

# Does a Christian Ever Need . . . a Doctor?

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## **Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Doctor ?**

Do you think going to a doctor or to a hospital shows any lack of faith in God and in His power? When we raise a question like this we're thinking in terms of living the Christian life. But our problem is that our Christian life here on earth is being lived in a physical body. This body in which we live has bones that can be broken, muscles and tissues that can be diseased or withered, nerves that can be disordered, glands that can function improperly and organs in the body that can, one way or another, be damaged or impaired so that they wouldn't be doing their proper job. In other words the body in which we live has the sentence of death in it.

Now, we Christian people know that there is prepared for us a body in heaven, and that body will have no aches or pains. There won't be anything that will ever go wrong with it. But this body in which we now live is definitely going to wear out – if it doesn't get broken first. It's a going concern, that's true, but it can be damaged and can be impaired. Meanwhile, this body that you and I are in needs food, every day. It needs water, lots of it. It needs air, all the time. It needs sleep, and there should be a certain amount of regular time taken for sleep. It needs hygienic care. We need to be sanitary with it. And it needs protection against damage from without and within. It can absorb a lot of abuse, but somewhere along the line that abuse will take its toll. And you can't let it be run into by a train or anything like that.

The body is our instrument of communication with the world, and what happens to it is a very big thing to us. None of us can get very far away from our body. If I have a toothache I feel it all over, and if I have stomach-ache, I'll tell you right now I feel sick all over. Not only is the body very real to us in that way but by means of the body we have all of our relationships in the world. The fellowship we have with people is promoted by the sight of them and the sound of them and the touch of them. The friendships we have with people is developed and enhanced by seeing them, hearing them, talking with them, touching them, having dealings with them, and so on, from body to body.

The Lord Jesus Christ, when He was here upon earth, often showed His power and His mercy among men by what He did for their bodies. There were people who were sick; He healed them. There were those who were blind; He made them see. There were people who had leprosy, and He cured them. There were those who had paralysis, and He restored normal function to their muscles. The great promise of the gospel as well, by the way, deals with the body . . . in terms of its resurrection from the dead.

Being impressed by the power of God in Christ Jesus to heal, as He did when He was here on earth, and to restore, as He did in the case of the blind and the deaf, and so on, it's quite possible for us Christian people to question whether we should leave it entirely up to the Lord and His Word as far as the welfare of our bodies is concerned. Let's consult the Scriptures.

First of all, in I Timothy 5:23, when Paul is writing to Timothy who is a young Christian and about whom Paul could say in praise, "I have no man like minded," the Apostle advises Timothy, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." An infirmity, of course, is a sickness; something is wrong with the body. Timothy actually was a rather sickly person. He was often sick, and he evidently had a weak stomach. So Paul tells him to use a little wine for his stomach's sake. What is Paul doing? He is prescribing a little medicine. This wine would be a stimulant for his stomach after the fashion of a medicine.

Do you think that Paul lacked faith so far as Timothy was concerned? You and I know that Paul was used to heal people by the Word. We know that Paul was used to accomplish tremendous things as a matter of faith. And we know that there were people stricken blind by Paul's exercise of faith. Didn't Paul have faith so far as Timothy was concerned? Or didn't Timothy have faith? Should we think that every

time Timothy was sick it was because he wasn't a believing man? Why wouldn't Paul tell him something about getting right with God?

I am arguing a little bit with you, because I want you to get the full force of this. I want you to see that here is a very fine young Christian minister, one whom Paul highly praised, but one who was often sick and needed to take some medicine so far as his digestion was concerned.

Now go back to Mark 8:2-3 and see something of what the Lord Jesus has to say with reference to the body. This is what we read: "I have compassion on the multitude, because they . . . have nothing to eat. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way." That is very natural, isn't it? You notice that the Lord Jesus didn't say, "I'll just speak the word and they won't be hungry." You notice that He did not say, "I'll just speak the word and they will be strong all the way home." No, they get their strength from food, and they need to eat food to be strong. And so He said, "We need to feed them." Now I know and you know that in the feeding of that particular multitude He performed a miracle when it came to providing the food, but there was no miracle performed so far as eating the food was concerned.

Here's another passage for you to look up. In Luke 5:31, the Lord Jesus says, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick." So apparently the sick do need a doctor. Notice that the Lord Jesus is not saying that people are sick because they are evil. On one occasion the Lord Jesus, speaking to His own disciples, said this: "Come ye apart and rest awhile." Isn't that resting just what you would do with your physical body? Your body isn't tired because it has performed some kind of evil. It's just normal and natural that it tires out when you use it. And the remedy is that you rest it so that it can be strong.

On the other hand, in James 5:13-16 there seems to be instruction concerning a special way to treat illness and disease. I'd like to suggest to you very simply that this is a guide for how you should *act* toward sick people. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he hath committed sins they shall be forgiven him." This passage of Scripture does not specifically say that the Lord will heal them, despite the fact that I know there have been people healed who have used this procedure and this promise. But, on the other hand, I know too that there have been any number of good people who have been so ministered to and yet they have died. If this passage meant they'd be healed, they would never die if someone would just come and pray for them.

Does a Christian ever need a doctor? My study of Scripture convinces me that no lack of faith is involved if you need a doctor. The doctor knows more about the body than you do. He knows better than you which foods will nourish it, which will harm it, and what care should be given it if its natural powers of recuperation are to be operative.

By all means have a doctor, but choose a man who honors God.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Lawyer?

Anything that a lawyer might do for us involves certain aspects of the society in which we live, in terms of our relationships with other people. Perhaps you have not had much to do with lawyers and you may think of lawyers only in terms of crime. Or you may think that you would only get involved with a lawyer if you were trying to take advantage of somebody or to sue for some property or something like that.

There's a great deal more involved in legal responsibility and in legal activity than criminal courts or in trying to take advantage of people. Our society today has brought people closer and closer together in crowded towns and cities and country sides, groups of people living near each other as strangers, neighbors, children, criminals, rich and poor, and so on. And in living with other people there are certain principles of procedure. I guess the right word is *equity* where others are involved. There are certain rights to life and liberty and privilege and property that have been secured by law. These laws are already established. We don't make them from day to day, but we live in a setting where laws are already set up to govern relationships.

Our society is so complex that anyone of us who is not professional in the matter can hardly recognize all the rights and! the responsibilities that are involved. Where does that leave the Christian? We're interested in belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ. Frankly, what we want is that we might walk with Him. Our main concern is that we stay close to the Lord Jesus Christ and have Him living in us; but we do have to live with other people and have relationships with them, dealings with them, and I am just raising the question for us all. Would we ever be wise to seek legal advice? Do we need a lawyer?

Let's consider the matter of property ownership. If you own a piece of land, a lot, a house, or a farm, the community has certain established rules. This makes your property secure. You own it and nobody else can have it, but real estate is of such a nature that if you sell it from one person to another, it needs what is called in the profession "title insurance." In other words the title of your particular piece of property needs to be guaranteed on the basis that there is no charge against it, because, the laws being what they are, there could possibly be restrictions upon that piece of property that have already been set up. A lawyer would know how to find if any such restrictions or charges existed.

If you were going to build a building in your town, you would need a permit. That's because there are other people living around in that neighborhood. If you would like to open a carpenter shop in that particular spot, it might be that there are people living near you who have built their homes with the idea of keeping that a residence area. So there is a law against the matter of building the carpenter shop. And, by the way, if you happen to live there and the other man wants to build a carpenter shop, you're protected by that same law. The same is true with reference to operating any business along this line; you need a license. The license will specify to you the conditions under which you can operate a business. Stores can open at a certain time, close at a certain time and operate on certain days.

Personal property always involves liability. If you own a piece of property that has on it a fish pond, or a lake of any sort, and some child comes over to visit your child and this child is drowned in your fish pond, you might be surprised to find out that so far as the law is concerned you could be held liable for that. Or maybe there is some reason why you would not be held liable. A lawyer could tell you where you wouldn't know. Or if you're driving a car, maybe you have in mind that giving people a ride in your car is a nice thing, so you take passengers in your car. Do you know that if anybody got injured, even through their own fault, they could come on you for damages because they were riding in your car? Well now, a lawyer could advise you about the extent of your liability because he knows about those things.

When you have a lawyer with reference to your property it does not mean that you're trying to seek advantage of anybody, but to advise you what your rights and privileges are and to protect you from someone else who might take advantage of you.

Then there are zoning ordinances to keep people from being a nuisance to another person. You can do certain things in one part of the city you can't do in another part of the city. For instance, here are people who think that they would like to have some chickens, so they're going to start to keeping chickens in the back yard. Well, it may be that this is a crowded locality, and there could be a law that would prohibit the keeping of livestock in that area of town,. You might be ignorant of the law, but it still wouldn't be right for you to keep, we'll say, a cow in a residential area, if there is a law against it. Or there may be a law in your area against the use of firearms within city limits. People cannot hunt or shoot squirrels or anything else around where you live if it is a residential area. The law protects you from that, and laws are very important so far as our living with other people is concerned. As sure as you have laws you should have somebody who understands them, someone who can interpret them for you.

Consider the matter of your will, or making a bequest. There is a whole legal area relating to inheritance. You could raise a question like this: Should a real Christian ever make a will? If you think into that for a moment I believe you'll change that question. Ask it like this and it would be a better question: Should a real Christian ever *fail* to make a will? Because of all that's involved in a matter of inheritance we are endangering all of our loved ones and friends with endless difficulty just because we fail to do this. A lawyer could tell you about that.

There are tax obligations, often involving laws unknown to the public that you wouldn't know, obscure laws, and a lawyer could help you. I suppose you might wonder, is it all right for you as a Christian to go to a lawyer about your income tax? Well, why not? Do you think that going to a lawyer about your income tax would mean you're trying to be dishonest? Why no, that's what the government expects you to do. They can't spell it out for everybody to understand it. But there are people who would be able to help you and this is what a lawyer could do.

Now maybe you think of I Corinthians 6:1-8. That's the passage where Paul says something about a brother taking another brother into court. Paul tells him not to do it. But that doesn't instruct us never to seek help from the law. The context states specifically that this is dealing brother with brother within the Christian company. Paul is simply saying it would be better to suffer whatever loss is involved than to arouse the spirit of contention in the company of believers. However, there are many situations between Christians when the use of a lawyer could help to *avoid* misunderstanding and would really keep you out of trouble.

In Luke 12:13-15 someone came to the Lord Jesus and asked Him to divide an inheritance, and He told this man not to be covetous. Does this mean that we should forfeit all legal rights? No, the application is against covetousness; there is no argument against keeping what is rightfully yours. What about the parent that does not guard his family property by law? Would that be fair to the other members of the family and to neighbors in the community?

By all means have access to sound legal advice so that you won't be doing things you shouldn't do, and so that you can know to fulfill your responsibilities when you enter into a contract, and so that you will be fair to all with whom you come in contact. But get a lawyer who is a Christian.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Pastor?

Everything that is involved in a pastor's activity is centered in spiritual living. It is important to have someone interested in you and responsible to watch over you in a spiritual way. No person is a full grown Christian at once. When you accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior you are entirely and totally a believer, yes. A Christian, yes. But not a full grown, mature Christian. That takes time. One needs to grow in grace and in knowledge. Paul says in Ephesians 4:11 that the Holy Spirit blesses the church with certain gifts. And one of the gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to the church is pastors.

The word *pastor* comes from the same root as the word *pasture*. We know about horses and pastures, cattle and pastures, sheep pastures. Pastures are feeding places. And so we can understand the function of a pastor. A pastor is in a certain sense one who feeds others. When you remember the Lord Jesus saying to Peter, "Feed my sheep," He was telling him to do the work of a pastor. "Feed my lambs." In fact, Peter himself, in his first Epistle, in I Peter 5:2-4, set forth this whole matter: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof." It's very interesting to see just how this is put. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." This is the whole function of the pastor. He is to be the shepherd. An under-shepherd, it's true. In other places in the New Testament he is called a bishop, which is an overseer. Or an elder; this is a person who has more experience, who is more of a seasoned person than others in the congregation. All of these words have much the same idea. They emphasize that the younger person is to be led by the more experienced person.

Paul, writing to Timothy in I Timothy 5:17 says this: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor." There you have the idea of them ruling over others, guiding others. In Hebrews 13:7 we get this word: "Remember them which have the rule over you." And the word *remember* means "appreciate." Give them the honor that is their due.

Now, much of what a pastor might do for us in our day and time has been organized. Originally the churches were probably much smaller than ours, but with the large churches that we have in so many places, much of the pastoral work has been organized and put under the direction of certain groups, like the Sunday School, for example. in which you get instruction in the gospel, in the Word of God. The elders and deacons guide the congregation as a whole in matters of their public affairs. Then such organizations exist as the "men of the church" and the "women of the church" and the "young people of the church." In each one of these there is a certain amount of mutual interest and concern being manifested. Wherever you have chairmen of circles and you have group leaders and you have group captains, anything like that, you have organization.

But there is a personal relationship involving the pastor that cannot be delegated or organized. When I am not having anything to do with the church, when I am outside the activities altogether, I need the pastor most of all. For instance, in daily living it's such an easy thing, even if you're a Christian, to let your routine occupation, what you're doing for a living, preoccupy your time. I can let my work preoccupy my soul. It can get to be such that I start missing church; and then I can very easily slide on into the habit of not going to church at all. I can be absent from prayer meeting as a regular thing. I might be satisfied with that, but if I had a good pastor he'd notice my absence. Or I might just be careless about Sunday, the Lord's day. That wouldn't be wholesome. Or it might be that I don't give anything to the Lord's work. I never contribute anything to the on-going of the gospel in other places, the missionary work, and so on.

That wouldn't be wholesome or good. And a pastor, either himself or through people that he would delegate, would draw my attention to that.

But I can tell you where I would feel need of the pastor even more. Take, for instance, in perplexity and trouble, if you're concerned about something and you don't know for sure what something means, or perhaps you're concerned about some passages of Scripture, or some understanding of the gospel, and you have real trouble in your heart about it, so that you need some guidance in the matter. That's where a pastor would come in. Like those two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were walking along, downhearted and sad with the events that had occurred. The Lord Jesus Himself drew near and you see Him there doing the work of a pastor, walking along with these disciples and asking them, "What is it that you're thinking about and that you're talking about here?" He knew, but He wanted to draw them out so that He could help them and instruct them. This is the work of a pastor.

But again, even more critically, what about sickness and death? In our day and time we have a good many cases of people actually trying, for one reason or another, to shelter the sick away from a pastoral ministry. I can't promise you that every person who comes to talk in the name of the Lord will be wise, and I am quite sure that there may be people who go visiting in hospitals that are unwise in what they do, but I think that it's a very serious thing that anyone should in any way hinder a pastor from going to his people, whoever his parishioner may be, no matter how sick that person is.

I can remember in the days when I was a pastor it wouldn't have made any difference what the condition of the person was, I would certainly have wanted him to have the privilege of knowing that I was there and that I was present at the time when he was weak and troubled in his serious illness. Or when death comes, it is important actually to be there, if at all possible, at the time a person passes away. If you have had anyone pass away in your family, you will know how very helpful and important it is for the pastor, the man who represents the gospel, the Word of God, the truth of God, to be in the home or in the room at the time. It would be a marvelous blessing. Now, I'm not talking about just anybody. I'm not talking about just some well meaning, interested Christian person coming. That might be helpful, too. But I am thinking about your pastor, the man who does the preaching to you, the man who cares for you and watches over you day in and day out, the man in whom you have your confidence. You could use him at a time when your heart is hurt and when you feel empty and bereaved. He can tell you the things of God.

Then there are times of estrangement between friends. I have seen it happen in my lifetime when a pastor has gone in between people who have fallen out with each other and has helped them get back together again. This is the work of a pastor. You may not have had it done for you, but this is what a pastor could do. I can remember one time how a pastor helped out in domestic troubles between man and wife. He went to the man and explained to the man that his wife, being the kind of a woman she was, needed her husband to treat her in a certain way. The pastor described how gentle he ought to be and how kind he ought to be, actually admitting to the husband that maybe the wife wasn't real bright about some things. Then the pastor went around and had a private conference with the wife and told her how she ought to treat the husband and how she ought to be kind to him. He intimated to her that maybe the husband wasn't real bright about some things. And so each one of them was just going to be especially careful to the other. Strange as it may seem to you, it really worked.

It would be a good thing for everyone of us to have a good pastor. If you're a real Christian, then appreciate and esteem the help that a good pastor can give to you.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Banker?

If I am honest in my business dealings, modest in my desires and in my expenditures, if I am industrious in my work and frugal in my spending, if I am careful not to spend more than I earn, would I ever need a bank?

Perhaps you are so accustomed to using a bank that you wonder why I even raise the question. But others have, for some reason or another, picked up the impression that any interest in money is somehow bad. It says in the Bible that the *love* of money is the root of all evil, and you'd be surprised how many people think that *money* is evil. Notice what it says: "the love of money is the root of all evil." Of course. So is the love of power the root of evil. So is the love of beauty. So is the love of strength. So is the love of advantage. So is the love of family and the love of home. Anything other than God that you love is a source of danger. "The love of money" is loving that which would give you an opportunity to expand yourself and to indulge yourself away from God. And this is "the root of all evil." That's a far cry from saying that money is evil.

Money has become a common medium of exchange. What used to be done in person, by personal service, when one person would help another, or one person would do something for another, is now done by money. Because of our complicated society we use money for almost everything in every direction. It represents a certain amount of your life. Money is a concentrated form of your time and energy put together. You work at a certain speed, or with a certain skill for a certain length of time and you earn a certain amount of money. That's what you can use then on the market to buy what somebody else has made.

Money can be lost, if you carry it from where you work to where you spend it and if you have to carry the money until sometime next week before you use it all up. And money in the whole transit, the whole affair, can be lost. So let us begin at the beginning so far as money matters are concerned.

Let me say to you right away that living by the day, from hand to mouth, earn it in the morning, spend it that night, needs no bankers. You would, never need a banker for that. But is this adequate? And this brings up the whole question. Is it a proper thing for a Christian person to save any money? Is it a proper thing for a Christian person to accumulate any money? Is it a proper thing for a Christian person to have any money? Shall we look on people who have money as being evil? And shall we think that the people who get rid of all their money right away are therefore virtuous? Is that what the Scripture means?

When Paul is writing in I Timothy 5:8 this is what he has to say: "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Now why do you suppose Paul wrote that to Timothy? Well I can tell you there are some people who would do that very thing. There are some people who would think that because they believed in the Lord they wouldn't have to make any provision for tomorrow. They would think that because they are putting their trust in the Lord, He will take care of everything. I can remember a man who went away and left his family. You'd say he forsook them. He justified himself, so he thought, by saying he gave them over to God. He said God would take care of them. He actually tried to do the Lord's work and just left his wife and children without any support, saying that the Lord would take care of them. Do you think he was wise? Do you even think he was truly sound as a Christian? I don't want to be the judge of his heart, but look what Paul tells us: "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

Providing for your own is going to mean saving. That's all there is to it. You're going to have to store up for future needs. Some people have a very simple way of saving. They keep it in their pockets and some people whose pockets aren't big enough have a sock someplace. They keep it in a shoe, or they keep



it in a jar at home, or something of that nature. But the most reasonable and safest thing to do is to keep it in a bank. So now let's see what a bank can do.

A bank actually supplies the facility for keeping your money safe, and more than that it provides an opportunity for you to earn some money with your money. I suppose you all know that if you put your money in the bank it will earn income. The banker gives you 4% or 4½% or 5%. But do you think a banker gives that to you because he is just a nice fellow? You know that he is using your money, but do you think he is using it in a crooked way? Do you think he is gambling with it? Not if he is a banker. He is loaning it out to people who need it, people who can use it, actually helping other people. This is the way life goes.

On the other hand, if you don't want to save, let me tell you right now, no banker can force you to save. You don't need to worry about having to save. If you don't want to save any money and you want to spend every day's pay as you get it, you won't need a banker. But if you want to provide for your own, if you're thinking right now that you want to put something together so that your family has got something in case you're suddenly called away, if you want to arrange for your children, if you want to arrange for your wife, if you want to arrange for the people who are dependent upon you, you'll need to save some money. And if you want to save this money, the thing for you to do is to put it in the bank, because that's what it's organized for.

If you want to save, if you want to accumulate resources for future needs, a banker can advise you and guide you. He can't make you do it, but if you want to do it, he can certainly help you. For instance, a savings account, as just referred to, provides a place where you can put your money and it'll earn something. You'll get more than you put in. The big thing is that you'll have it when you need it.

If a person is a Christian, one of the things that he would show is an attitude toward other people that's thoughtful and considerate. By the way, do you remember one of the last things our Lord Jesus Christ did when He was on the cross? Hanging there on the cross just before dying, He called on His close friend, one of His disciples, John, and He looked over at His mother. He said to John, "Behold your mother." He called to His mother, who was standing there looking at Him with all the agony there could be in her heart, and looking at John, He said to her, "Behold your son." Do you see what He was doing? In that last moment on the cross, tenderly considerate of the practical needs of His mother whom He was going to have to leave, He made sure that she'd have a home. Now if the Lord Jesus, hanging on the cross, could take steps to make sure that His mother would have a home, are you going to say there is anything wrong with a man trying to make sure that his family will be taken care of, if he should be taken away? A savings account can be a big help.

Consider the matter of investment. I am not asking about you trying to get something for nothing. I am not asking you about trying to gamble, but there are ways in which you can invest your money that business can use. You're not scheming to get anything from somebody for nothing, but certain people could use your money for the time being. A banker could interpret the wise investment and guide you in it so you will know what to do. And you'd say, "But I don't want to gamble." That's exactly why I want you to have a banker. The last thing in the world a banker would let you do is to gamble. He wouldn't let you do it, but he would let you loan money to somebody who could repay it, and that person could use your money in a certain way.

There is the matter of a loan. You know it's just possible that some time you may need help. You may need financial help. You never know what can happen. Someone can get sick in your home and you may suddenly run up a hospital bill to a thousand dollars and the hospital has to have its money. Before your loved one can come out of that hospital you've got to arrange for a thousand dollars. Do you know what you need? You need a banker. You need someone who can advise you how to get your loan, where to go and what to do.

A real Christian will want to provide for his own, and a good banker can help him to do this

wisely. So by an means I'm going to tell you to be a reasonable and faithful person as a Christian. Have a banker. And by all means, if you can, get a Christian.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Psychiatrist?

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples. And oh how people want peace. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How sweet is rest to the human heart and soul. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." So was the promise throughout all the Old Testament days, even down to our time.

The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace. Perhaps the most precious promise in all the gospel is peace. The peace of God that passeth all understanding. This is the sort of blessing most attractive to all mankind. No doubt most men everywhere really want peace and rest. I am sure that many of my readers may be in a situation where you would give anything to have peace of heart and mind . . . perhaps with situations in your family, maybe situations in your office, maybe problems confronting you in your business, perhaps the weight of work and detail in your place of occupation. What you wouldn't give to have a period of rest and peace! Perhaps you're looking out at the world as a whole and at its confusion and its danger, its conflict and contention, both at home and abroad, and oh how precious peace would be.

Peace is something more than the stopping of all activity. It is more than the initials RIP – Rest In Peace. Now that is a very real rest and it's to be found in the cemetery, but it's not adequate for life. Peace in living is the absence of conflict. Things going on and no discord. People doing things in all directions but not in contention. Many different things in hand to be done, but no strain. Facing many unknown and uncertain and new and various things, but no fear. Conscious of the fact that we may have loss, and we may have things happen that are difficult, but no worry. Realizing that in this world the sentence of death is upon things and the grass withereth and the flower fadeth, but no depression. This would be peace.

Human affairs are indeed complex, and in recent years there has been much study made of human experience. This study has developed certain definite ideas. These ideas we call *psychology*.

Medicine has not changed the physical processes from the very start of mankind. Babies are still born in the same way, and people die in the same way. But medicine has helped a great deal with reference to the body. Psychology has not changed mental processes. Fear and anxiety and anger and happiness, these things still continue on, but there is a close interaction between body and mind in living that has been noted. It has been seen that sometimes a disturbed and upset mind can cause sickness in the body and similarly a sick body can cause a disturbed and upset mind. This is something for us to understand, and in recent years some doctors, recognizing this, have specialized in just such cases. We have a name for these specialists. We call them psychiatrists.

Psychiatry is not so much a science as it is a procedure. It is actually a specialized branch of medicine. No person is really a psychiatrist who isn't first a medical doctor. An eye doctor is a medical doctor. A foot specialist is a medical doctor. And a psychiatrist, a mind specialist, is a medical doctor. You have pain in your ear, so you go to an ear specialist. He'll treat you and you can have peace about your ear. Trouble with your eye? You go to an eye doctor and you'll have peace so far as your eyes are concerned. Pain in your appendix? You go to a surgeon. He performs an operation, takes out your appendix and you'll have peace. Unreasonable strain in your mind as you work and live? You could go to a doctor who is a psychiatrist who will try to help you and enable you to have the peace that you're looking for.

We speak from the point of view of the Bible and the Christian gospel, and we understand very well that man also has a soul. In this soul a man can feel guilt and he can have fear and he can have worry, and we have a way out for him. He is to turn to Christ so far as his soul is concerned. In everything he is to give thanks and make his supplication unto God, and the peace of God that passes all understanding

will guard his heart and mind in Christ Jesus. This we understand. But suppose you know the truth of the gospel in the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet feelings of guilt persist after you exercise faith. You know you're forgiven, but you still have this horrible feeling of guilt. It may be due to sick glands. There may be something wrong with your thyroid. A doctor would know.

You may have taken reasonable precaution about everything that concerns you. You're careful about your business and careful about your practices; you're careful about your driving, careful about your living, and so on. And yet you have feelings of anxiety, feelings of fear. You have an unreasonable dread of being left alone in a house, or something like that. Now this may be due to sickness in your body and you should see a doctor about that. There's no reason why you should be haunted with a feeling of fear after you have put your trust in the Lord. It could be that you're sick in your body.

A doctor can help you, the kind of doctor we would call would be a psychiatrist. You may have a feeling of hostility, maybe just against certain individual people, but maybe against others also. Suppose that you have a falling out with somebody, you have trouble with somebody and then you have reconciliation. And actually, so far as you're concerned, everything has been laid away, but tomorrow you're mad at them again. It all comes back and you have a new form of hostility in you. I want to tell you something: you could be sick. That could be the real reason for this persistent, unreasonable hostility. You might know perfectly well that the right thing to do is to be kind. The right thing to do is to be charitable, and you might be minded to be kind and charitable; and then, first thing you know, when you're not watching yourself, you're just bitterly opposed to this person. It could be that your liver is bad. And if the man is a doctor or a psychiatrist, he can find that out.

Sometimes some of us have feelings of persecution. We just feel people are against us; we think people are talking about us when we have no real reason to think so, and yet we feel that way. You know that could be your digestion. And a doctor could point it out to you. It could be stomach trouble that brings on a feeling of depression. You could feel downhearted and discouraged in spite of good fortune, in spite of the fact you've got enough money to live on. You've got friends, you've got people to take care of you, and yet you feel badly. That could be due to low blood pressure.

Do you see what I am trying to say? There could be things wrong with your body that actually affect you in your feelings and, that would come up into your experience. I want to tell you something. If your doctor advises you to do so, find a Christian psychiatrist, a specialist, and let him check on you. I say *Christian*, because unless he's a Christian, he won't know the sources of grace that are in Christ Jesus.

Just the other day I jokingly asked a certain person if she thought I would ever need to go to a psychiatrist, and this woman pointed up and said, "You've got one real close. He's right up there." And she pointed up to the Lord.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Church?

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another." These words are found in the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Tenth Chapter, verses 24-25.

Here is very clear instruction that as Christian people we should help each other. And so I raise the question, Does a Christian ever need to belong to a church? That's like asking a question like this: If I were really alive and healthy and strong would I ever need a home? Why, of course. It is not good for man to be alone. This principle is true in every situation in which men live. In the church, in the company of other Christian people, a person finds fellowship and communion.

There is inspiration for you in the sight of other believers. Being around with other believers is just simply a good thing. It's encouraging to you. And when you go to a fellowship of Christian people in a church and you share with the other believers in the singing of the hymns and the reading of the Scripture and you join in prayer and listen together to the preaching of God's Word, it's a help to you, it's an inspiration to your soul and to your heart.

In the book of the Acts we read concerning Paul on his way as a prisoner to Rome. He went through a very serious storm on the Mediterranean sea in which he could have been drowned, and then he was shipwrecked on the island of Malta. After a period of time he continued the journey to Rome, traveling overland on the road in Italy. And as he came up near the city we read that certain Christians, hearing that Paul was coming, came out from the city to meet him on the highway and these are the words I want to mention to you: "Whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." Well, there you have it. Paul could take courage from a group of strange people he had never seen before; but they were Christians, and just the sight of those Christians encouraged him.

I hope you get to go to different parts of the country and to various churches, and when you do travel here and there around the country, I hope you go in and visit churches. When Sunday comes around, go to church and go into some congregation and feel the inspiration of the fellowship of those believers. It's good for you. There is a strength in the fellowship of other believers. It's a wonderful thing to be able to share with other Christians.

But perhaps you are a shut-in. You're never able to go to church. You're on a sick bed. Perhaps you have a physical condition of such a nature that prevents you from going out in public. You have a situation the rest of us really ought to help you about, because you're being deprived. And I'd like to say to any of you who are in such a condition that you should take special pains with reference to your spiritual life because you're missing something. You're missing the strength that comes from the fellowship of other believers. You see, there is help even in the prayers of other believers. I am not sure that every member in the church will pray for you, but when I ask if you ever need to belong to a church I don't mean some particular congregation of a thousand members, or some particular congregation of a hundred members. That's not what I am thinking about, but we do need to belong to a group of Christian people. Do you need to belong to a company in which you have fellowship? Would that be any real significant help to you, if you are a real Christian?

Just for a moment let's consider what I mean by a "real" Christian. I'm not saying you're a perfect Christian. I'm not saying you're full grown and mature. I am not saying you wouldn't ever need any help. I am just talking about your being real in this, that you really do believe in the Lord. You really do put your trust in Him. You may be just a child in the faith. You may be just a beginner. Or you may be a weak believer. You may be the kind of a believer who has trouble staying close to the Lord. It may be so far as

your life is concerned, because of the home that you have, the fellowship you have with your friends, or because of the family that you're in, that you find it real difficult to live with the Lord. You really do believe in Him but you don't spend much time with Him.

You need help, and this is where James would say to you, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed." That is the point. And this will come to you, that a real Christian would need to belong to a group of believers. By all means. He needs the help of these other believers that he might grow stronger. And, by the way, I wonder if by some chance you are having trouble in your own spiritual life. Is your faith weak? Are you by any chance uncertain about things? Well, do you have any Christian friends whose faith is strong? You know if you stay around with them your faith would get stronger. Do you have a Christian friend who really understands the Bible and reads it? I'll tell you what you could do for yourself that would be a wonderful help to you. Go to that person and tell him that you'd like to study the Bible with him. Tell him that you'd like to learn more about the Bible and you'd like to be with him sometimes when he is reading and studying the Bible.

Would a real Christian need to belong to a neighborhood Bible class? If you got a chance, I'd say, yes. Would a real Christian need to get together with other people for cottage prayer meetings? By all means. Would a real Christian, a person who is a real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, need any help, we'll say, in reading pamphlets or reading booklets that are on faith and on prayer and on the spiritual life? By all means. Yes, yes, yes. Read the testimony of other believers. The more you are in with other believers, the stronger your own response will be.

Someone may say, "Well, you'd just be encouraging one another in the Lord." And I would say, "So what?" Why not encourage one another in the Lord? Have you ever considered this?

I imagine that most of my readers are loyal citizens of their country. You're loyal members of the United States of America, we will say. You really and truly belong to this country. Now, do you have any objection to a patriotic rally? Do you mind a parade on the Fourth of July? Have you any objection to the playing of our national anthem? Have you any objection to such a thing as when the flag is being raised that you stand at attention and put your hand upon your heart, looking toward the flag, and you repeat the oath of allegiance to the flag? Does that violate anything in you? Well if you would do that with reference to your country, and do that with reference to the flag, why wouldn't you do it with reference to the Lord? Listen, if you were to be by yourself, go in your own home and put up the flag and stand there and salute it, it could be helpful, I know, but not nearly as helpful as if you get a chance to go downtown in the town square and do it there in front of everybody. It just is stronger. Well that's the significance of belonging to the church.

Also, there is guidance in the company of believers about things. For instance, in the matter of worship you and I know that we want to worship God. You want to hear His word. You want to listen to it being read. You want to share in prayer. You want to sing His praises. Do you realize that if they didn't do it in the local church you'd probably never do it. Don't you realize it's when you join in with other Christian people that you hear and join in the singing of the hymns? Well now, do you want other people to provide that and you not have any part in it? Why not be practical? Join some church and help them to put this thing on.

Take the matter of communion. Do you believe in that? The Scriptures tell you to observe it, and I want to tell you from personal experience that it's very, very important. You'd be a poorer Christian without having shared in the sacraments that are set out by the Lord. And you have to be with a group of other people to do that in the spirit in which it was first done.

And then there are the service projects that you have in mind, the matter of teaching other people, Sunday School, young people's work, helping the poor. Maybe you'd like to share in helping orphans. Could you do it alone? No, but you can band together with others in the church and you can do it in the orphanages that you support. Missions . . . I'm sure you're in favor of taking the gospel to the heathen.

But would you be able to go? No? Would you be able to send somebody? No? But you could join the church and the church would do it.

I need to do these things, but if I were left alone I would never get them done and it wouldn't be good. Take the matter of your public testimony. Don't you want to be able to say before the whole world that you do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you realize that is in the church's creed? If I were a real Christian, would I need to belong to the church? Yes, and thank God for a good church.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . Neighbors?

The word *neighbor* has been used a great deal in recent years. In the Bible the Lord Jesus faced a question when a certain man came and asked Him, "And who is my neighbor?" The word neighbor has in our time been often used almost as a slogan, and as such it has several distinct meanings.

As used in the Good Samaritan parable, it would seem that the neighbor is the one who needs me. The man in the ditch who has been wounded and left for dead needs me, and so he is my neighbor. But as used in public commonly among us today, the way you get it in the newspapers and magazines and public speeches and when you hear this comment about our good neighbors and the good neighbor policy, it usually means the man next door, so to speak. He lives in the same area that you're in. You are neighbors because you live on the same side of town.

There's a third use of the word, and the one I want to make use of. It concerns you as a member of your community. Is there any real reason why you should ever be a member of a community? Do you need to have other people living with you in a communal life together as neighbors? Now here again you come across the basic principle: it's not good for man to be alone. You can think about that principle any day of the week and any time of the night and it will always be true. It's just not good for any man or any woman to live or to be alone. Life is easier when you have friends, and life is better when you have friends.

Long ago I heard something that's rather difficult to say but I think I can get it across to you. It's a rather awkward old English way of saying that when you have a friend it will have your sorrows. Friends will divide your sorrow so that they will only be half as heavy, and friends will double your joy. Every single friend with whom you share just divides your sorrows and increases your joy.

The Bible does not actually say very much about your life in this world. I wonder whether you realize that. If you were reading along in the Bible, it has most to say, especially in the New Testament, about your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, because that is the part that's being revealed to you. Actually living in the world is more or less a normal, natural, practical thing that will happen anyway. But the thing that you don't know about is your relationship with the Lord and that's what the New Testament deals with. Most of what the New Testament has to say about your conduct and your way of doing things applies to relationships with the Lord Jesus Christ and with each other in the church as believers. Living among people as a whole remains rather in the natural area, according to good common sense. I would say from my own recollection, as I think about it, that the best guide for anybody with reference to living in a community would be found in the Book of Proverbs. Does that sound strange to you?

Let me tell you something about the book of Proverbs, for you may be able to pick up something here that you will remember with appreciation as long as you live. If you haven't been accustomed to reading the book of Proverbs let me give you a suggestion. If you will just read a chapter a day, take the chapters according to the date: on the 17th of the month, take the 17th chapter of the book of Proverbs, or on the 21st day of the month, take the 21st chapter, and on the 3rd day of the month take the 3rd chapter. The reason why is that there are 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs. And there is no month with more than 31 days. So you can just follow through that way. Another reason for this is that the book of Proverbs is of such a nature that you don't need to have Chapters Two and Three in mind if you want to understand Chapters Six and Seven. Or you can read Chapter Ten and it will stand by itself.

Take the book of Proverbs and read. You'll get many a good, wise suggestion that will guide you in your personal affairs with other people. For instance, here is one that comes to my mind: "A man to have friends must show himself friendly." You know that's worth a lot. Just stop and think about it. You



want to have friends? Would you like to have neighbors who are friendly to you, that you'd like to have as friends? Well, if you want to have friends you must show yourself friendly. That's all. And if you will show yourself friendly they will respond to you.

Perhaps one of the greatest blessings that one person can have from another person is his good will. The cordial, cheerful friendliness of folks who know you can be a great help to your soul. Proverbs will tell you more about how you should act toward others, but the promises are such that they will encourage you to believe that if you do it to others they will do it to you. That's what will follow. Most of the book of Proverbs has to do with guiding you to be a good neighbor, to be a real neighbor.

Here's another idea from Proverbs: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." If you should happen to be heavy hearted on any given day you will know what a wonderful thing it is to meet a neighbor who will smile and talk to you, one who has something to say or something to share with you that's not burdensome and not wearisome and worrisome. A merry heart, especially if it is kindly and considerate, doeth good like a medicine. It's so easy for us to fail to think about the other fellow.

Maybe you'd like to have something out of the epistles that would guide you. Here's one from Peter: "Love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." Being *pitiful* means that you're considerate of other people – and you're *courteous* when you're considerate of other people. You are pitiful to the people that are at a disadvantage and courteous to the people who are the same as you are. Do you realize in your own experience that most folks you meet have things just as hard as you do? Well if that's the case you could start something among the people that you meet. Be courteous to them. Be thoughtful of them. Then they might be that way with you.

I can remember a man who put it this way: "Act like the moon." Show your bright side. Keep your burdens to yourself. No, I guess I should say to you, cast your burdens on the Lord, for He cares for you. What I particularly want to say is, don't cast them on your neighbor, because you'll be disappointed. Most people have enough burdens of their own. When they meet you they want to forget their own troubles: and they don't want your troubles. If you have any personal troubles, just give them over to the Lord.

Perhaps even more than needing neighbors to help us, we need to be neighborly. Maybe it is true that you would need a neighbor, but maybe it's even more true that you need to be a neighbor. I mean in your dealings with people. For instance, you can be friendly and you can be cheerful. You can thus demonstrate to other people something of the grace of God and in so doing you can adorn the gospel. Among people your kindness and your thoughtfulness and your cheerfulness and your helpfulness will adorn the gospel.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . Insurance?

Let me say at once that so far as taking out insurance, having insurance, whether it's insurance of your house, or insurance of your car, or your furniture, or whether it's insurance on your life, whatever it may be, what I have in mind is not a matter of wanting something that is dishonest or wanting anything that is unfair or wanting anything that's evil. I think sometimes among people who haven't considered this and who perhaps have not in their own experience ever had a great deal of responsibility in money matters, it's quite possible for them to feel that this matter of insurance is something like gambling where you hope to put in a little and take out a whole lot. But such is not true.

The only way in the world that you can ever get insurance is by buying it from insurance companies. You have to hire them, as it were, to render you a certain service or protection, and they'll charge you for it in your premiums. Insurance companies are like banks in this one thing: they never gamble. You can be very sure that the insurance company that insures you is not gambling on the outcome. It may seem that way when, for the sake of a certain amount, say \$150 a year, they will insure you to the extent perhaps of \$50,000 personal liability as the case may be, and it will look to you as though there is a gamble involved in that. But the whole issue is actually a matter of safety and of protection.

The question really is this: If you have a real strong trust in God, would you ever need to arrange for protection? Perhaps I could set forth my own understanding of this if I remind you of something that I am sure you have seen in pictures. Maybe some of you have actually done it. I'm thinking of the technique that is employed by mountain climbers. Have you ever noticed how mountain climbers are tied together with a rope? Think about four or five or more mountain climbers who will take a long rope and tie it up to each person and then they start climbing up the side of the mountain. The purpose of the rope is quite simple. If one of them should slip, all the others will hold that person up until he can regain his footing. It's a sort of a protection against disaster. The person who would lose his footing would fall to destruction, if he were not tied in with these other people.

Does such a device as that necessarily imply lack of trust in God? In one sense, if one trusted God, it's true that one would not need practical security, and I think you can see that. And yet, at the same time in a case that I have just described, would you say that those five men climbing up that mountainside are not trusting God when they tie themselves together with the ropes? Is it not possible that they could use the very device of using those ropes tied to each other as a means that they would want God to bless?

I am inclined to lean strongly toward the wisdom of making provision to take care of emergency and calamity. For instance, I am in favor of putting a fire escape in a hotel. The fire escape isn't needed for the building. You don't need it for the walls. You're not going to use it day in and day out. But when I want a fire escape outside my window in a hotel does this show lack of trust? Or does this actually show an intelligent understanding of the practical risk that's in the situation?

Suppose I go in a boat. There'll probably be a law that I must put on a life preserver or must have a life preserver at hand. Is this a lack of faith so far as the Christian is concerned? Do you mean to say, if a Christian person is riding out in his own boat in his own lake, that he would never take a life preserver along because he is putting his trust in God? I wonder if that is coming close to tempting God. And as a matter of personal testimony before other people, the Scripture says that we should provide things honest in the sight of all men. We're to act and conduct ourselves in such a way that other people looking at us will get an impression of our wisdom and of our faithful, humble procedure.

There may be factors involved other than just my own personal dependence upon God's providence. Take, for instance, the matter of driving a car. The question could be raised, would a Christian

person need car insurance? Let me ask you this: What about the other people in your family and what about the other people on the highway? We'll say that you have trust in God to such an extent that if there should be an accident you're going to accept it from God, and whatever may be the consequences you're just going to take it from God. But now what about the other people, the other people who are involved in the accident? Especially since you know that car insurance is available, and in the event that you caused another person damage, you could, by a simple little matter of making arrangements with the insurance company, be sure that the other people would get their equity. They'd get repaid. Don't you think I'm responsible for that?

Perhaps I build a house. If I invite people to come and live in it, am I not responsible to make sure that fire protection is involved and arranged for? Don't you think I ought to recognize a fire hazard and have on hand fire fighting equipment? Is this evil thing?

Always keep in mind that there is no need to think that insurance is going to rob anybody else. That's not the idea. Nobody is going to get robbed by it. This is a service that you purchase, in which people, banded together, help out the one who is stricken by calamity.

Insurance is a practical arrangement to implement help in time of need. And a very practical consideration to have in mind is something like this: If you do escape calamity and you never suffer any loss, you never have any fires, you never have any accidents, you never have any sickness, then you personally don't need any kind of insurance indemnity at all. Well, then, I could tell you one thing: You can afford the premiums. They're not that big, and the premiums that you put in will help somebody else, because you see, somebody else may experience calamity.

If you experience some kind of event in which you are injured, or your family is injured, or your car is destroyed, or your house is burned down, would you need help? Certainly you would need help. Would you object to it, if the neighbors came together and built a house for you? Well now, if you would have no objection to the neighbors coming together and rebuilding your house, why should you object if the neighbors would come together ahead of time and put the money there and have it available so that, in case fire came to you, you could have the house built? Can you see how much alike they are?

When you do your driving, do you carry a spare tire? Why do you carry the spare tire? Why don't you just have confidence in God that there will be no flat tires? Now you have more sense than that. You have enough sense to know that one of the hazards of driving a car is that the tire might go flat, and one of the possibilities is that you could carry a spare tire with you. And because you're a provident person, because you are ready to do this kind of thing, you make arrangements ahead of time.

By the way, do you have a first aid kit in the house? Well, what have you got the first aid kit for? Why don't you just trust God? You see what I mean?

I am not wanting to belittle the matter of putting confidence in God. But even if you're willing to trust providence about your family and to risk everything as far as they are concerned, why not take advantage of an arrangement that has been made and protect them in case of danger or calamity?

## **Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A Budget?**

No doubt many persons feel that a budget is a practical procedure for persons who are not living by faith, and I want to raise these questions.

Does believing in God mean that you make no plans about your work? If you believe in God, does that mean that you're expecting God to arrange to provide everything, and you just go ahead as if you were a child and make no plans for the future?

No matter what the budget is for, nor what shape it might take, there is one basic idea. When you budget, when you use that word, you mean that you're planning to spend a certain amount of money here, a certain amount of money there. You are planning to do this in the morning, to do that in the afternoon, and that in the evening. You're planning to do this on Monday, you'll do this on Thursday, you'll do this on Sunday. That's what a budget is.

Now this budget, this thing of having a projected plan of conduct, of procedure, a plan for your house, a plan for your pocketbook, a plan for your time, is a practical admission of scarcity or limited supply. The reason why it is important for me to budget my activity, my time and my money is because I do not have enough for everything. And then, too, the budget is an evidence that some matters are more important. I've got some things coming up on Wednesday that I need to think about on Monday. I can't afford to spend all my money on Tuesday because of what's going to happen on Friday. I know already what's going to happen on Friday, and although I could easily spend all my money on Tuesday, I am going to need it for Friday.

A budget is possible only for a person who is willing to control himself and to deny himself. If you just spent everything you've got, well, that's the end of it. But if you're going to spread out what you've got over all the various things that you need, and the truth of the matter is you haven't got enough for all that you need, then you're going to have to plan it. You need so much. You've got so little. Some things are more important than others. And you're not going to let yourself do as you please. You're going to put yourself under control.

At this point the question might be raised that if that's the way it is, why even ask the question about a budget? Wouldn't everybody have one? Wouldn't every Christian person just naturally respect all these different things? Some would feel, you know, that a real Christian would be led right at the right moment, every time. And some will even live lives that are undisciplined, doing moment by moment, anything they want to do, and they're inclined to tell you that God will provide. I am going to suggest to you that this is living very much on a child-like level. In fact I'm not sure that it's even child-like. I think perhaps it should even be called childish.

Perhaps for some people the Sermon on the Mount would seem to teach something like this, when the Lord Jesus said, "Consider the birds of the air for they sow not, neither do they reap." The implication might seem to be that they don't do any planning for what they need, and yet our Father in heaven knows their need and arranges for them. But if you stop to think about the birds of the air, first of all you'll have to remember that they're not equipped with the same kind of faculties of conduct that you have. We're not at all sure what kind of minds they have; but they do not have minds like yours. But still I want you to notice something about birds: there's no lack of industry on their part. Believe me, it is true that they do not plant and they do not reap, but that doesn't mean they're not active.

Do you know when the birds go to work in the morning? Did you ever hear the expression, "Getting up with the chickens?" In case you don't know and don't have chickens I'll tell you right now that getting up with the chickens is real early business. It's a long time before daylight. The roosters will start

crowing long before the light of day, and if you're going to be like the birds of the air, just remember this: you're not going to be lazy and you're not going to be inactive. You'll be industrious. And, by the way, they don't just sit on fenceposts and have God drop the worms and the crickets in their mouths. You know perfectly well the robin has to go out and fly to find the worm, and if you stop and think about how far they go to get the worm and how they hunt around to find it, you could say to yourself, If I went about my work as diligently as they go about their work, if I was willing to put myself as much as they put themselves out, you know what? I'd get along. I'd do all right in this world. No, no, so far as the birds of the air are concerned, you'll find that interest and diligence has its place. The reason that story was told, the reason that that particular illustration is used in the Sermon on the Mount is that you're not to worry. When the bird goes out looking for a worm, he figures the worm is out there. He just has to find it. When that woodpecker goes up and starts pecking up on the side of a tree, you know he believes that the insects are there under the bark and he just wants to scare them out.

If you happen to be a salesman, you won't get a better sales talk today nor any day. You just think of that. All in the world you need to do is just go out there on the confident assumption that somewhere right in front of you there is a customer; you just have to find him.

There is nothing in the Sermon on the Mount at this point that would encourage you to be indifferent or careless about what is going to come to pass. In Luke 14:28-33, you will find that the Lord Jesus said, "Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it." A wise man, a good business man will see whether he's got enough to finish it. If he starts the tower and hasn't got enough to finish it, he'll look like a fool. You know what the Lord Jesus is saying? He is saying that any man who starts on a building project ought to budget what he's got and build accordingly. He goes on to say that any man who is going out to war, leading an army over against another one, and finding that his army is too small and the other army is too large, will first consider if his strategy is good enough to enable him to win. Otherwise, if he is wise, he will send a messenger, a committee, as it were, a delegation over there, and find out what the conditions of peace are before he commits himself to a hopeless fight. Now that's counting the cost.

If you sit down and count such a cost, and if that is sensible and spiritual, this is the very thing we do when we're budgeting. We are sitting down and planning. We are counting the cost. It's true that man proposes and God disposes. I know, and I know also that no budget can provide resources that are not there. The budget won't make you any money, but the budget is a procedure by which you can make the best use of the money that you've got. It's an admission that as you go along living day in and day out you could lose sight of what you're going to do overall.

Observation of the Lord's day, one day in seven, is actually a budgeting of your time. The tithe, one tenth of your income, is a budgeting of your money. Self denial, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, take up his cross. . . ." That's actually putting yourself under control. And this: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." That's a matter of priority.

Put those things all together and consider how the needs that you have are so many, as opposed to your resources. Keep in mind that you need to exercise self-control so that you don't indulge yourself, and you've got all the elements necessary to put together to make your budget and your plans.

As a practical procedure for you to receive blessing from God, yield yourself to the discipline of priorities. Put first things first and play it that way.

## Does A Christian Ever Need . . . A New Suit?

Do you think a real Christian should care about his personal appearance? I realize right well that some of my readers are laboring people, and you work under circumstances where your hands get dirty and your clothes get dirty. I realize that. I grew up on a farm, and many and many a time I worked in the mud. I worked with machinery and got my hands dirty. I have milked cows, and I know about these things. And with that in mind, I want you to read very, very carefully. I don't mean to make you feel embarrassed.

And I know that there are some who live under opposite circumstances. Your daily work enables you to dress well, and your clothing, your suits and your dresses are clean and fine. But I don't want you to think, when you look at somebody else, that you're a whole lot better. My point is this: Do you think your personal appearance in front of other people matters

We know very well that clothes do not make the man; it's the man inside that counts. We understand that, but I am going to raise a very sober question with you. Is it any evidence of spiritual maturity for a person to be careless about his appearance?

There was one time in life when I was real careless about my appearance, and that was when I was a baby. I didn't care a bit what I looked like. I didn't care a bit how I acted. I could embarrass people and it didn't matter to me. But you know, when I grew a little older I put away childish things. I was expected to conduct myself accordingly. I put on shoes. I couldn't go barefoot everywhere, and I began to dress. I had to button up my shirt. In fact, the time came when I had to put on a tie. Now this was because I was growing up and becoming mature. I was becoming responsible.

Do you remember what our heavenly garments are to be like? Remember what is said about them? They are to be without spot or wrinkle. Your clothes may be wrinkled here on earth, but should you wear clothing that really needs to be laundered or needs to be cleaned?

Do you remember, when our Lord Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, the way He is described? His face became brighter than the noon day sun. And His clothing became glistening white, whiter than any fuller's soap could make it. Think about that.

The garments of the priests were to be clean, without spot. And those men who were at the open tomb were dressed in white. There is great emphasis in the Bible on cleanliness. It is next to Godliness.

Now I know certainly that there's a danger here of vanity and I wouldn't want to pass that by. There is an important truth in this. If you get things out of proportion it's bad. Lack of proportion is evil. A person can say that to be strong is good. But to trust in your strength is pride, that's evil. To be wise is good, but to trust in your own cleverness, that's vanity, that's evil. To make an appearance that will put you in good report is actually honoring to God and adorning the gospel, but to trust in your appearance and to trust in your adornment would be unwise and would be spiritually unhealthy. So while there is a danger here of vanity, if you pay too much attention to your own appearance, there's an equal danger here of laziness if you pay no attention to your appearance.

It's very important to realize that the failure to be neat can also be a matter of pride. I can be so full of myself and so conceited that I don't care what I look like. The failure to be clean can actually be a matter of indulgence. I am just indulging myself and that's the reason I didn't wash my face.

I understand that a woman should be humble. Humility is a wonderful thing in a woman, but to not adorn herself for her husband at all is actually lack of love. Remember how a bride is adorned for the bridegroom? It's like that. The Scripture uses this phrase: "The king's daughter is all beautiful from within." Then we are told that her raiment is fine needlework. Well, if you have ever done needlework

you'll know that doing fine needlework is a very great chore. It is said in the Bible that a meek and quiet spirit is a pearl of great price; but personal piety should never be equated in your mind with carelessness or untidiness.

Most of us who fail to put on a clean shirt on occasion know right well why that was. We didn't want to be bothered. And actually the reason we didn't do it wasn't that we didn't have a clean shirt. It was just that we didn't care. The effect upon our hearts in the matter of personal appearance is very great.

Maybe you'll say to me, "Everything you're talking about is just something in this world." Listen, my dear brother or sister, we are living in this world and you're getting your report in this world and you're bearing your witness in this world. And people will look at you and they will, as it were, either appreciate or misunderstand the gospel in you because you are the "epistle" known and read of men. A letter that doesn't have any ink blots on it is a far better letter than the letter that is besmeared. You see what I mean?

Some years ago a young woman whom we knew real well was having much trouble in her family. It was trouble that was very hard to bear, and the emotional strain was great. On one particular day she happened to call up my wife, and my wife asked her, "What are you doing?" She said, "I'm going to buy a hat." My wife was almost shocked. "You are going to town to buy a hat?" The woman had had so much trouble, and this was the answer that came over the phone: "Yes. You never heard of a woman committing suicide on her way to a millinery shop." Now you think that over. You know there's a lot of truth in that.

Some years ago I happened to be in Brazil. I was riding in a bus among a people who spoke Portuguese. I don't, and so I was absolutely alone. I looked around and beside me there was sitting a man, a laborer, dressed in overalls. Very clean. After a while he took out a hymnbook and began his private devotion. I said to myself, that fits. Clean on the outside and clean on the inside.

Once upon a time, there was a man who was a very famous scientist. His name was Kepler. Perhaps you have read about him. He was a great astronomer. They said about Kepler that when he went into his observatory to look at the stars he always put on a dress suit. Can you imagine that? He said he put on that dress suit because he was going to look at God's handiwork.

Why do we have Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes? Oh I know you can abuse the matter of your appearance, to be sure. But you could use it too. And so, in reverence toward God and respect toward man, let's be careful of our personal appearance.