



*"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16*

# Warnings to Church Leaders

By L. S. Boardman

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### PART I

#### WARNINGS TO CHURCH LEADERS

This is the first of four chapters on the general theme of "Warnings to Church Leaders" against corruption in the operation of their official duties.



## 1. VOICES THAT CANNOT BE SILENCED

History consistently reveals the frightening fact that most church officials tend to become corrupt in the operation of their offices if they remain in a position of leadership for very long. Many times their attitude and spirit changes noticeably, almost as soon as they find themselves in an official position.

From the "EVANGELIST OF TRUTH," August 1982, -- Rev. C. E. Fleishman, 49 years on the firing line, having pastored some of the largest holiness churches in America in the earlier years of his life, wrote, "The church is backslidden because leaders have compromised. Preachers have followed leadership rather than God."

Dr. R. T. Williams, one of the early General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene said, "If you want to ruin the best Holy Ghost preacher in the church, make him a district superintendent." (Various others have quoted Dr. Williams, but he is said to have originated and broadcast this statement).

Rev. Francis Mansell, the President of the Allegheny Wesleyan Church, while preaching at a camp meeting in Sherrard, Illinois, in 1981, and specifically addressing the preachers, made this statement: "We have less chances to make heaven than the laymen." Rev. H. E. Schmul, president of the International Holiness Association has this to say: "We did not get where we are, in our movement, by accident. We are reaping twenty years of a preaching emphasis that has polarized around men and issues; men die and issues change, but Christ and His Word abide forever. Some of our younger men feel strongly that our leadership bears a large share of responsibility for where we are, because we have permitted the emphasis that has produced this effect. They hear the call for humbling and confession for revival and fail to see leaders setting a genuine example. They feel if any one needs to admit failure, it's the leadership. I fear they will continue to turn away from us unless we repent and change our ways . . . . There must be a spiritual death, a crucifixion to our institutions and a resurrection to a new life in Christ. I am not sure what that will mean for our organization. Unless leaders humble themselves and seek reconciliation, we will continue to stagnate and die." (Crucible for Conservatives, 1987).

Evangelist Arthur Vess, a very sweet, holy man, now deceased, wrote in the April 1966 issue of the CONVENTION HERALD, "It is a rare thing for a church official to confess his faults or sins, but you must do it regardless of your position among men." A very close friend of mine for many years, shortly after resigning as district moderator in our church, confided in me, "I got out of it because I saw that if I stayed with it I could not make heaven."

When John Wesley Redfield was asked what kind of sermons made him so successful as an evangelist, he replied, "I take the rough, unpopular Methodist truths that preachers who hope to be Bishops and Presiding Elders dare not use." --(Life of Redfield, p. 125).

Mr. Redfield subsequently wrote, "I had yet to learn that hostility to right never ceases." (Ibid., p. 173). "Hence, Dr. Redfield generally encountered, wherever he labored, fierce opposition from ecclesiastics. A whole city would be moved by his preaching, while the presiding elder, and such as he could influence, were doing all they could to destroy his influence." (Ibid., p. 5).

From a tape recording taken at Hobe Sound Camp a few years ago, evangelist Percy Trueblood shocked the congregation by remarking, "Two-thirds of this crowd should come to the altar and most of the preachers should lead the way." (He was preaching on

the subject of “Backsliding”).

Paul Harvey, our current, popular news commentator told his radio listeners, “The office tends to make a man a demagogue.” Webster says a demagogue is “. . . a leader who makes use of popular prejudices and false claims and promises to gain power.” THORNDIKE-BARNHART JUNIOR DICTIONARY, SEVENTH EDITION, says a demagogue is “a popular leader who stirs up the people to get something for himself.” Another said, “A demagogue is one who seeks power over others and then takes advantage of it.”

In the book THE SECRET OF POWER, by E. M. Bounds, Richard Cecil is quoted as saying, “The leading defect in Christian minister is want of a devotional prayer life.” (pp. 48-49).

Hal Lindsey, a very popular and current writer, is unblushingly outspoken when in his tape recording entitled COUNTDOWN TO ARMAGEDDON, spoke his convictions thus: -- “There has never been a time in the history of the Christian church when so many men posing to be of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, are not even born again themselves. Listen, when the rapture occurs . . . you know that most churches wouldn’t even have to go get a new pastor.” Alma White, author of the book, LOOKING BACK FROM BEULAH, and founder of the Pillar of Fire Church, wrote of one of the Methodist Bishops of her day in these shocking words, “Bishop Vincent was no doubt the Ahab of Methodism who did more to provoke the wrath of God than all others who had proceeded him.” (p. 312).

Mrs. White continues, “I saw in the church officials the spirit of the inquisition, or the next thing to it, and awoke to the fact that God was no longer in the machinery of Methodism.” (Ibid., pp. 235-236).

Again, she added, “There were those who were willing for their names to be used as speakers in camp meetings and conventions, but who took no active part where work or sacrifice was required.

Such persons were usually ambitious for leadership where they could build on the sacrifice and labors of others.” (Ibid., p. 317).

Mrs. White ventured, “The preacher’s soul is of no more value in the sight of God than that of a member of his congregation, but he is capable of doing much more harm because of the position he holds.” (Ibid., p. 255).

Referring to her husband, Mrs. White wrote, “I know that if the Lord wanted him to stay in the Methodist ministry, He could manage backslidden Bishops and Presiding Elders and vindicate His own work if He chose to do so.” (Ibid., p. 236).

We quote Mrs. White again: “Preachers may be brilliant and attractive in their manner of speech, and not have a iota of salvation. Their pleasing personalities and oratorical discourses may captivate and hold the people, but will never uncover their sins and bring them to repentance, and to the knowledge of God. People everywhere are making the mistake of supporting clergymen who are void of spiritual life and power.” (Ibid., p.255).

The saintly, and most highly revered H. Robb French, founder of HOBE SOUND BIBLE COLLEGE AND CAMP MEETING, voiced this conviction: “When politics come into a church, the Holy Ghost goes out.” (This quotation should be a strong warning to every church official on every level – local, district, and general).

On another occasion Bro. French said to his audience, “Many have brought their office or position into focus. Men who used to preach radical, today see thing differently. They get to climbing up, and now they are living to hold their position. An office is dangerous thing.” (From a tape recording).

Evangelist H. E. Darnell, in a recorded message delivered in a Bible Missionary campmeeting in the summer of 1982, made this statement: “There was a brother that I loved with a love like the love of David and Jonathan. I tell you he was an old-fashioned, rugged preacher of the Gospel at one time.

But he was promoted to a high position and immediately there seemed there came a let down in his life, and a compromise. People brought me the report. They knew of the close relationship that existed between us...”



## 2. TRUTHFULNESS, THE TAP ROOT OF INTEGRITY

Blessed is the church official who will never, never, never, for any reason, resort to falsehood. He will not knowingly misrepresent anything. Someone said, “Those who tell white lies soon become color-blind,” and, “It is easy to tell one lie, but it is hard to just tell one.” THE BIBLE SAYS THAT NO LIAR SHALL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. “And there shall in no wise enter it (heaven) anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. . . .” (Rev. 21:27).

Lies come from a deceitful and carnal heart. Paul insisted, “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds. . . .” (Col. 3:9).

According to I Tim. 4:2, lying indicates a seared conscience. “Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron. . . .” The most cruel lie is the one which puts a good person in a bad light by telling something about him that is not true. That, by the way, is the height of slander and the ultimate in brutality.

There are those who reason that a little white lie is not that serious a matter if it will relieve the immediate situation or enhance one’s objective, especially when it is a good cause. Remember, holy ends never justify sinful means. Anything is easy to rationalize when one’s conscience becomes seared.

One man convinced himself that he didn’t tell a lie, and the facts are, HE DID TELL THE TRUTH, TECHNICALLY, but he told it in such a way as to leave a false impression that was designed to totally mislead the one to whom he was speaking.

From the SATURDAY EVENING POST years ago a quote read, “The trouble with stretching the truth is that it’s apt to snap back.” (from the 7000 Illustrations, p. 1529).

Some church officials have been known to follow THIS deceitful pattern: when someone tries to involve them in something they are opposed to, instead of coming clean with the brother and revealing their honest feelings, they leave him with a false hope by saying, “I’ll pray about it,” when they have no intention whatsoever of praying about it, but use that as a means of evading the issue. Escape mechanisms come out of a cowardly, unsanctified heart.

In the account of Ananias and Sapphira in the fifth chapter of the Acts, God lets us know how He feels about liars. When rebuked by the apostle they dropped in their tracks and were buried before the sun went down. If God should suddenly do the same thing in our day, we wonder how many churches would be without a pastor, or how many general and district seats would be empty – that of local church board members also and Sunday School teachers – etceteras.

Some feel – and they probably are right – that the day of judgment would not be a very

heavy day's work for God if He would first eliminate all of those who knowingly, purposely, habitually and even maliciously tell things that they know are not the truth.

One high church official has this habit: when accosted for gross wickedness in the handling of church affairs he will try to trip up his challenger with a diverting statement or counter-question, and then immediately explain that he has an important engagement, and he hurries away; leaving the challengers frustrated and speechless. It seldom is productive to approach such as one about the wrongs he has done. When one doesn't feel enough Holy Ghost conviction, or possess enough natural character qualities to come clean without outside pressure, then the outside pressure seldom does any lasting good. Jesus said to regard such as one as a heathen man and a publican (Matt. 18:17). Paul said, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful work of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11).

Another deceitful "escape-trick" some play when approached for their wrong doings as to say, "It was all a misunderstanding," and then hurry away, making further probing impossible. That trick will not work when we stand before God on the day of judgment.

It is a temptation sometimes for a district leader, when he desperately needs a pastor to fill an opening, to make a pastorate sound much better than it actually is. There is also a temptation in discussing moving expenses or salary, or both, to make promises which he knows that he or the church can't keep. For some reason or other there are those who do not think such a practice is lying.

Years ago while preaching a revival down in the deep South, and staying with a very fine family of lovely Christian people, the husband told me this story:

He said that in a previous revival the evangelist challenged them all to fast WITH him for a week.

They might drink clear water, but take no food or nourishment of any kind. Several agreed to do this along with the evangelist. When the week was over this laymen said to the evangelist, "Would you like to ride down town with me this morning?" When they got to the milk plant he invited the evangelist to come and meet his friend. When he started to introduce the evangelist to his friend in the milk plant the man said, "Oh, I know him. He comes in every morning and buys a quart of milk and drinks it." Does that not make one wonder how many other places he may have gone, and how much he may have eaten during that week when he led the people to believe he was fasting along with them? If he had not promised to fast with the people, it would have been a different matter.

Rumors tell us the Communists believe and teach that lying is not wrong if it helps the cause.

There is a pastor right here in Des Moines who is a pastor of one of the largest churches, who tells his people that lying is not sinful if it benefits the church. It is amazing how many church officials come eventually to feel the same way about it, and even though some don't come right out and voice this philosophy, they practice it. But their hopes of heaven is false hope because God's Word emphatically declares: "All liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8). Church officials who fall into this evil pattern convince themselves that they are still saved and that they are on their way to heaven, but that is Calvinism – eternal salvation – [a sinning religion](#) that is a diametrically opposed to the plain teachings of God's Word.

Lying is a terrible sin, and how few are as careful about total abstinence from its practice as heaven's entrance shall demand! If even little white lies are acceptable with you, my friend, and are not considered serious crimes by you, then you are affiliated with the

kingdom of Satan and controlled by the demons of hell. Furthermore, you should not need to be reminded that when your lying habits put good people in a bad light, marring their pure image and hurting their good influence, you become a murderer in the eyes of God and are deserving of eternal punishment in eternity, and that is exactly what you will receive, unless you repent, confess your backslidden state and abandon your sinful practice. One may succeed in pulling the wool over the eyes of the public here in the world and for years become reelected, but he won't come out that well at the judgment, for God said, "But he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." (Eph. 3:25).

Years ago when we were young we pastored in a small community a few miles from another young couple, Brother and Sister S., and we became very close friends. A few years later we both had moved to another state and Sister S. became the District Foreign Missionary President, and she was very efficient in that position. She was a gifted speaker, saturated with missionary zeal, and visited every church faithfully, stirring up visions, zeal and finances for the work. She came to know nearly all the lay-women on the district by their first name. She received nearly an unanimous vote at every annual District Assembly.

In the meantime it had become popular for the district superintendent's wife to be the Foreign Missionary President. However, the superintendent knew his wife could not receive enough votes.

So he devised a plan, and got the word around that his wife might become the vice-president. No one objected to that proposal, so it went through with an overwhelming vote. He then confided in a supposedly trusty friend that all he would have to do now is to get Brother and Sister S. to move to another district and his wife would automatically have the coveted position.

He then went to Brother S. and said, "Brother S. you have done a real good job in this little church, but you are deserving of something better. Now, I have a much larger church that will be open in two or three weeks and I can get you in there. Also, I have a man that I would like to put in your church and he is ready to move right now. Now, since it is warm weather, and your little girl is not in school, if you would be willing to move down into a cabin on our district camp ground for a few days so we can work things out both ways." Bro. S. fell for the idea and moved to the district camp ground. A few more weeks went by and Sister S. contacted the superintendent. He said, "Sister S. I have bad news for you. They didn't want you. However, I have another church opening up just any day now and I am sure I can get you in there. It is not as good a church, but is about the same as the one you had." A few more weeks went by and Sister S. contacted him again with the same results. They didn't want them. However, he had another very small church that was to open right away and he offered that and she consented to accept that church. In the meantime they were without both food and money. Wife and I were both working and we kept them in groceries for several weeks during this harrowing ordeal. Again, time went on and Sister S. contacted him again and he said, "Sister S. I'm only the superintendent. I can't make those people accept you if they don't want you." Would all of this lead one to wonder if the pressure was put on hoping they would seek an opening on another district? Let us see! Wait for evidence! We must not surmise! About that time a lady in one of the churches called Sister S. to visit their church on foreign mission night and preach for them, which she did. At the close of the service Sister S. stepped up to three ladies who stood talking together. One of them said, "Sister S., we recently changed pastors and we knew you folks were not in a pastorate right now and we planned to bring your name up at the church meeting, but the superintendent brought up a name of a minister from another district and spoke so highly of him, and it went through so fast that we didn't have a chance to mention your name."

Sister S. was dumbfounded because that was one of the three churches that supposedly had rejected them. She then contacted some of the ladies in the other two churches and learned that their name had not been brought up in any one of the three churches mentioned.

We knew this superintendent personally and have heard him preach. He was a very gifted preacher and a very successful administrator. He is gone on now. We wonder if the report in the church paper said he was “promoted to glory.” However, if anyone wishes to believe that this District Superintendent went to heaven he has a perfect right to believe whatever he wants to believe, but he will be forcing himself to believe something which is one hundred percent contrary to the Word of God. (Rev. 21:8). The facts are, he didn’t even observe the Golden Rule which Christ laid down in Luke 6:31, to do unto others as he would have others do unto him.

Being able to preach great sermons and having administrative ability second to none, [will never keep any soul out of hell](#). Jesus said, “The wicked shall be turned into hell. . .” (Psa. 9:17).

Wouldn’t you say that the treatment Brother and Sister S. received was equivalent to killing the prophets? What did Jesus say about killing the prophets? It is recorded in Matt. 23:29-30 that Jesus accused the Scribes and Pharisees of [being of the same spirit as their father](#) who killed the prophets, and He finished by saying, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of Hell?”

Here is another view of the above illustration: In the case the superintendent’s wife, who naturally coveted the position, was the party to the diabolical scheme, [would she have any better chance of heaven than her wicked, scheming husband?](#) Did Sapphira, in Acts 5:10, who was a party to her husband’s wicked device fare any better than her husband who lied, and dropped in his tracks when God smote him? What could possibly lead anyone to feel that he will get by with similar corrupt practices when God said in His word, “But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respecter of persons” (Eph. 3:25).

*[People who are not truthful; how can they have kept their salvation?](#)*

In a revival meeting some years ago, several young girls were at the altar praying earnestly, when suddenly one of them got up hastily and went into an adjacent Sunday School class room. In a few minutes she returned and volunteered that she had gone in there and removed all the stars opposite her name from the poster which indicated she had studied her Sunday School lesson. She confessed that she had not studied it one single time. When she said that, three or four others got up from the altar and went into the same room and did the same thing. Then the teacher, who also had a star against her name every week testified that she did study her lesson. She hurried through it while her husband was driving her to church. If one could conscientiously call that “STUDYING” then she DID tell the truth! Anyhow, she kept her stars on the chart. Somehow, it seems much harder for important people to confess their sins than unimportant people. Have you ever noticed that the longer one remains in a high position, the less inclined he is to admit doing things that are shady? Many church officials, it would seem, tend to get to the place where they put the truth into one box and falsehood into another box and it often appears that they will reach into either box, [just so long as they can ease the present situation](#).

Colonel Harland Sanders gives this as his prescription for success; “It is comparatively easy to prosper by trickery: violation of confidence; oppression of the weak; sharp practices; cutting corners;

- all of those methods that we are so prone to tolerate and condone as business shrewdness. It is difficult to prosper by the keeping of promises, the delivery of values in

goods, and in services and in deeds, and in meeting so-called shrewdness with sound merit and good ethics. The easy way is efficacious and speedy. The hard way is arduous and long. But as the clock ticks the easy way becomes harder, and the hard way becomes easier, as the calendar records the years it becomes increasingly evident that the easy was resting hazardously upon sifting sands, whereas the hard way builds solidly on a foundation of confidence that cannot be swept away.” (Paul Harvey, Sept. 2, 1985).

It is highly evident that those who endeavor to build a foundation of bones of those they have stomped into the ground, are not building for eternity, and yet eternity is down the road for us all.

Hundreds of pages could be written on this subject, but the point has been made; the warning has been given, and intelligent people, who can read the Word shouldn't have to be reminded that with a deceitful heart and a lying tongue, they have absolutely no hope of heaven. If you, my dear reader, have developed deceitful practices through years of administrative pressures you must totally and forever break the habit of lying. And, if your position of leadership in the church makes it impossible for you to always tell the truth, you should resign at once, and slip out of the devil's snare before you receive your summons to appear before God, “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:14).



### 3. WATCH YOUR SPIRITUAL VITAL SIGNS!

Blessed is the church leader who will refuse to continue operating and professing full salvation when he knows he has lost the keen edge from his experience and become lean in his soul, with the Holy Spirit neglected and grieved, and with carnal symptoms returning. Instead he will seek the throne of grace for frequent heart searching and “. . . renewing of the Holy Ghost ...” (Titus 3:5).

The “Eye gate and the ear gate are liable to an attack at almost any time. Eve fell at those two gates. David fell at the eye-gate. Peter failed through inward cowardice. Demas loved this present evil world. Look well to the heart, for out of it are the issues of life. Then there is that tongue of yours and those lips! Watch.” (Holiness and Power, by A. M. Hills, p. 358).

“Ask God to set a watch at the door of your lips lest you sin against him. The famous Alfred Cookman sought and obtained the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, and received the long-sought blessing of holiness, with its attending unutterable joy and peace and light and strength and blessing.

Eight weeks of this when he went to conference: ‘I found myself in the midst of beloved brethren.

Forgetting how easily the infinitely Holy Spirit might be grieved, I allowed myself to drift into the spirit of the hour, and after an indulgence in foolish joking and story telling realized that I had suffered serious loss. To my next field of labor I proceeded with consciously diminished spiritual power” (Ibid., p. 359).

We wonder, why it is that under the same circumstances as Alfred Cookman indulged in, some of us do not feel any loss of spiritual power. Could it be because we cannot lose what we do not have? (This question is not intended to be in any way sarcastic or cynical, but is utterly sincere). How some hate to admit that we don't have what we profess! When

the rapture occurs millions of professed holiness people from the humblest lay-person to the highest official will miss it because both their public and private lives fail to measure up to the holiness they profess. Their sin in the eyes of God are worse, and call for more severe punishment than the sin of sodomy because they have had so much more light and have failed to walk in it. If you do not believe this statement, then read Lamentations 4:6 in its context.

It is both dangerous and easy for any one of us to grieve the Holy Spirit away, but it takes genuine effort to get Him back when He has been heedlessly, (or worse than that) MALICIOUSLY grieved away. St. John speaks of those who “could not believe” because God had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts. (John 12:39-40). Why did God do that to them? Because His patience runs out and His Spirit will not always strive with man. (Gen. 6:3).

“Preachers are as liable to backslide as any other class of men. When they do backslide in heart they often become extremely dangerous.” (Fisher of Men, by B. T. Roberts, p. 67).

“Their growing popularity deceived them, as they are deceiving others . . . The deceived and deceiver shall perish together.” (Ibid., p. 68).

There have been, praise God! High church leaders who have humbled themselves when they realized they had lost the smile of God, they made public their deep soul need and found their way back in favor of God. Such was the case of W. A. McIntyre of whom we read in the biography of Samuel Logan Brengle of the early Salvation Army. We read:

“Major, when I asked that you might come to California, I had a double purpose in mind. I wanted you for the Trestle Glen Camp-meeting; but I wanted you for myself as well. I’ve read your writings, sensed your spirit, and I believe you can help me. I’ve grown a little dry in my own soul. I didn’t expect to approach you here in the office; I intended rather to wait and lead the way to the penitent-form at camp. But I can’t wait.’ After this frank confession of heart hunger, the two men went to their knees.”

“In such a manner was the way paved for what turned out to be, according to the San Jose MERCURY, ‘. . . altogether the most successful meeting of its kind ever held in this Coast.’ The camp-meeting opened in a blaze of revival fervor, ran for two weeks, during which more than four hundred came to the penitent-form seeking deeper spiritual experience.” (Portrait of a Prophet, pp. 102-103).

Major McIntyre was one of those very rare, high officials in the church who felt that humiliation meant nothing if only he could get back the favor and power of God. He felt that, at any price, he must again enjoy the romance of his experience which he had lost. All too many in the same sad condition simply drift on and on, get worse and worse, until they never find their way back to a Holy Ghost experience, and die in the fog.

Such was the case of a great physician in the South a few years ago. Dr. G. \_\_\_\_\_ also was a gifted Sunday School teacher and had his lesson broadcast on the radio every Sunday morning. One Monday morning one of his nurses said to him, “Dr. G. \_\_\_\_\_, that was a marvelous lesson you taught yesterday morning on the radio.” “Thank you,” he replied, “But if I only had my heart.” He knew he wasn’t right with God, but he didn’t have the courage or the willpower to do anything about it. He was a good, faithful church member, but he had habits that would break the heart of any good, devoted wife, but he would not desist.

Years ago a District Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene was awakened one night by the voice of God saying to him, “You are nothing but a backslidden District superintendent.” It broke his heart. He rolled out of bed, according to his own testimony and wept his way back to God.

One of the greatest evangelist preachers, in my opinion, that the Holiness Movement ever produced was sitting in a camp meeting listening to another preach and went with others to the altar of prayer where he was overheard praying, "I have lost out in my soul." The sad part of this story is that his subsequent life made many wonder if he ever got back to God, even though he preached to great camp-meeting crowds to the end of his life. We hoped he did get back, but if he did not, it is too late now. Many of the shady deals he induced and endorsed subsequent to that trip to the altar were so dishonest and ethically corrupt that we shudder as we think of it. Oh how we loved him! But he turned us down flat.

One of the greatest problems facing high church officials is discovering, under the close preaching of their peers and subjects, that they themselves have a spiritual need and being too proud (which is carnal) to face the humiliation of confessing their need and their sins, they will take it out on the one who preached them under conviction.

For example, E. E. Shelhamer writes: "November 1, 1895, by invitation we began a meeting in a mission in Atlanta, Ga., then under the auspices of the North Georgia Holiness Association. The revival was a clean sweep, taking in holiness professors, many of whom found they did not have the genuine article. After a number prayed through, it brought light and conviction upon others until it reached the leader who saw that to get right meant restitution. Though rich and well able to do it, he backed down, wrote to the president of the association to return quickly, for 'Shelhamer,' he said, 'is about to organize a Free Methodist Church in the mission.' Such a thing had never been intimated, or even thought of. However, it brought the president back and immediately his countenance toward us was changed. He said the meeting must close, and the door was locked." (Ref. Lost).

It was reported that Dr. Ironside was one time mightily baptized with the Holy Ghost, and for a time had a most glorious experience. However, sad to say, he grieved the Holy Spirit away and spent all remaining years of his long life, from youth, denouncing this glorious experience of second blessing holiness, denying its validity. He is said to have been the strongest voice in his generation opposing the true, scriptural doctrine of holiness on which John Wesley founded in the Methodist Church. It surely would be sad enough for one to lose this marvelous experience, but to deny it and denounce, — that is one of the sure marks of an apostate. The Bible says, ". . . whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matt. 12:32).

Dr. Ironside's book entitled, "HOLINESS THE TRUE AND THE FALSE" contended that true holiness was false and false holiness was true. That book was designed to disannul the real, genuine Scriptural experience of holiness and substitute a false, man-made holiness. This book was a direct, lethal thrust against the Holy Ghost himself, and was written by a man who at one time had the true experience, but lost it and settled for the false, based, not on Scriptures, but on his own faulty experience.

One of the ministries of the Holy Ghost is to guide us into all truth (John 16:13) and when we lose Him we stumble in the dark until we finally wind up in "the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 13). That is apostasy, pure and simple, and calls for the insertion here of a poem which God gave the writer several years ago.

## **LIFE'S GREATEST LOSS BY L. S. BOARDMAN**

Should I lose the Holy Spirit ----- (Judges 16:20-b).

It would be life's greatest loss, ----- (Phil. 3:8).  
If I gained the throne of honor ----- (Num. 22:17, 18).  
While I laid aside my cross ----- (Matt. 10:38).

Were I to grieve the precious Spirit, ----- (Eph. 4:30).  
Oh, the tender "Dove of God," ----- (Matt. 3:16-b).  
I would rather die an early death, ----- (2 Kings 4:18-20).  
And be hurried to the sod, ----- (Gen. 3:19).

Than to miss divine appointments, ----- (Luke 19:14-44).  
And thus follow human plans, ----- (James 4:13-16).  
And at heart I fail my calling ----- (I Peter 1:15-16).  
And have blood on my hands. ----- (Matt. 27:24-25).

I might still promote revivals, ----- (II Chron. 7:14).  
And still preach very fine, ----- (I Sam. 10:10-11).  
And point folks to the narrow way, ----- (Matt. 7:14).  
And hold them to the line. ----- (II Cor. 13:2).

And with altars lined with seekers, ----- (Acts 2:41).  
And most zealous while I preach, ----- (Rom. 10:2).  
And sense not the 'Dove's' departure, ----- (Jud. 16:20).  
Till He's forever out of reach. ----- (I Sam. 28:15).

While longing to be famous, ----- (Isa. 14:13-14).  
Grieving thus the Holy Spirit, ----- (Isa. 63:10).  
I might preach with only sentiment, ----- (Isa. 30:10).  
That's the kind some like the most. ----- (II Tim. 4:3-4).

And avoid repercussions, ----- (John 16:1-3; Acts 7:54-60).  
Taking pains to step aside, ----- (I Tim. 1:5-6; Jud. 11-13).  
To salve up one's own conscience, ----- (Luke 10:29).  
When wrongs are rationalized. ---- (Prov. 14:12; 30:12; Rev. 3:17).

Aims to keep the carnal happy, ----- (Eph. 6:6).  
And to make them each his friend, ----- (II Sam. 15:5-6).  
What a sad and bitter story, ----- (II Sam. 18:33).  
When one's life has reached the end ----- (II Kings 20:1).

Eulogizing o'er one's casket, ----- (I Kings 13:30-31).  
Will not save him from the 'fire' ---- (Matt. 23:33; Rev. 19:20).  
Which is awaiting the false preachers, ---- (I John 4:1; I Kings 13:18).  
When at last they shall expire. ----- (I Kings 13:24).

Being called to preach the gospel, ---- (I Tim. 1:12; Luke 9:60).  
Proved a very perilous day, ----- (Matt. 27:5; Matt. 23:37, 38).  
For many preach the truth to others, ---- (I Tim. 1:12; Luke 9:60).  
And themselves have missed the way. ----- (I Cor. 9:27).

With their eyes upon life's comforts, ----- (II Tim. 4:10).  
And their hearts were lifted up, ----- (I Tim. 3:6).

They despised to join the martyrs, ----- (Rev. 17:6; Acts 7:54-60).  
And refuse the bitter cup. ----- (Matt. 26:39-42).

Pointing to their well lined altars, ----- (Acts 2:41).  
They supposed that proved the fact, ----- (Luke 10:17-20).  
That they'd obeyed the Lord themselves, ----- (Acts 26:19-20; II Tim. 4:10).  
And never once looked back. ----- (Gen. 19:26; Luke 9:62).

But our Christ – He holds the road map, ----- (Isa. 30:21).  
And He knows just where we've erred, ----- (John 4:16-19, 29).  
When we failed the path of duty, ----- (Matt. 21:30-31).  
And we compromised the Word. ----- (II Peter 3:16).

Lord, keep the fear of hell upon us, ----- (Matt. 5:29, 30).  
Lest we take the hireling's way, ----- (John 10:12-13).  
And for lust we sell our conscience, ----- (I Tim. 4:2).  
While we are slipping every day. ----- (Jer. 8:5).

Standing bold before the people; ----- (I Sam. 28:15; Acts 1:18).  
Putting up a stubborn bluff, ----- (Matt. 26:24-25).  
While in our secret heart life, ----- (Ps. 19:12).  
Things are getting awful rough. ----- (I Sam. 28:15; Acts 1:18).

While working up enthusiasm, ----- (I Kings 18:28-29).  
And we seem to "ring the bell," ----- (Prov. 14:12).  
With true unction all departed, ----- (Judges 16:20-b).  
Is a tell too sad to tell. ----- (Matt. 23:37-38).

Do we dare to turn the ledger? ----- (Rev. 20:12).  
With our motives written down; ----- (I John 3:12).  
Hireling preachers, heed this warning, ----- (John 10:12, 13).  
Lest you fail to gain the crown. ----- (Rev. 3:11).

Prostrate then, we'll fall before Him, ----- (Phil. 2:10, 11).  
Be it I, or be it you; ----- (Rom. 2:11).  
At the judgment we must answer, ----- (Eccl. 11:9).  
Why we preach the way we do. ----- (Jer. 23:16).

Secret sins and carnal motives, ----- (Eccl. 12:14).  
That are too off-shade to tell; ---- (Prov. 27:6; Matt. 26:48-49).  
Blind men lauded to Heaven, ----- (Matt. 15:14).  
Jesus curses such to hell. ----- (Matt. 22:13-14).

Where the hottest fires are burning, ----- (Matt. 23:14; Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47).  
There to spend endless night, ----- (Jude 13).  
Having damned our souls and people, ----- (Matt. 15:14).  
With a false facsimile of light. ----- (Matt. 6:23).

Losing the experience of entire sanctification is not a rare occurrence. "John Wesley said it was next to a miracle for anyone to receive that blessing (entire sanctification) and never lose it." (Holiness and Power, p. 345).

Rev. A. M. Hills tells of a precious lady who received this wonderful experience and for

two years had unutterable peace, but she somehow lost the blessing and never regained it. (Ibid., pp. 344-345).

Multitudes across the centuries have fallen over that same cliff into a backslidden state. Many, it is true, have confessed their "Lost estate" and prayed their way back into the saved and sanctified life, but the great majority who thus fall, especially when they are prominent in leadership, with all eyes upon them, never pay the price, confess their lack, and get back the holiness they lost.

Rev. William Reddy received this wonderful experience, but fearing to confess it, lost it, and it took him four years to get it back. (Ibid. p. 349-350).

"If, therefore, we who have the grace will not be true and tell the world of it, we deprive God of his only witness. To try to hide the truth, or so mix up the evidence that the people will not know that we are holiness people, is to prove that we are backslidden or on the road there. If he sees us trying to avoid the cross of definite testimony by keeping back a part of the truth, he can not bless us.

Definite testimony is a necessity. Failure at this point cuts off further supplies. It will be the gateway to a lost blessing." (Ibid. p. 347).

We all need to be reminded and warned that grieving the Holy Spirit from one's heart is one of the most serious and perilous things a soul can do, and especially so for one who won't admit it. The chances of getting back one's lost experience is not the best. It is always a bad risk. You frighten a dove away and then try to coax it back and you'll see what we mean! The Holy Spirit in Scriptures is likened to a dove. He is our Advocate, Intercessor, Comforter, Guide, Helper, and Commissioner.

Hence the writer's most loved and cherished poem, received from the Holy Spirit Himself and dedicated to Him.

## **DOVE DIVINE**

O Thou Trinity's Precious Dove,  
Advocate of Holy love,  
Comforter, by Grace Divine,  
And to think that Thou art mine!  
Thou who makes our Saviour real,  
With a Presence we can feel --  
Intercessor, most divine --  
All heaven thrills this heart of mine!  
We honor Thee, our Blessed Host --  
Sweet Spirit of God, Sweet Holy Ghost!  
Above all things of time and earth,  
Since we've found the Second Birth.  
O Thou Condescending Dove  
From God's throne room high above, --  
To this carnal heart of mine;  
Making pure and holy Thine.  
Takes away my bent to sin --  
Puts God's holiness within --  
Starts a fire to burn for aye,  
To eternity's endless day.  
My allegiance Thou shalt always know,

As the eons come and go.  
Holy Spirit, Dove divine --  
I'm so glad that Thou art mine.

There is a secret to one's keeping spiritual, keeping close to God and not losing the divine touch and the smile of the Father. "If we would be preserved blameless we must live not by long intervals, but by the breath and by the moment. Each instant must be dedicated and presented to God, a ceaseless sacrifice, and each breath be poured into his bosom and received back from His Being. We must also learn to recover instantly from failure by frank confession and prompt faith and recommittal. It is possible to catch ourselves before we have really fallen, and God does not count it a fall if we do not yield to it. Unseen hands are ever near to bear us up even when we dash our foot against a stone." (Ibid., p. 364).

Says Bishop Foster: "Acquire the habit of living by the minute. Let it not be supposed that you are not to act for the future. But act by the minute. Take care of this moment now, while you have it, and the next when it comes; you will not then neglect any. You can live this minute without sin! Is it not so? (By the help of God) do it, then. Never mind what is before you. (With the help of Jesus) do not sin now. When each successive minute comes do likewise. If you will do this you will not sin at all. Days are made up of minutes. If each minute is without sin, the day will be also. Try this: Nothing is easier. Nothing is more wise. Live by the minute. Carry on your business, trade, labor, study, plans for the future by the minute. Trust in God now; do God's will now; do not offend God now. If you will observe this simple rule you will not fail." (Ibid.).

Years ago, while holding a revival in Wichita, Kansas, a dear old gentleman confessed, "I had a better experience seventy years ago than I have now." This is terribly sad, and yet it has happened to millions both living and dead. May this never happen to one who reads this book, or to its author.

But instead, we hope for all that the last mile of the way will be the best! Some one has truthfully said: "It is much easier to keep the holy fire burning than to kindle it after it has gone out."

"It was a childish ignorance,  
But now 'tis little joy  
to know I'm farther off from heaven..."  
(Other part of poem missing)



#### 4. THE AMBITIOUS AND UNPRINCIPLED

Blessed is the church official who will not try to unsettle another to make a place for himself. That spirit is satanic and murderous. Remember Lucifer, the "Son of the Morning?" He becomes Satan, the devil, the deceiver and destroyer, first by attempting to dethrone God and take the rulership of the universe into his own wicked hands. (Isa. 13:12-14). Those for selfish reasons place ruthless hands on one of God's anointed, must have taken lightly God's stern command in Psalms 105:15, which reads: "Touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm." These ominous words appear seven times in the book of First Chronicles. The higher-ups in position and power must never forget that even the most humble layman, such as Uriah the Hittite, has rights which he has received

from God and which are sacred to him, and are to be looked upon with due respect. When caution at this point is thrown to the wind, church leaders on any level find themselves in open violation of Biblical standards of morality and are in league with Satan, the archenemy of Jesus Christ. Once a corrupt pattern of operation is adopted by a church official, he has violated, seriously, a basic principle in the area of Christian ethics as laid down by Christ and His apostles. And please do not forget, my friend, God will finally see to it that the gallows-builder hangs. Dr. Coxon has very forcibly affirmed: "One cannot persecute God's children without destroying himself." Christ gives us the true Christian ethic in Matt. 23:11, in these words: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." Remember it is as sinful for an official to violate the rights of the most humble layman as that of anyone else. Each church official should remember that he is to be a servant of the people, and not the people a slave to him. It seems natural for leaders to feel they must get the job done regardless. So they use people for "tools" and when such tools are broken or worn out they can so readily be scrapped and replaced with fresh ones. Many times the new tools lack the quality of metal that the old, reliable ones, which were abused and broken, possessed.

There also is another side to this coin! When the smaller leader, or "wants-to-be" leader, seeks to destroy that is over him (often the pastor) and secures his replacement with himself or a friend, that aggressor is just as cruel and just as guilty as when one in the higher ranks snuffs out one of the lesser lights.

A very forceful gospel tract which has been on earth longer than any of us have, entitled, "CHRISTIAN, BEWARE" is a classic example of the awful sin committed by some petty, unprincipled Diotrophes, (the church boss) who is determined to control, even if it means the destruction of somebody's ministry or the health of one of God's anointed ones. If your conscience, my friend, (friend! -- That is what Jesus called Judas on the night of the betrayal) if your conscience has gone dead, then don't bother to read this tract entitled "CHRISTIAN, BEWARE." One man who read it only sneered and made a wise crack. If I were on the brink of apostasy, approaching the point from which there is no return, I would read this tract a thousand times if I thought it would save me from the tragedy of the hopeless apostate who dared to defy the Holy Ghost and murder one of His anointed.

When the Holy Spirit ceases to strive with a person, that is the most tragic experience that can happen to anyone. When this occurs one can blatantly trample others like so many worms under his feet, and feel no compunctions at all. In fact, he may feel he is doing God's will and helping the cause. Christ warned us of this, saying, "They shall put you out of the synagogues: (out of the pastorate, or the evangelistic field) yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you (your influence, your open door of service, your effectiveness) will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

When a conspirator gets WHAT HE WANTS he is inclined to forget that at the final reckoning he will get WHAT HE DESERVES. What does he deserve? The great apostle of love tells us plainly what he deserves in these terrifying words: ". . . They that have done evil, unto the resurrection of the damned" (John 5:29). Imagine! Such scathing words from the apostle of love! They contained teeth that will never stop biting with fangs of remorse for all eternity unless the offender repents, makes wrongs right and has his wicked heart changed to the pattern of righteousness. Personally I desire "a better resurrection" (Heb. 11:35), even unto "the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power" (Rev. 20:6).

In addition to the personal tragedy of evil-doing is the group tragedy. When political carnage is permitted to continue, unchecked in the church, the Holy Ghost places entire movements in the list of apostates, putting them in His 'dead file' forever. It is practically unheard of for such a movement to ever recover spiritually from such a sad condition. This

reality ought to frighten every one of us.

A church which has fallen into this dilemma will either eventually decline and die or turn worldly and grow big. Stalemate in any Christian denomination is an indication that the Holy Ghost is grieved and is withdrawing from their midst. Some district leaders are good, holy men and they stay that way, but there have been cases when the most aggressive whose district is growing most rapidly, are the ones who have learned all of the corrupt tricks of the trade and they will pull shady deals to promote their ends. It is also noteworthy that the older a denomination is, the scales will tip more and more with the corrupt leaders and less and less with the others. When the trend first starts and is allowed to continue, it will never be as easy to check its progress. Eventually, if the wrong trends are not checked, they will become hopelessly out of control forever, and the movement itself beyond spiritual recovery.

In Deut. 32, Jeshurun led the whole nation to forsake God (V. 5.); They worshipped and served the devil instead of God (V. 17); so God forsook them (V. 20), and consigned them to the punishment of hell (V. 22). This is the only one instance of many.

In 2 Tim. 3, Paul refers to “false accusers” and “despisers of those that are good,” and list them among the reprobates (V. 8). Webster defines reprobates as foreordained to damnation; morally abandoned; hopelessly lost.” It is virtually unheard of these days for the guilty who have trampled the innocent to come out in the open, confess their sin, make the wrongs right and have their names placed back in the Book of Life, from which they have been blotted out because of their crimes (Ex. 32:33). Usually, sad to say, they hope that it will blow over and be forgotten and if there is a person whom the guilty one fears will not let it die down, that one believes he will be more comfortable if that knowledgeable person is pressured into another fellowship. Whatever fellowship God wants him in is not a point. How the pressure-monger can be comfortable with his conscience is explained in I Timothy 4:2: “. . . seared with a hot iron.”

When, however, the wrongdoer finds he cannot banish the one he fears, he has a real problem on his hands. Had he humbled himself in the first place, confessed his sin to the offended one, affected a mutual reconciliation, then the two could have become the warmest of friends forever. What is wrong with an intelligent person, and especially a professed Christian when he feels that the wrong road out of a bad situation is the right one? Furthermore what is wrong with his evaluation when he feels that his first priority is to keep his bad ways in a good light, even though it tends to grieve the Holy Ghost out of the entire movement of which he is a part, and trends toward a hopeless stalemate, except for an increase of human worldly zeal and ingenuity? How much better would it be for one to repent while in a backslidden state from whence he might recover and be reinstated in the family of God (Isa. 1:16-18). But if he stays on that treacherous course too long, and goes too far, unless totally blinded by sin, he must surely know that he is very close to crossing over the border line of God’s grace into that final state of apostasy from which there can be no return (Heb. 6:3-6; 10:26-29). We wonder if there are those who, reading these lines and knowing what they ought to do, will lack the moral courage to do so. One who takes the wrong course at this point may be an Arminian (Wesleyan) in Theology, but he is a Calvinist in practice because, knowing he has done some terrible wrongs and some equally terrible cover-ups, and because he can still preach great sermons and line the altars with seekers, probably he feels that God will not hold him accountable for those awful sins he has committed. Oh! How deceived can one be? It would seem, by observation, that very few people realize the grave danger of taking things into their own hands and denying the Holy Ghost His rightful authority as Executive of the Godhead and Administrator of this dispensation. [BEGIN QUOTE BELOW]



## CHRISTIAN, BEWARE

“Touch not Mine anointed and do my prophets no harm” (Psalms 105:15).

I would rather play with forked lightning, or take in my hands living wires, with their fiery current, than speak a reckless word against any servant of Christ, or idly repeat the slanderous darts which thousands of Christians are hurling on others, to the hurt of their own souls and bodies.

You may often wonder, perhaps, why your sickness is not healed, your spirit filled with the joy of the Holy Ghost, or your life blessed and prosperous. It may be that some dart which you have flung with angry voice, or in an idle hour of thoughtless gossip, is pursuing you on its way, as it describes the circle which always brings back to the source from which it came every shaft of bitterness, and every idle and evil word.

Let us remember that when we persecute or hurt the children of God, we are but PERSECUTING HIM, and hurting ourselves far more.

Lord, make me as sensitive to the feelings and rights of others as I have often been to my own, and let me live and love like Thee. --A. B. Simpson.

## AN EXAMPLE

Deacon Lee, who was a kindly, silent, faithful, gracious man, was one day waited upon by a restless, ambitious, worldly church member, who was laboring to create uneasiness in the church, and especially to drive away the preacher.

The deacon came in to meet his visitor, who, after the usual greeting, began to lament the low state of religion and to inquire as to the reason why there had been no revival for three years past: “Now what do you think is the cause of things being dull here? He persisted asking: The deacon was not ready to give an opinion, and after a little thought frankly answered, “No, I don’t.”

“Do you think the church is alive to the work before it?”

“No, I don’t.”

“Do you think that the minister fully realizes the solemnity of his work?” “No, I don’t.”

A twinkle was in the eye of the troubler in Zion, and taking courage, he asked “Do you think his sermon on ‘Their eyes were holden’ anything wonderfully great?” “No, I don’t.”

Making bold after this encouragement in monosyllable, he asked, “Then don’t you think we had better dismiss this man and hire another?”

The old deacon started as if he had been shot, and in a tone louder than his wont, shouted, “No, I don’t.”

“Why,” cried the amazed visitor, “You agree with me in all that I have said, don’t you?” “No, I don’t.”

“You talk so little, sir,” replied the guest not a little disturbed, “that no one can find out what you do mean.”

“I talked enough once,” replied the old man rising on his feet, “for six praying Christians. Thirty years ago I got my heart humbled, and ever since that I’ve walked softly before God. I then made vows solemn as eternity; and don’t you tempt me to break them!” The troubler was startled at the earnestness of the hitherto silent, immovable man, and asked,

“What happened to you thirty years ago?”

“Well, sir, I’ll tell you. I was drawn into a scheme just like this of yours, to uproot one of God’s servants from the field in which He had planted him. In my blindness I fancied it a little thing to remove one of the ‘stars’ WHICH JESUS HOLDS IN HIS RIGHT HAND, if thereby my ear could be tickled by more flowery words, and the pews filled with those turned away from the simplicity of the gospel. I and the man that led me – for I admit that I was a dupe and a tool – flattered ourselves that we were conscientious, as though we were doing God’s service when we drove that holy man from his pulpit and his work, and said we considered his work ended in B. \_\_\_\_\_ where I then lived.

We groaned because there was no revival, while we were gossiping about and criticizing and crushing, instead of upholding, by our efforts and our prayers, the instrument at whose hand we harshly demanded the blessing. Sir, he could not drag on the chariot of salvation with a half dozen of us taunting him for his weakness, while we hung as a dead weight to the wheel; we claimed that he had not the power of the Holy Spirit, so we hunted him like a deer until, worn and bleeding, he fled into a covert to die. Scarcely had he gone when God came among us by His spirit to show that he had blessed the labors of his respected servant. Our own hearts were broken, and our wayward children converted, and I resolved at a convenient season to visit my former pastor and confess my sin, and thank him for his faithfulness to my wayward sons, which, like long-buried seed, had now sprung up, God denied me that relief, that he might teach me a lesson every child of his ought to learn, that he who touches one of His servants touches the apple of His eye.

“I heard my pastor was ill, and taking my oldest son with me, set out on a 25-mile ride to see him.

It was evening when I arrived, and his wife, with the spirit any woman ought to exhibit toward one who had so wronged her husband, denied me admittance to his chamber. She said, and her words were arrows to my soul, ‘He may be dying, and the sight of your face might add to his anguish.’ “Has it come to this, I said to myself, that the man whose labors had, through Christ, brought me into His fold, who had consoled my spirit in a terrible bereavement, and who had, UNTIL DESIGNING MEN HAD ALIENATED US, been to me a brother – that this man could not die in peace with my face before him? ‘God pity me,’ I cried, ‘what have I done?’ I confessed my sin to that meek woman and implored her for Christ’s sake to let me kneel before His dying servant and receive his forgiveness. What did I care then whether the pews by the door were rented or not? I would gladly have taken his whole family to my home forever, as my own flesh and blood, but no such happiness was in store for me.

“As I entered the room of the blessed warrior, whose armor was falling from his limb, he opened his languid eyes and said, ‘Brother Lee! Brother Lee!’”

I bent over him and sobbed out, ‘My pastor! My pastor!’

“Then raising his thin white hand, he whispered in a deep impressive voice, ‘Touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm.’”

I spoke tenderly to him, and told him I had come to confess my sin, and bring some of his fruit to him, calling my son to tell him how he had found Christ. But he was unconscious of all around; the sight of my face had brought the last pang on earth to his troubled spirit.

“I kissed his brow and told him how dear he had been to me; I craved his pardon for my unfaithfulness, and promised to care for his widow and fatherless little ones; but his only reply, murmured as if a troubled dream, was, ‘Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.’ “I stayed by him all night, and at daybreak I closed his eyes. I offered his widow a house to live in the remainder of her days, but like a heroine she said, ‘I freely

forgive you. But my children, who deeply into their father's anguish, shall never see me so regardless of his memory as to take anything from those who caused it. He has left us with his covenant God, and He will care for us.' "Well, sir, those dying words sounded in my ears from the coffin and from the grave. When I slept, Christ stood before me in my dream, saying, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.' Those words followed me until I fully realized the esteem in which Christ holds those men who have given up all for His sake, and I vowed to love them evermore for His sake, even if they were not perfect. And since that day, sir, I have talked less than before and have supported my pastor, even if he is not 'very extraordinary man.' My tongue shall cleave to the roof of my mouth and my right hand forget her cunning before I dare to put asunder what God has joined together. When a minister's work is done in a place, I believe God will show it to him. I will not join you, sir, in the scheme that brought you here.

Moreover, if I hear another word of this from your lips, I shall ask my brethren to deal with you as with those who cause divisions. I would give all I own to recall what I did thirty years ago. Stop where you are, and pray God, if perchance the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

This decided reply put an end to the new-comer's effort to get a minister who could make more stir, and left him free to lay new roads and build hotels. There is often great power in the little word "No," but sometimes it requires a little courage to speak it resolutely as did the silent deacon.

[END QUOTE]

This is not a new problem. It is only new to us because we have not always been here. However, the problem has taken its toll out of every generation and every church organization, dumping both human souls and whole movements down the drain, and it will do the same for any group which fails to check this horrible, satanic maneuver and carnal follow-up.

Charles G. Finney, nearly a century ago, encountered the same problem, and cried out against it.

He wrote: "The . . . frauds and villainies in high and low places . . . are most alarming, and one is almost compelled to ask, 'Can nobody be safely trusted?' Now, what is the cause of this degeneracy? Doubtless there are many causes that contributes more or less directly to it; but I am persuaded that the fault is more in the ministry . . . than in any and all things else . . . The error that lies at the foundation of this decay of individual and public conscience originates, no doubt, in the pulpit." (Lectures to Professing Christians, pp. 78-79).

Ralph W. Emerson said, "The true test of civilization is not the census, nor the size of cities, nor the crops; no, but the kind of men the country turns out." (Treasury of the Christian Faith, p. 136).

Kindly permit me to reconstruct Mr. Emerson's character analysis into challenging language for all church officials, stating that the true test of character is not found in glowing reports as to mounting membership rolls, nor in fabulous fund-raising, nor in personal popularity: no, but in the quality of character which the church turns out. Any church that is not producing integrity of character is not producing anything but fodder for the eternal fires of hell. One will have to be a Christian at all to be honest, and upright and honorable, and treat others as he would like to be treated.

**FROM FATHER TO SON**

I tell you my lad, it pays to live clean;  
Let the others do wrong; let the others be mean:  
Don't give in to bad influence from old friends or new;  
Being noble and upright is the makings of you.  
Integrity pays off as nothing else will.  
Spend all of your life climbing honesty's hill.  
Speak the truth always and in people's mind,  
They'll soon have you branded as the very best kind.  
Never betray one if he trusts you an inch;  
Confidence established is more than a cinch.  
If you let him down once you are less of a man;  
And he'll never be sure he can trust you again.  
Look the world in the eye; there's no room for bluff;  
No veneers in this mill – no camouflage stuff.  
Don't polish the apple with a worm in the core;  
You may fool folk a little, but you'll fool yourself more.  
You may live in the shadows and seem to get by,  
And make the world think you're a wonderful guy.  
But the harvest is coming, for we reap what we sow,  
And the mills of God's justice are still grinding you know.  
The world is out looking for men that are true;  
If you are of that brand, they'll be looking for you.  
Men do their best work with nails that are straight,  
With boards that aren't warped, and with bricks that are baked.  
So be straight as arrow and clean as a pin;  
In the long run of life you know you will win.  
Character is gold; reputation is brass;  
Choose wisely between them and wave as you pass!

There also is the problem created by the ambitious non-leader, who is itching to be the leader.

Oftentimes he desires to supplant the pastor. When he knows his chances are nil without a strong backing he will go about to secure a following and cement a group into a confederacy. Nothing can be more treasonable, treacherous, underhanded, undermining and betraying of Christ. How highly ironical the situation becomes when God begins to talk to a few who, having been enticed into participating in the scheme and beginning to feel the pangs of guilt and condemnation, go to any individual wronged as well as to the church confessing their wrongdoing and asking forgiveness, while the big "arm-twisters" and "plot-planners" never feel the faintest sense of guilt or condemnation, but maintain a false front all the way to the judgment. It is the height of irony when enlightened people adopt the policy of hypocrites as in Matt. 7:21-23 who stood telling the Lord of what wonderful service they had rendered, and the Lord shocked them by confessing, "I NEVER knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Every cruel nail with which the carnal element in the leadership of the church crucifies one of God's little ones is driven by the same spirit that drove nails through the hands and feet of Christ Himself.

When Christ said to them, "I NEVER knew you" He implied that throughout all the years of serving God they had NEVER really had a genuine, bonafide Christian experience. They had lived with a false front and a false hope all the way through, because they did not get sin out of their hearts and lives. They evidently thought God would overlook their wicked motives from which they had never been delivered. The probability is they didn't get started right in the first place. Back at the very beginning of their serving God they

should have formed the habit of making wrongs right, but they apparently didn't do it. Instead, they built into their lives the pattern of doing wicked things, driving nails through hands and feet of Christ's humble suffering servants until Christ Himself bleeds again and again, for inasmuch as ye have done it UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF HIS BRETHREN, YOU HAVE DONE IT UNTO HIM. (Matt. 25:40). There were actually so many commendable things about their service for Christ that it is little wonder that they were shocked and dumbfounded when they heard the sentence from the lips of Jesus Himself, "Depart, I never knew you."

My dear reader, is this indictment too harsh? These are Christ's own words, not mine. To be honest, we must insist that as long as you have wrongs that you WILL not make right, in so far as you are able, do not expect God to blot out your transgressions because He has warned you instead that he will blot your name out of the Book of Life. Has not God made it unquestionably clear that it is only as we walk in the light as He is in the light that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin? Remember, religious feelings are most deceiving and unreliable. Emotional highs mean nothing unless they are attended by a pure heart and a righteous life. [The height of self-deception is when one convinces himself that when he wrongs another, all he must do to fix it up is to ask Jesus to forgive him.](#) That is one hundred percent non-Christian. It is, however, the road that most church leaders are tempted to travel. Should I say, "Prone [to travel]?"

What about the self-centered intruder who builds an illegitimate power structure around himself – an illicit organization within the church organization, like a malignant growth – a self-appointed Adonijah (I Kings 1:5), while the rightful pastor becomes a mere figurehead, facing dismissal? However, this impostor fared better materially than Adonijah did whom King Solomon executed for treason, because this one was able to fully establish himself with the people, oust the pastor, steal the pastorate, and sometimes the property also. Thus he became a thief of both the position and the property. How can one have any sensible hope of heaven until he returns what he stole and asks forgiveness of God and the ones he wronged? The Word says that no thief "shall inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. 6:10).

There also are those who have failed in the pulpit (sometimes property also) take-over-attempt.

But are not their hearts just as wicked and contrary to the basic moral structure of the Scriptures as though they had succeeded?

Again, a similar thing sometimes happens in the evangelistic and revival work. This illustration is not a hypothetical case. A pastor wrote to a church where he had friends and relatives and asked them to call him for a revival, but ignoring his letter, an evangelist was engaged. How did the pastor react to not being called? After the meeting was in progress and the Holy Ghost was on the scene and with backslidden people praying through, confessing some frightful sins, this minister drove to the community, visited in the homes, picked up false, slanderous reports about the evangelist, then proceeded to break up the meeting. Then, fearing exposure, and repercussions, he spent the next few years trying to force the evangelist into other connections by closing every door against him that he could. When such as this is allowed, encouraged, and even instigated, with reward by superiors, and promotion – the impostor exonerated, the victim ecclesiastically martyred, and the whole matter covered up, and such things a common practice; then one should not be surprised when the Spirit of God is grieved, the heavens become brass, altars virtually barren, growth stunted, with dead limbs falling faster than new, feeble suckers can sprout!

Is the church of which you are a part, my friend, speeding rapidly toward the condition which Isaiah saw in the old Jewish Church of his day? He said, "This day is a day of trouble and rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is

not strength to bring forth” (Isa. 37:3).

Sad indeed, it is when God looks down upon any church that was born in a blaze of holy fire from heaven and soon laments: “...the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and putrefying sores: they have not been closed up, neither mollified with ointment.” (Isa. 1:6).

When too much lethal crime is winked at by those who don’t want to get involved, the time finally comes when the devil has more influence in the church than Christ does. “The devil does not want to destroy the church. He wants to run it.”

Those churches which have stayed true the longest were the ones which had the greatest number of Holy Ghost filled men who were of true statesman caliber, with principles of integrity which they would not barter at any price, for friend they loved, or foe they feared. No! Not for promise of reward or prospect of promotion or threat of ecclesiastical ruination. Amen! And amen!



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