of Jesus dying on the cross, "I thirst." That thirst has never yet been quenched. He thirsts for China, for Asia and Africa, for the Filipinos, for poor lost men wherever found. O let us rise up and quench His thirst! Then shall He see the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And all the redeemed shall be satisfied with Him, and from all their blood-washed lips this glad hosannah shall ring out forever: Emanuel--God with us!

These pages fill in gaps
of pp 16-17, missing
from Truett sermon.

We Would See Jesus

And Other Sermons

By
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What is Christ's Church? It is His body, the instrument of His purpose of which He is the head. It is the business of the head to direct and control the body. Christ, the great Head, is lawgiver and director over His body, the Church. The mission of Christ's Church must be identical with the mission of Christ Himself. What was His mission? Find that out and you will know the mission of every church and every individual Christian. He Himself so tells us: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Here is the great source of the church's authority and purpose. And a church could furnish no other evidence half so strong that she is not a New Testament church as the refusal or disinclination to obey Christ's last and all-inclusive commandment. And a preacher, even though he may have been baptized and may talk much about "soundness in faith," could furnish no stronger evidence that he is not in the apostolic succession than that he is not a missionary.

High time is it that the consciences of very many people were faithfully aroused as to the nature and meaning of Christ's churches in the world. False views abound on every side. A church of Christ is not an ark in which a few of the elect are to be happily housed in order that they may float around joyfully over the drowning world beneath them. Nor is it a ship, passage upon which will land us in the heavenly country. Nor is it an insurance company, to which we may pay dues now and then, and thus certainly secure our dear selves against all loss. Nor is it a hospital for healing all manner of sickness. Nor is it a select social club with a toast-master to

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call out such themes as shall provoke the building up of a mutual admiration society. Nor is it a debating society where more attention is to be given to the fine points of ecclesiasticism rather than to the consuming passion of Christianity. Nor is it a school where we may gather as students to be forever taught. Nor is it merely a place of worship where we may give ourselves to song and praise and meditation about our heavenly inheritance.

Christ's Church is not any of these nor all of them combined; but with my whole heart I declare that His Church exists primarily to give the Gospel to all the world.

This great motive is its native air, and any church that will persistently ignore this heaven-appointed work does not have the moral right to the plat of ground on which the church building stands. Christianity is incomparably more than a creed—it is a life. Any other conception than that Christ's Church is to be a soul-saving army is a caricature upon the churches of the New Testament. And the day comes on apace—may God speed its coming—when any church not missionary both in spirit and practice shall be regarded as a monstrosity, and when the regular giving of money for world-wide evangelization shall be as great a test of orthodoxy as is baptism.

Furthermore, Christ's Church is to be sublimely aggressive rather than defensive. He did not mean that His soldiers should be chiefly engaged in building forts of defense. Any church that merely sits and sings "hold the fort" will soon have no fort to hold. We hear a great deal now about "expansion." I

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Our Savior and King commands world-wide even-
geлизation, and disobeience to such command for any
cause is basal treachery to our trust as Christians, and

There are many other reasons for obedience to such commands, but they are unnecessary except as they may awaken our zeal and strengthen our faith. There are the motives of gratitude, and charity, and sympathy, the marvelous missionary triumphs already achieved, and still other motives, potential and urgent. But underlying all these motives and springs of action is the plain, unchangeable command of God.

At the bloody battle of Troy, Henry IV of France said to his soldiers: „When you lose sight of your colors, rally to my white plume. You will always find it in the way to Glory.“ So when every other motiver to missional effort fails, this one—logically to Christians’ command—stands firm as the adamantine hills. And logically to Christ, we have always made bold to say, is the fundamental principle in our denominational life. We reject utterly all assumed authority from any human source whatsoever. „One is our Master, even Christ.“ We boldly repudiate the right of pope or council, or anybody else, to ignore scriptural baptism, or change that ordinance in any way.

O my brethren, I pause and tremble as I ask what
shall be said of our loyalty to Christ's last but all-
inclusive command! Take the figures: One billion
human beings are without the Gospel; forty millions
die every year; one hundred thousand die every
day; four die every time we breathe; and yet

don't know what the politicians intend to make of it all, but I do know that the key-word of Christianity is expansion. „His dominion shall extend from sea to sea, and from the river unto the uttermost ends of the earth.“ Napoleon said : „Conquest has made me what I am and conquest must maintain me.“ Inviolability true is it of Christians that conquer must never be their watchword. Not only the well-being but the very being of a church depends upon its fidelity to the one design for which Christ brought it into the world. Self-preservation demands that it shall be missionary. The anti-mission spirit is the death of spirituality. It is the fruit of pride, and it is the hotbed and breeding place of suspicion, bitterness, malice, heresy and all uncharitableness. The consequences to a church without the mission spirit are so direful that it becomes a hospital, and unless it is converted, God removes its deadliest bickering, malice, heresy and all uncharitableness. The consequences to ourselves is its deadliest bane. Our only safety is that we give ourselves to the supreme purpose and shall become our bulwark if it be not intruded and passion of Christianity. Yet more, our very entire life becomes a graveyard. Our only safety is that then it becomes a graveyard. Our only safety is that we give ourselves to the supreme purpose and shall become our bulwark if it be not intruded and passion of Christianity. Yet more, our very entire life becomes a graveyard.

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