



Morning Glory

“The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh” — James 5:8

EXPERIENCED SALVATION • CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP • SIMPLICITY IN WORSHIP

Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation • May 2023

Perhaps He Will Smite You!

Charles Spurgeon

“So you should realize that, ‘Just as a parent disciplines a child, the LORD your God disciplines you to help you.’” (Deuteronomy 8:5)

I can truly say of everything I have ever tasted in this world of God’s mercy, (and my path has been remarkably strewn with divine loving-kindness), I feel more grateful to God for the bodily pain I have suffered, and for all the trials of diverse sorts I have endured—than I do for anything else.

I am sure I have derived:
more real benefit,
and permanent strength,
and growth in grace,
and every precious thing,

from the furnace of suffering, than I have ever derived from prosperity.

I know not how to quite express my meaning, but even depression of spirit and deep sadness have a particular charm within them, which laughter in vain may emulate.

“It is good for me that I have been afflicted!”
(Psalm 119:71)

Ponder and consider the much gratitude you owe to God for His chastening rod. Dwell much in your heart upon what God evidently regards as one of His distinguishing blessings. Do not lightly pass over what God would have you consider. Count the cross and the rod to be doubly worthy of your deepest thought.

“Hear the rod, and Him who has appointed it.”
(Micah 6:9)

Remember that whenever you are chastened, you are not chastened as a slave master smites his victim, nor as a judge orders the criminal to be lashed; but as a man chastens his son—so are you chastened.

Your chastisement is a sign of sonship; it is a token of love! It is intended for your good.

Accept it, therefore, in the spirit of sonship, and “Do not despise the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when you are corrected by Him.” (Heb. 12:5)

It is the Lord your God who chastens you! If He were not your God, He might let you alone! If He had not chosen you to be His own, He would not take such care of you!

If He had not given Himself to be your treasure, He might not be so diligent in weaning you from all other treasures! But because you are His, He will withdraw your love away from this poor world.

Perhaps He will take one child after another from you, that all the love that was lavished on the children might flow towards Himself. Perhaps He will leave you a widow, that the love that ran in the channel of a husband may run altogether to Himself.

Perhaps He will take away your riches, that the consolation you derived from them may be all derived from Him.

Perhaps He will smite you, and then lay you on His own bosom, faint and helpless—that you may derive a strength and a joy from close and near fellowship with Himself, which you would never have had if it had not been that these other joys were removed.

Bless God for your chastenings!

Morning Glory

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Let the sweetest note of your music be to Him who, as a loving father, chastens His children for their good.

So you should realize that, “Just as a parent disciplines a child, the LORD your God disciplines you to help you.”

(Deuteronomy 8:5)

“For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and chastises every son He receives.” (Hebrews 12:6)

“I have refined you in the furnace of suffering.” (Isaiah 48:10)

QUESTION

Can it truly be shown and with clarity with Eternity in View that you truly Love someone who you know is resting in a false religion? We all know it is much easier for us to remain silent, but one day we must give an account to the Lord, and we don’t want to be rebuked by HIM because we didn’t manifest or speak the TRUTH! James 4:17.

“Open rebuke is better Than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” (Proverbs 27:5-6)

A Fiery Ordeal

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.” (1 Peter 4:12-13)

Trial By Fire originated in Bedouin societies and is still practiced in parts of rural Egypt today. When a suspect is accused of having committed a crime ranging from theft or property damage to murder, manslaughter, illicit sexual relations, rape, or witchcraft, and there are no witnesses to the alleged misdeed, one may be required to lick a ladle that has been heated to 600-900 degrees Celsius (RED HOT) – if the suspect’s tongue blisters, he or she is found guilty; if the suspect’s tongue is clear, he or she is innocent. The prevailing thought was that God would divinely intervene and provide a miracle to bring about innocence or guilt.

This may sound pretty extreme, but there is something very similar that God DOES send us through – and that is a Fiery Ordeal

The Pain of a Fiery Ordeal

You are going to have to undergo an ordeal. (v. 12 above) It is one thing to hear that we are going to experience suffering in our lives as a Christian, and it’s another thing to hear that there will be times when this suffering goes on steroids! In fact, it will be a FIERY ORDEAL. An ordeal is misery, trouble, difficulty, torture, torment and agony. It will be similar to licking a red-hot ladle. It will be something that will shake you to the very core. It will bring you to the brink of your sanity to where you cry out to God and ask, “What is going on in my life?” It will be something that will shake even your faith in God to the very limits. If God is Who He has promised to be in the Scripture, then why is this happening to me? It can be at this very time that some people just give up on God. “I tried this walk with God and my life ended up worse than before!!!”

So when this does happen, don’t think that you’re the only one who has to go through this. Remember the life of the godly man Joseph? Even though he was a Godly man – he underwent a fiery ordeal. God gave him a dream that he would be exalted above his father or his brothers. The end result was that he was despised by his brothers for such arrogance and they sold him as a slave and lied to their dad that a wild animal mauled him to death.

He ended up in Egypt and was able to be Potipher’s personal assistant. He ended up resisting several advances from Potipher’s wife to where he fled from her. The end result was that she lied to her husband and Joseph was thrown into prison.

When he was in prison, God was with him and granted him favor. But that doesn’t mean that everything was good for him. He saw the Baker end up being hanged at Pharaoh’s whim. Would this be his end result as well? Keep in mind that life in prison was in terrible conditions. Because when it came time for him to appear before Pharaoh, “*Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh.*” (Gen. 41:14) So he lived in squalor conditions with just enough to live on.

How long did this fiery ordeal last? It started when he was just a teenager of 17 and finally ended when he was 30 years old and stood as Pharaoh’s assistant. It was 13 years where he wondered, “Where is God in all of this? How long must I have to live like this? I have lived in truth and rightness in God’s Ways and this is what I end up with?” It would be at least another 7 years of famine in Egypt before he would be reconciled to his estranged brothers and father. That is 20 years of living with possible hatred, resentment and bitterness! This was the length of time before Joseph could say, “And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.” (Genesis 50:20) So why does God send a fiery ordeal to us?

The Purpose of a Fiery Ordeal

God does not send us a fiery ordeal just to be mean and capricious. He has something to accomplish in your life as a result of it. This Scripture is addressed to “Beloved.” (v. 12 above) God does not bring this to our lives because He is angry with us. He does it out of His love for us – Which sounds quite strange. You might think – “If this is His love – I can well do without it!” But it is still sent in God’s Love. In fact, don’t be surprised when it happens. (v. 12 above) In fact, you should be surprised if it hasn’t happened yet!

In our culture, we have been so infested with mushy love and easy believism that this all sounds quite strange. This is exactly what Peter predicts will happen (v. 12 above) It is viewed as a Strange thing. Many are quick to assign it to oppression from the devil when it isn’t that at all. It is sent specifically from God. In fact, listen to the admonition from Hebrews 12:

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved by

Him; for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives. But if you are without [this] discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” (Heb. 12:5-6, 8)

So you should be more concerned if it hasn't happened to you!

Fiery Ordeals come for your testing. (v. 12 above) God will test everyone who claims faith in Jesus to see if it is genuine. Are you really serious about God and Jesus? Is He really more important to you than anything else in life? God already knows the answer to that question – but He wants you to know. God put Abraham to the test to see if his faith was truly genuine. – and that test was to sacrifice his only son! **Talk about a fiery ordeal!** So God will put you to the test.

A Fiery Ordeal comes for you to Share the Sufferings of Christ. (v. 13 above) It isn't that Jesus' sufferings on the cross weren't sufficient to save you entirely. It isn't that we are going to suffer or even die for the sins of others. But what Jesus experienced in His suffering is what you will experience in your sufferings. Jesus went through a fiery ordeal in His sufferings. Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane so intense that His sweat became drops of blood. He said, *“My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death ...”* (Matt. 26:38) God was calling Him to die a horrid death by torture for the sins of all mankind, and bear the wrath of God in the process! **Talk about a Fiery Ordeal.** In His darkest moment of struggle and surrender, He was met with an answer of NO when He cried out for another way. It was when Jesus suffered the most when He called upon God the hardest – *“In the days of His flesh He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and was heard because He feared.”* (Heb. 5:7)

So one of the things you will learn as you share the Sufferings of Christ. When your Fiery Ordeal hits – **You will call upon God like never before.** It will come from a broken heart out of a soul in absolute desperation. Hannah prayed in bitterness of soul with weeping and fasting when her fiery ordeal hit – Not even able to speak her prayer. *“But Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I am a woman oppressed in spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the LORD.”* (I Samuel 1:15)

The other side of Sharing in Christ's Sufferings is Being Forsaken. When Jesus went to the cross – He took our sin upon Himself. When He did – God turned away from Him and left Him all alone. When Jesus was

in the midst of His greatest suffering, He cried out *“My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?”* Just when He needed help from God – He was forsaken by Him – and left all alone. This will be your experience as well. When your fiery ordeal hits, you will call upon God and He won't be anywhere to be found. It will be like your cries don't make it any further than the ceiling. The very words that Jesus cried on the cross were actually the same words that King David cried once, *“My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from deliverance are the words of my groaning. O my God, I cry by day, but Thou dost not answer; and by night, but I have no rest.”* (Ps. 22:1-2) He experienced being forsaken from God like Jesus did – Like you will.

A Fiery Ordeal comes for you to Set proper priorities in Life. God sets the limit on your ordeal of suffering. In verse 13 above, it says, – **TO THE DEGREE THAT YOU SHARE.** God knows the limit and will not go beyond that limit. He knows what you can take. The Fiery Ordeal works to get your eyes off this present life and look forward to the coming of Christ. When He returns – That is when we will rejoice with exultation.

Fiery ordeals teach us to have a hard look at our lives and ask what really is important. Maybe your life in God is starting to drift – Maybe you're getting too involved in the affairs of your daily life – Maybe you're too earthly minded to be any heavenly good. Maybe a lot of what you are devoting your time to will not really benefit you or the Kingdom of God in the long run. Maybe it has been going on for a long time and God has been trying to get your attention – to no avail. So God resorts to a fiery ordeal – **To make you stop and really take stock of your life.** Because life in this world is very short and most of us assume that we have plenty of time left, when this isn't necessarily so. Psalm 90:12 tells us, *“So teach us to number our days that we may present to Thee a heart of wisdom”* Because it won't be until heaven when our true life and purpose will come to bear. (v. 13 above)

Dear reader, has a fiery ordeal come upon your life? Even those closest to you won't realize the travail of soul that you are going through. But when it does – Realize these things:

- 1) It is sent by God in His Love for You
- 2) It is the normal part of walking with the Lord – It is not punishment for sin
- 3) It is sent to accomplish a purpose in your life
- 4) The present suffering will not be the final glory *“Weeping endures for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”* (Ps. 30:5)

Pastor Jim Haga

A Man Who Faced a Fiery Ordeal

Horatio Gates Spafford, was a Chicago lawyer who – although previously successful – had suffered setbacks when his considerable real estate investments were lost during the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. His finances took another hit during the Panic of 1873 financial crisis. After two rough years, he decided to alleviate some of his family’s stress by giving them a change of scenery.

Plans were made for the family (including Horatio, his wife Anna, and their four daughters) to journey to Europe in November 1873 via the French iron steamship *Ville du Havre*. Horatio accompanied them to New York, but at the last minute had to change his plans because of a business obligation. He sent his family on ahead, promising to join them in time. Wife Anna and daughters Annie (b. 1862), Margaret Lee (b. 1864), Elizabeth (b. 1868), and Tanetta (b. 1871) set sail on November 15th.

His family never reached their destination and he never saw his four daughters again.

Ironically, the *Ville du Havre’s* captain assured Anna Spafford and other passengers that his ship was very safe and the voyage would be an easy one. A week into the voyage, on 22 November 1873, the liner collided with the British clipper *Loch Earn*. Even as the ship was struck, sounding like an explosion according to passengers, the captain told everyone “it’s nothing, nothing.” As the ship began to take on water, the crew assured passengers that the ship was too safe to sink.*

But they were wrong; the *Ville du Havre* sank in just 12 minutes, killing an estimated 226 people – including all four of the Spafford daughters. Anna survived the shipwreck by clinging to a floating plank.

As anyone can imagine, the accounts of the *Ville du Havre* sinking are terrifying. Heartbreakingly, in the last moments of daughter Annie Spafford’s life she is recorded as proclaiming: “Don’t be afraid. The Sea is His and He made it.” As Anna was thrown into the sea, she felt her baby Tanetta pulled out of her arms by the rough waves. All four daughters drowned. When Anna was finally rescued she was unconscious, floating on a piece of debris.

The rescue ship *Tremountain* took the survivors to Cardiff. During this voyage Anna said few words. A friend who had also survived the sinking, clergymen Thoeophile Lorriaux, was with her when she finally uttered the words: “God gave me four daughters. They have been taken. One day I shall understand why. I will understand why.”

Once Anna arrived in Cardiff she sent a telegram to her husband in Chicago that must have devastated him:

Saved, but saved alone. What shall I do?

Horatio left Chicago to meet Anna, who was staying with friends in France. At one point during the voyage, the

ship’s captain summoned Horatio to his cabin and explained that he had determined the exact spot where the *Ville du Havre* had gone down. He let Horatio know that they were at that moment passing that very spot. Horatio then returned to his own cabin and, leaning for strength on his tremendous faith in God, wrote his famous hymn:

It Is Well With My Soul

When peace like a river, attendeth my way
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say:
It is Well, It is Well, With My Soul

KellyGoshorn.com, March 30, 2018

All Together Now

“With one mind and one voice ...glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 15:6)

While Nicholas Taylor was boarding a train in Perth, Australia, his leg became wedged in the gap between the platform and a commuter car. When safety officials could not free him, they coordinated the efforts of nearly 50 passengers who lined up and, on the count of three, pushed against the train. Working in unison, they shifted the weight just enough to free Taylor’s leg.

The apostle Paul recognized the power of Christians working together in many of his letters to the early church. He urged the Roman believers to accept each other the way Christ had accepted them and said, “(May God) *give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 15:5-6).

Unity with other believers enables us to broadcast God’s greatness and also helps us to endure persecution. Knowing that the Philippians would pay a price for their faith, Paul encouraged them to strive “*together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you*” (Phil. 1:27-28).

Satan loves to divide and conquer, but his efforts fail when with God’s help, we “*make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace*” (Eph. 4:3).

Jennifer Benson Schuld

Dear God, please let Christians everywhere experience the blessing of unity in You. Remind us of what we have in common: one hope, one faith, and one Lord – Jesus Christ.

Our unity comes from our union with Christ.

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Guest Editorial

JRH

Revival

“Behold, I long for Thy precepts; Revive me through Thy righteousness.”
(Psalm 119:40)

Most of us have heard of the “revival” that took place at Asbury College recently. After a chapel service, the students stayed in the chapel and began a 24/7 time of singing, praying and worship to the Lord that went on non-stop for two weeks. It became so popular that many of the secular news agencies picked up on it and reported on it. Supposedly, students from this movement went to other churches and had “revival” break out in those places as well. What is really unique about this is that a previous revival happened in this very school in 1970 and this one took place in the same place almost to the very day that the previous one happened. How are we to evaluate this? Is this a true move of God or simply a stirring up of the flesh?

When we look in the Scriptures, we see that when a true awakening of people takes place that there is a deep move of repentance that takes place. This is what the Scripture at the top of the page reflects upon: God revives us in His righteousness. We can also look at times when God’s people went away from Him and what God did to bring them back. In Ezra 9:3-8, we read of Ezra the priest’s prayer of repentance for the people. *“And when I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening offering. But at the evening offering I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the Lord my God; and I said, “O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to plunder and to open shame, as it is this day. But now for a brief moment grace has been shown from the Lord our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to*

give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage.”

When the people heard this repentance, *“Now while Ezra was praying and making confession, weeping and prostrating himself before the house of God, a very large assembly, men, women, and children, gathered to him from Israel; for the people wept bitterly.”* (Ezra 10:1)

We see this as well in revivals from the past. When Jonathan Edwards preached his famous sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, “the influence was so great on the congregation that strong men and women cried and screamed for mercy and even grabbed their seats for fear they would slide into hell that very moment.” (See page 16 to order this) When Evangelist Billy Sunday preached in Bloomington, Ill on March 30, 1908, 84 saloons went out of business and the line of people publicly demonstrating that they were leaving alcohol went on for blocks. (Billy Sunday by Bruce Lockerbie, pg. 32)

These are the true marks of true revival. Is this what we see happening in the Asbury Revival? I think that there were people who were convicted of their sins and did repent and come to Jesus for forgiveness of sins. In this aspect, I believe that this was an awakening from God. But did this Awakening from God accomplish what God would bring?

It is common knowledge that Asbury College and University are affiliated with the United Methodist Church and that they train people to be ministers for the Methodist Church. Right now, the United Methodist Church is going through a split over the issue of homosexuality and gay marriage. The godly people in the United Methodist Church have left and started a new denomination called the Global Methodist Church. If there was a genuine response to the Awakening of God, there would be genuine repentance OVER THIS VERY ISSUE! Yet this has not been the case. In fact, there is evidence that they are still holding to their ungodly ways in this matter.

Because of this, I don't believe that we could call this a revival, but rather an awakening that accomplished some things but fell short of what God really intended. The danger of this is that when people view this as a true revival and move of God, they can be deluded into believing that the Gay Christian Movement is OK because this "revival" never addressed this or did away

with it. I believe that if this were a true move of God that masses of people would have acknowledged this as sin, repented of it, and then demanded that the School change their stance on this, or they would leave in droves, because the marks of true revival are repentance and change, not just singing songs all day long.

A River That Makes Glad the City of God

(This is part of a message given by the Rev. Evald J. Conrad on the occasion of his installation as director of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement, Sunday afternoon, July 25 1948)

We all know that in America today there are thousands who are preaching a perverted gospel. Nearly all kinds of preaching are given the careless title, "gospel preaching." Oh, how very important it is to know the full and deep meaning of the gospel. Paul said that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. What is the gospel? Paul answers this question most clearly in I Corinthians 15:1-4: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." Here are the high points Paul mentions as essentials in presenting the gospel:

1. It is according to the Scriptures. It is based on the Word of God, and the source material is found in the inspired Word of God.

2. It is based on the person and redemptive work of Christ, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. This is the heart of the gospel. He is the propitiation and covering for all our sins through His substitutionary death when He bore our sins in our stead and for us. Without the message of atonement there is no gospel. We continue with Paul's definition of the gospel. He was buried and He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. The gospel message proclaims, He is risen for our justification; He is living; He is in our midst.

3. Let us see what Paul says about how this gospel becomes effective in our lives, or how we and others become "gospelized" or evangelized:

The steps Paul here enumerates are very important:

a. The gospel must be preached. People are saved by the foolishness of preaching. Preaching is important.

b. The gospel must be received. "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God."

c. We must stand on this gospel. We must build our hope, faith and trust in nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. We stand on His promises.

d. Finally, Paul says, this gospel must be kept. "By which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you."

This gospel will be received by repentant, broken people. The self-righteous have no need, no open door for the gospel. So the message must be law and gospel if the Movement shall be a blessing. When people have been led to repentance through the preaching of the Word, there will be a deep longing and hunger for the saving gospel. There will be no need to use human high-pressure methods of persuasion to get such people to accept Christ. Even in our day such people will cry out, "What shall we do?" "What a joy it is to tell needy, repentant sinners: Jesus died for you; He carried all your sins in His own body on the tree; His blood cleanses from all sin; your sins which are many are forgiven, depart in peace! God grant us grace to preach the true, unadulterated, saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

From the book "*The Christian Warfare.*"

Messages Delivered at the Tenth Anniversary Of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement Lutheran Deeper Life Conference, July 19-25, 1948 at Mission farms on Medicine Lake near Minneapolis. Copyright © 1949 by the *Lutheran Evangelistic Movement*, Minneapolis, MN.

Believable... Yet Unbelievable

Advocates file suits against states' abortion pill restrictions

Supporters of abortion rights filed separate lawsuits Wednesday challenging two states' abortion pill restrictions, the opening salvo in what's expected to be a protracted legal battle over access to the medications.

The lawsuits argue that limits on the drugs in North Carolina and West Virginia run afoul of the federal authority of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which has approved the abortion pill as a safe and effective method for ending pregnancy.

The cases were brought by a North Carolina physician who prescribes the pill, mifepristone, and GenBioPro, which makes a generic version of the drug used in West Virginia.

While the lawsuits target specific state laws, they represent key legal tests that could determine access to abortion for millions of women. The litigation turns on a longstanding legal principle that federal law, including FDA decisions, preempt state laws. Indeed, few states have ever tried to fully ban an FDA-approved drug because of past rulings in the agency's favor. ...

North Carolina bans nearly all abortions after 20 weeks, with narrow exceptions for urgent medical emergencies. Any physician prescribing medication for abortion is required to be in the same room as the patient when administering the drug. The state also requires counseling before receiving the drug. ...

The FDA approved mifepristone in 2000 to end pregnancy, when used in combination with a second drug, misoprostol. The combination is approved for use up to the 10th week of pregnancy.

In late 2021, the agency eliminated the in-person requirement for the pill, saying a new scientific review showed no increase in safety complications if the drug is taken at home. That change also permitted the pill to be prescribed via telehealth consultations and shipped by mail-order pharmacies.

Earlier this year the FDA further loosened restrictions by allowing brick-and-mortar pharmacies to dispense the drug, provided they undergo certification.

Taken from *Star Tribune*, 1/26/23

Conversion therapy ban advances

[Minnesota] House votes to end an approach that has been used on LGBT minors. Mental health providers in Minnesota would be prohibited from performing conversion therapy - a discredited practice that seeks to change a

person's sexual orientation or gender identity - on minors and vulnerable adults under a bill passed by the state House on Monday. ...

"These treatments are ineffective and lead to depression, decreased self-esteem, substance abuse, self-harm and suicide," said state Rep. Athena Hollins, DFL-St. Paul, who sponsored the bill in the House. "We must move past the idea that queer people can choose their sexuality and gender identity and let them show up as their full, glorious, authentic selves." ...

"This practice needs to be banned," Dibble said. "It is heinous. It is abhorrent. It does active harm to people and their lives. Minnesota is better than this."

Minnesota would join 20 other states that have banned conversion therapy for minors if the bill becomes law.

Taken from the *Star Tribune*, Feb. 21, 2023

Editor's Note: There is potentially in this amendment a provision to protect clergy using conversion therapy in their congregations. If this doesn't hold, then a pastor could be arrested for telling people who are involved in this that they need to repent.

Dying seek legal right to aid their passing

[DeeDee Welles is dying from ovarian cancer.]Now, she doesn't want her kids to have to watch her in agony at the end. "I know what's coming, which is both good and bad," said Welles. "It was awful seeing [her mother] suffer. My kids, will potentially see me suffer a long time. I don't believe it needs to go that way."

Welles is part of a renewed push at the State Capitol to allow terminally ill patients to seek a prescription from their doctor for medication to end their life. A proposal has been introduced in both chambers to have Minnesota join 10 other states that already allow aid in dying - including Oregon, the first state to approve the measure more than 25 years ago.

Linking it to the debate over abortion access, advocates argue Minnesotans deserve bodily autonomy at the end of their life, too.

Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL), the state's largest anti-abortion group, says it advocates for all human life from conception until natural death.

"People who are at risk of suicide deserve our protection," said Cathy Blaeser, co-executive director of MCCL. "Those facing an adverse, prognosis or the challenges of disability deserve our concern and protection no less than physically healthy and able-bodied people."

“It’s an option people should have if they want to. There are protections in place to make sure it’s not abused,” said Rep. Michael Freiberg, DFL-Golden Valley, who has sponsored the measure in the House for several years. “There are decades of data from Oregon and other states that have this on the books that show it’s a safe option.”

The legislation requires the person to be 18 years or older and of “sound mind” when making the decision. A doctor must determine the person has six months or less to live, and patients must attest that they’ve been fully informed of all of their treatment options.

Patients have to make the decision voluntarily and free of coercion. Under the bill, it’s a felony for someone to pressure a terminally ill person into seeking the medication. Once they receive the prescription, patients must administer it themselves, unless they change their mind. Individual physicians and health care systems can opt out.

Taken from the *Star Tribune*, March 3, 2023

Editor’s Note: When people have no respect for life of the unborn, the next logical step is to have no respect for life of an elderly or terminally-ill patients. Life is a gift from God and He is the one who determines the bounds of our habitation. When God said, “Thou Shalt Not Kill,” that includes yourself as well as others.

Pence says parents’ rights being ‘trampled’

The former vice president criticized school policies supporting trans gender students.

Former Vice President Mike Pence crusaded against school policies supporting trans gender students during a Minnesota stop Wednesday, calling for parents to have more say over their children’s education. ...

In Iowa he rallied with parents and local community members in Cedar Rapids, where a conservative group has sued the Linn-Mar Community School District over a policy that allows students to limit a parent or guardian’s role in the gender support they receive at school.

The district’s policy states it will support transgender students, gender-nonconforming students and those questioning their gender. Students in seventh grade or older have priority over their parents when it comes to control over their gender support plan. The district does not reveal a student’s transgender status to others, including parents, unless the student authorizes the release of that information or it is legally required.

The policy also says “every student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to their gender identity.” Staff or students are in violation if they

intentionally or persistently refuse to respect a student’s gender identity.

Taken from the *Star Tribune* 2/16/23

Editor’s Note: According to this policy, a student could change their gender identity at school without their parents even being notified.

The Powers of Darkness

“But this is your hour, and the power of darkness”
(Luke 22:53).

JESUS uttered this deep and dark saying in Gethsemane just as His enemies came to arrest Him.

The devil had been after Him before, too. First in the wilderness, and many times after that. But His Father always intervened. In the wilderness Satan had to leave, and angels came and ministered to Jesus. In Gethsemane likewise. The temptation was no doubt an exceedingly terrible one; but His Father had a hand in it: “An angel from heaven came and ministered unto him.”

But now Jesus felt that the Father’s hand had been withdrawn. He was in the power of men and devils without protection. No doubt it was this that filled His heart with such fear and horror.

Now Satan and his human agents were to be permitted to do what they would with the Holy One. They blasphemed Him, they struck Him, they spat in His face, they scourged Him, they pressed a crown of thorns upon His sacred head, and they took His life in the most shameful manner that they knew.

All this was terrible. But Jesus’ real sufferings were other than these. They were of an inner and spiritual nature. First and foremost this, that the Father withdrew Himself. Next, that Jesus had to look upon sin. At last the wicked nature of man stood revealed in its true light, in its hatred of, and enmity toward, God. And this was the last Jesus saw of men before His death.

The gospels indicate that Jesus was remarkably quiet during His last sufferings. There was not so much to say now; there was more to see. He saw men in their most miserable state of degradation now that they had been given freedom by the Father to do exactly as they had mind to. He saw the raging multitudes, crying themselves hoarse that He should be crucified. Finally He saw them beneath the cross. They felt safe now that He had been crucified.

This provides us with material for many a Lenten meditation.

God’s Word for Today by O. Hallesby, © 1937 by Augsburg Publishing, used by permission.

Open Your Windows!

“In the morning, Daniel went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Jerusalem); and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.” (Dan. 6:10)

You are in need of fresh air. Open your windows!

In times of tribulation many people keep their troubles to themselves, and there, in an isolation of their own, they consider all their difficulties.

In this way their burdens grow still greater, and the air in their enclosure becomes unhealthy and heavy.

Do not do that! Open your windows! Stand before the window toward Jerusalem, breathing in the healthy air that is streaming to you from above.

In front of those windows, many who have an ill and depressed mind, have been breathing in joy and health.

To Daniel life had become difficult. The difficulties, however, made him kneel down in prayer and thanksgiving three times a day. Notice that Daniel’s prayer before those windows was transformed into thanksgiving.

Jerusalem is, spiritually speaking, our native country, our heavenly home. There our love is centered, there is the place we are longing for. Jerusalem is the goal of life’s journey.

Here we are strangers and foreigners. We are citizens of the Kingdom of God. Our citizenship is in Heaven.

This we are not to forget. We have to stand frequently before the open windows, looking homeward, waiting for the day of removal.

Looking toward Jerusalem will give you a heart that is centered on Heaven.

At noon on a little island far out in the Norwegian skerries, lived a woman who had been ill for many years.

The days passed with no variation, each day was like every other. Always the same people, the same pictures on the wall, the same bed in the same place.

The sick woman wanted it that way herself. She did not like changes.

One day, however, she asked her people to move her bed.

They were surprised, but the invalid told them: “I am so excited. Something is going to happen. I can feel it. I wonder if Jesus is soon going to return? Move my bed, dear. I want to lie over there where I can look through the window – eastward. My eyes must be ready for the first glimpse of Him when He appears in the clouds, — my dear savior.”

May all the children of God both in life and in death, have the joyful expectation of the coming of Christ, and always be ready to leave this earth and to follow in his train.

The poem of the day

One day the trumpet will sound for His coming.

One day the skies with His glory will shine;

Wonderful day, my beloved ones bringing;

Glorious Saviour this Jesus is mine!

In the evening

“Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:1-3)

What is Jesus doing now?

He is preparing a place for you in Heaven.

“Father’s house”, — that means: at home.

Whether the day is near or far off, in Heaven they are looking forward with pleasure and joy to your moving from earth into the celestial Home.

Oh that day, everything will be prepared for you.

You will at once feel at home, noticing that they all have been waiting for you to welcome you home.

Even you ought to rejoice as you consider this.

As Heaven is prepared for you, so you ought to be prepared for Heaven. Be ready to depart. Keep the garment of your soul pure, cleansed in the blood of the Lamb.

On Our Father’s Knee (Devotions for Times of Illness), by Fredrick Wisloff, Copyright © 1966 Lutherstiftelsens Forlag, Oslo, Also copyrighted, Augsburg Publishing House – 1973

In The book “The Hauge Movement in America” it says this:

The Lutheran Church had gone to sleep on the pure doctrine. (Year 1675) But now Philip Jacob Spener preached repentance and conversion. And people were converted. He preached 66 sermons just on the new birth: “You must be born again.” This is the outstanding doctrine of all pietistic preaching. God has given the lay people a special mission to preach repentance. This has been and is sorely neglected in the Lutheran and other churches.

“Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works.” (Rev 2:5)

Rejoice in the Lord

“As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” (Isaiah 61:11)

*O child of sorrow, be it thine to know
That Scripture only is the cure of woe;
The field of promise, how it flings abroad
Its perfume o’er the Christian’s thorny road;
The soul, reposing on assured relief,
Feels herself happy amidst all her grief;
Forgets her labors as she toils along,
Weeps tears of joy and bursts into a song.*

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bride-groom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” (Isaiah 61:10)

Editor’s Note: “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’” Luke 15:22 – 24a.

“For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, ‘Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ‘And he said to me, ‘These are the true sayings of God.’” (Rev. 19:6b-9)

TODAY!

Today, 4.5 billion people are living without the hope that only comes from knowing Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. But when we think of these people as one very large number, as a faceless crowd, it’s easy to overlook that each one is an individual. Each one is an individual with hurts and longings. Each one is a very precious soul – especially precious to God – for whom Jesus Christ shed His very own Blood, died, and rose again.

“According to his abundant mercy (He) has begotten

us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” (I Peter 1:3)

App. 40 Million Individuals in the U.S.A. feel trapped or crippled by fear. They live as prisoners to their own anxiety.

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you.” (Isaiah 41:10)

Without Natural Affection

“Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful” Romans 1:31.

This phrase “without natural affections: is the translation of one Greek word, *astergeo*. It was a characteristic of many pagans of the ancient world. Significantly, it is also prophesied to be a characteristic of the humanistic pagans of the end-times. “In the last days ...men shall be ...without natural affection” (II Timothy 3:1-3). These are the only two occurrences of this word in the New Testament.

The word *stergeo* (“natural affection”) is one of four Greek words for “love,” but it is never used at all in the New Testament. It refers to the natural love that members of the same family have for each other. It is such a common characteristic of all peoples that there was apparently no occasion to refer to it at all – except when it is not present, when people lose their instinctive love for their own parents and children, and thus are without natural affection.” One thinks of the widespread abortionism of these last days, as well as the modern breakdown of the family in general.

Another Greek word for “love” is *eros*, referring to romantic love, or passion. Like *stergeo*, *eros* also is never used in the New Testament. The other two words, however, are used frequently. *Phileo*, referring to “brotherly love,” occurs over thirty times. It indicates fondness, based on a community of interest with the person or persons so “loved.”

The fourth “love” word, of course, is *agape*, which is used over 300 times. This is the type of love called out of one’s heart by the preciousness of the object loved, the love that impels one to sacrifice his own interests for the benefit of the person loved. This is the love of Christ, who “loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). And this is the love generated by the Holy Spirit in the believer for “the fruit of the Spirit is love ...”

(Galatians 5:22). HMM

Taken from “*Days of Praise*”, Institute for Creation Research, Copyright, 2007

Who are the Blessed of God? Those who Mourn.

“Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.” If you have recently lost a loved one, and you are certain that they were saved, there is a wonderful promise here for you to claim. There is a Christian way to mourn, that’s different from the way the world mourns, because we have the blessed hope of the resurrection. God gives you a promise of His grace and comfort, and we know His word is sure. Biblically there is another aspect of mourning. That is the aspect of mourning over sins, both personal and corporate.

Joel the prophet lived in a time when he had seen the judgment of God fall on Israel because of sin. He was standing in the land of promise and he saw the rubble of what used to be the temple and the land in ruin.

Joel 1:9 *“The grain offering and the drink offering have been cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests mourn, who minister to the LORD.”*

Joel 1:13-14 *“Gird yourselves and lament, you priests; Wail, you who minister before the altar; Come; lie all night in sackcloth, You who minister to my God; For the grain offering and the drink offering are withheld from the house of your God. Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly; Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.”*

Israel had sinned and the judgment of God had been brought upon them and the prophet called them to mourn over their sins and the destruction it had caused. And in the midst of their weeping, God promised them comfort, he promised them that there would be a day of joy and restoration.

Jesus said; blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Who are the blessed of God, how can you tell who they are? They will be the ones who recognize the destructiveness of sin, they will recognize the grief sin causes to our Holy and Righteous God, and they will be of humble and contrite hearts and will personally walk in daily repentance and will intercede for others, they will stand in the gap and represent their family, friends and community before the throne of grace.

What does the world say; the world says blessed are those who know how to have a good time. Blessed are those who rejoice, who dance, and who know how to party. Blessed are those who eat, drink and are merry.

But Jesus says (Luke 6:25) “Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep” There is nothing wrong with laughter, there is a time for that. Solomon in Eccl 3:4 says there is “A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn , And a time to dance;” NKJV This is true, and I hope you have time to laugh and to dance and have fun, that’s important, we can’t get so negative that we lose our joy.

There is a time for that. Especially when we gather as a family and as the people of God, there should be laughter and joy. But the other is true too, there is a time to weep, and a time to mourn, and I believe in the day and age we live in God is calling us to weep and mourn.

The Church of Jesus Christ lies in ruins. It’s just as the Psalmist described in Ps 74:3, “Lift up Your feet to the perpetual desolations. The enemy has damaged everything in the sanctuary.” Everything has been damaged and corrupted, Jesus has been minimized to being a mere man, his atoning work on the cross is misunderstood, sin is denied, repentance is ignored, faith is seen as agreeing to a few historical facts, the sacraments have gone from a means of grace to a means of salvation, Satan and Hell are thought to be a myth, and I could go on and on. You get the picture.

v. 4 “Your enemies roar in the midst of Your meeting place;” It would be bad enough if they went and started their own church or cult, but no they come into our midst with their pride and arrogance and tell us we need to be more politically correct, we need to be more tolerant, that we need diversity training, We need to be more contemporary with the times we live in, and we need to be less judgmental.

“They set up their banners for signs.” They set up their own standards in the place of God’s standards. The old standards no longer apply, away with piety, there is a new freedom. They continually question, “Hath God said.” The true signs of God have been replaced with the banner of ecumenism, and tolerance, and the church is about affirming people where they are rather than calling them to repentance, self denial and following Christ.

v. 7 “They have set fire to Your sanctuary; They have defiled the dwelling place of Your name to the ground.” They have chopped up the altar, the place of blood sacrifice, the place of atonement and say things like this; “The view of the cross as the sacrifice for the sins of the world is a barbarian idea based on a primitive concept of God and must be dismissed.” (Bishop for life Spong)

v. 8 “They said in their hearts, “Let us destroy them altogether.” They have burned up all the meeting places of God in the land.” This is the goal. There is a Satan inspired conspiracy, there are organizations out there that

see true Biblical Christianity as an obstacle in their way and the goal is the complete corruption and even destruction of the church.

v. 9 “We do not see our signs;” Where are the signs of almighty God in our land today. Where are the Red Sea crossings and the victories at Jericho and victory over the prophets of Baal, where are the miracles of God in our day, the mighty moves of God, the revivals, the great awakenings, the awesome awareness of the hand of God in our midst?

Those of you who are my age or older (age 69) remember those days with fondness. The days when the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement was about evangelizing the lost in our towns and churches. The days when the Spirit of God used the Hauge Federation to bring many to Christ. Those days are but a distant memory. Vs9b “There is no longer any prophet; Nor is there any among us who knows how long.” Where are the prophets calling for repentance? Where are they? Where are the Billy Grahams, the D.L. Moody’s, the Billy Sunday’s of our generation calling sinners to repentance and to Christ? Where are the priests who are weeping between the porch and the altar?

Will we be like Israel? Listen to God’s words in Ezek 22:30, “So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.”

God sought a man among them, someone to stand in the gap, someone to legally represent the nation Israel before God, to plead their case before God and to plead with the people to repent and God said; “I found no one”. What sad words. Today God seeks men and women who are willing to stand in the Gap and intercede for their neighborhood, their town, their state, their country, will He find anyone? Or will we be destroyed. When you look at how things have changed in the last few years, it makes my head spin, it scares me to think how things might change in the near future. We truly are at a crossroads in our land.

Blessed are those who mourn, blessed are those who have sorrow over sin, sorrow for how God’s heart has been broken. Blessed are those who mourn over the condition of the world, our country, the church, for they will be comforted. If we draw near to God in that way, if we so identify with the heart of God that we rejoice in the things that he rejoices in and weep over the things He weeps over, He has promised to draw near to us. James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. This is the comfort God has promised to us when we mourn over both our sin and the sins of our nation and church.

Wayne Almlie Continued from the March, 2023
Morning Glory

Being Diligent

“Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.” (Proverbs 27:23)

EVERY wise merchant will occasionally hold a stock-taking, when he will cast up his accounts, examine what he has on hand, and ascertain decisively whether his trade is prosperous or declining. Every man who is wise in the kingdom of heaven, will cry, “Search me, O God, and try me;” and he will frequently set apart special seasons for self-examination, to discover whether things are right between God and his soul. The God whom we worship is a great heart-searcher; and of old His servants knew Him as “the Lord which searcheth the heart and trieth the reins of the children of men.” Let me stir you up in His name to make diligent search and solemn trial of your state, lest you come short of the promised rest. That which every wise man does, that which God Himself does with us all, I exhort you to do with yourself this evening. Let the oldest saint look well to the fundamentals of his piety, for grey heads may cover black hearts; and let not the young professor despise the word of warning, for the greenness of youth may be joined to the rottenness of hypocrisy. Every now and then a cedar falls into our midst. The enemy still continues to sow tares among the wheat. It is not my aim to introduce doubts and fears into your mind; nay verily, but shall hope the rather that the rough wind of self-examination may help to drive them away. It is not security but carnal security; which we would kill; not confidence, but fleshly confidence, which we would overthrow; not peace, but false peace, which we would destroy. By the precious blood of Christ, which was not shed to make you a hypocrite, but that sincere souls might show forth His praise, I beseech you, search and look, lest at the last it be said of you, “Mene, Mene, Tekel: thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.”

Morning & Evening by Charles Spurgeon, © 1991
Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.

Adversaries

“Throughout the days of your life you may well face many adversaries and be compelled to battle many times. But no adversary is as formidable as your own wicked heart, and no battle so frequent as the one within yourself.

Thus the necessity to surrender yourself to the Lord repeatedly if you would win the struggles which the world, the flesh and the Devil impose upon you”

Dr. Shelton Smith

Do I have a right relationship with God?

QUESTION: At one time I was very indifferent toward the Word of God and the church, but great effort was made in our congregation to get everyone to join the church and my family and I joined. This has been a great blessing to us for we read God's Word in our home, are faithful at church and Sunday school and have a part in the activity of the church. Somehow this doesn't seem to be enough — something is lacking. I am not convinced that I am a child of God. Does it take more than what I have mentioned to be in a right relationship to God? What is your advice in the matter?

ANSWER:

You admit that at one time you were indifferent to God and His church—that you were away from Him. You were not alone in that condition. Half of our population is the same. When you joined the church a great change took place in your life and in your home. The whole atmosphere changed, and you have wondered if this might not mean that you have come into a saving relationship to God.

May I say that the experience you have been having has been an awakening. Through this experience God has been drawing you unto Himself. The lack you feel in your heart is the final step—the actual coming to God. Your conscience needs to be revived so that you may be convicted of your sinfulness. When that happens to the human heart, a person asks, how may I be saved? It is they who are sick who need a physician and not the well.

My advice to you is that by all means do not be satisfied with being an active member of the church. Permit God's Spirit to reveal to you how utterly you come short of the glory of God. He will show you your inner corruption and your need of a Savior, who has forgiven all and who gives you a new nature. The Holy Spirit who has begun the good work in you will finish it and lead you into full assurance of your living relationship with God.

Ask the Holy Spirit to open the Word to you. As you read, knowing it is God who speaks to you, wonderful things will happen. You will see yourself in the light of God's holy demands and your sin will rise up to condemn you, but there God's Spirit shows you the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. You will see Him go to the cross with your sins and mine, and hear Him say, "It is finished!" You and I cannot add or detract anything from that.

All this will become a reality to you if you wish. It is just this you lack. It is the experience of surrender to Je-

sus, of all one's sin, and all one's life that so many church people lack.

I know from experience that taking this last step is difficult. Our whole nature rebels at turning over to Jesus our right to ourselves. The devil will try by every means to prevent it. He isn't so worried about church members who remain satisfied that their names are on the church roll and are busy doing many things. What makes the evil one active is the awakened soul who goes to the Word of God and permits the Holy Spirit to minister to him. God has used your activity in the congregation to call you into this fuller life with Him. Surely you do not want to stop where you are and lose out on the new life He gives. Jesus gives one untold joys and blessings, gives a burning desire to serve Him, and He bears fruit for His Kingdom through us.

May the Holy Spirit lead you to see your lost condition and reveal to you the Savior at whose cross you may place your burden of sin and be free. Jesus cleanses from all unrighteousness.

God bless you and all others like you who are awakened to their need of Him.

How can I enter into fellowship with God?

QUESTION: How can I enter into fellowship with God? This is a question I have thought and read much about. But I am not able to arrive at a clear understanding of the matter. The first difficulty that presents itself is, how much I must repent before I can be saved. I have heard and read that a true and living faith is wrought through a heartfelt contrition and sorrow for sin. I can truthfully say I desire to be saved and become a true child of God. But when I do not have this heartfelt contrition and sorrow for sin, is there then no hope for me?

ANSWER:

Your desire to be saved is the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart. And we read that He, who hath begun the good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ.

You say, you desire to be saved, and that means that you desire to have all your sins forgiven, so that you may be a happy child of God. It must be your sin that makes you unhappy, and you wish to get away from it and be happy. You realize that sin is your worst enemy. You long to be able to say: "I am saved, my sin is forgiven, and I am a child of God." In this longing there is in the first place a grief over your sins. This sorrow or grief may be somewhat different than what you thought it should be. Per-

haps you were looking for so dreadful a pain in your conscience, that God would have compassion on you and forgive you your sins, but you do not seem to be able to bring about such a contrition, and therefore you think there is little hope that God will be merciful and forgive you.

Our contrition cannot induce God to forgive sin. Contrition merely serves to give us a desire to be saved, and when you have this desire, you have sufficient contrition for your sins. The contrition that we should have had for our sins, was laid on Jesus, and he felt the contrition for us. He tasted our eternal grief for our sins to such a degree that he cried out:

“My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?” Isaiah says, the punishment was laid on him that we should have peace. And now you are struggling to work up sufficient contrition for your sins so that God may have compassion on you. But if you should have to do that, you would have to take upon you the punishment that was laid on Jesus. Then He would have suffered in vain for you. Oh no, you should be most thankful that the contrition for your sins was fought out on the cross, and you are free.

In your longing for forgiveness there is contrition enough. It is only an evidence that you are honest before God, when you are dissatisfied with your contrition.

When I was in the same situation as you, not able to feel as sorry for my sins as I wished to be, my attention was called to a little verse: “Your grief o’er sin has reached its height, when with it you are dissatisfied.”

What a blessing, that you can be saved without even as much as to the proper sorrow for your sins. You can then realize that you are a helpless, lost sinner, who has nothing in yourself to build upon. Those are the very sinners that God can save.

The next question then presents itself: Is it possible to be able to believe, when one does not have any contrition to lean on?

In the longing in which there is sufficient sorrow there is also faith. Your longing draws you to Christ. That is the way the Holy Spirit works. He leads you to the Lamb of God who bore the sins of the world. He gave His life to save you from your sins. He did it, because He loved you, and had a deep longing to save you. And now you come with an earnest longing to meet Him. Do you then believe that He will turn you away, telling you that you must have more contrition and more faith before you can be saved. Oh no, He stands with open arms to receive you. We are so apt to want something of our own to rest on in our conversion. We do not want to be completely helpless. But that is what the word of God teaches. And that is also the experience that a sinner is saved by grace alone, without any work on his part.

Both articles taken from *Spiritual Guidance for Troubled Souls* by S.H. Njaa. It is a collection of articles published monthly in the paper “NORTHWOOD EMISSEREN”. Translated from the Norwegian 1948.

Nothing in the book about a copyright.

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The Mouth Speaks

“You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.” (Matthew 12:34)

WHEN Jesus speaks to us about our sins, He always directs our attention inward.

Our words reflect our heart-life, He says, “*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*”

The great amount of false, flattering, wheedling talk of our day corroborates this. This falseness of people’s hearts come to expression in their false words.

If you will give heed to your words, if not for more than one day, you will learn to know the condition of your heart. Because there is this inner connection between our words and our hearts, Jesus speaks to us with such earnestness about our tongues.

Let us listen to Him carefully as He speaks, and prove ourselves.

The generation of Christians to which we belong is a superficial and thoughtless generation. We could perhaps without exaggeration use an even stronger expression: a frivolous generation. I believe that our speech is irrefutable proof of this.

The Christians of the past generation were quite different in their daily speech and in their social relationships; they were exceedingly careful. They took cognizance of Jesus’ statement about every idle word. There was a certain seriousness and dignity about them in all their ways and in all their conversation.

Our generation of Christians thinks that the older Christians were too serious and legalistic. Where upon they proceed to show their Christian liberty in their associations with others and in their speech. And, it is true, a Christian should be happy and jovial. However, the line between joviality and frivolity is not always easy to observe. And then we have so much nonsense and worldliness, so much thoughtless and frivolous speech, when Christians meet. Both among the clergy and the laity.

Lord, forgive us! Lord, teach us how to speak!

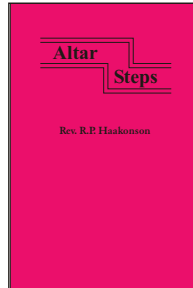
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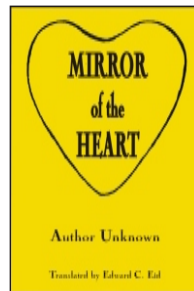
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This daily devotional was written by Pastor R.P. Haakonson and was published in 1947. It is suitable for families with children. It has illustrations from daily life, and a strong salvation emphasis. Suggested offering: \$8.00.



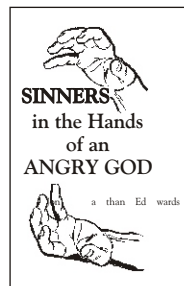
Mirror of the Heart

This book was published in 1900 by an unknown author. It contains some very earnest meditations and fervent prayers. It also contains ten very graphic pictures of the human heart. Inside the heart, the devil is visualized and also seven animals representing some of the most prevalent sins found in the heart of the impenitent sinner. These pictures show how these animals as sins are driven out of the heart when the sinner is converted to God, but how they can re-enter the heart if a person falls away from grace. One picture visualizes the fearful death of the ungodly, and another shows the blessed death of the righteous. Suggested Offering: \$3.00.



Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God

Jonathan Edwards preached this remarkable sermon at Enfield, Conn. on July 8, 1741. It was at night while he was reading it to a large congregation, that the lights became dim and he read with difficulty, and the influence was so great on the congregation that strong men and women cried and screamed for mercy and even grabbed their seats for fear they would slide into hell that very moment. Suggested Offering: \$1.00.



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Oh! Man take notice:

- 1) Come face to face with God the Father and you shall die unless thru His Son you are in Heaven. (Rev. 22:4)
- 2) Come face to face with God the Saviour, Jesus Christ and you shall live, when you receive Him and His forgiveness. (John 1:12)
- 3) Come face to face with God the Holy Spirit and you shall see your sin. He shall point you Jesus Christ. (John 16:8)