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"Say, Fellows—"

**Fifty Practical Talks with
Boys On Life's Big Issues**

By

WADE C. SMITH

*Author of "The Little Jetts Telling
Bible Stories"*



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Dedicated to

*her whose instruction and example
first inspired in me the purposes
and ideals which make for patience,
courage, endurance and faith—*

MY MOTHER

Introduction

"My teacher told me to write a composition on the last picture I looked at," said Henry, a sixth grader, when he came in from school the other day. "I had seen a picture of a fire engine," he added, "so I wrote:

"With a clatter of hoofs and a whirr of wheels, the fire engine dashed around the corner. The driver was crouched low in the seat. He was driving like Jehu."

"But I could not spell Jehu, so I went to my teacher and asked, 'Please, how do you spell Jehu?'

"Spell what, Henry?'

"Jehu.'

"What in the world are you trying to say, boy?'

"I am trying to tell how fast a fire engine driver goes—as fast as a chariot driver in the time of King David, I think it was.'

"Well, Henry, I think you had better say the engine driver drove as fast as an ancient charioteer."

"And did you?" I asked.

"No, sir; I said, 'he was driving like mad.'"

It is plain that this grammar-school teacher had never heard of the Bible character who had interested her pupil, but the author of this book knows how to spell "Jehu" to a questioning boy, or to a "gang" of boys, or to a Sunday-school class of boys.

Is there any boy who does not have a motor in his mind? A writer of a method article in a recent issue of *The Sunday School Times* related an incident of a chap whom he described as "a motor-minded boy." He said that he was sitting on top of a school desk at recess, kicking back with his heels, and when asked what he was thinking about, replied: "I was wondering, if my legs were horses, how fast they would go!"

It was with a realization of the fact that when a class of Sunday-school boys assembles, their instinct is of one accord to turn their legs into horses and to drive them as Jehu drove his pair of Arabs, that our paper requested Wade Smith to take charge of its Lesson Help for boys' classes. The management realized the truth of the statement of Dr. Walter W. Moore, President of Union Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va., when he said that Mr. Smith was the most versatile man whom he ever knew.

Although Mr. Smith was already contributing to its columns "The Little Jetts Teaching the Sunday-school Lesson," he was asked also to undertake the difficult but important task of writing the lessons for teachers of, and students in, boys' classes. His highly acceptable performance of this work is but another evidence of his versatility.

Out of his own richly eventful and happy boyhood, as well as his experience as a Christian father and a lifelong student of boys, small and grown up, Mr. Smith wrote the chapters of this book. They appeared week by week under the title of "Say, Fellows—" Letters from our readers have testified to their helpfulness. The writer of this Introduction teaches two Sunday-school classes—one composed of his two boys in their home preparation for Sunday school, and the other an Adult Men's class in the church to which he belongs. When his own boys have finished studying their lesson in their Quarterlies, they almost invariably come to their father and say, "Now read us what Mr. Smith says, and then we will be ready for the lesson."

On two occasions I recall introducing the lesson to my adult class by recounting Mr. Smith's striking stories out of his own experience about the boy who was drowned and restored to life, illustrating the Resurrection Lesson (See [page 60](#)), and of his first and last deer hunt (See [page 76](#)), and both times the attention of the men was gripped in an unusual way by these remarkable incidents. No doubt, hundreds of teachers have had similar experiences in making use of Mr. Smith's illustrations.

So great has been the helpfulness of the "Say, Fellows—" lessons that the demand has come for their publication in the delightful book form in which they now appear. In expressing my own pleasure that these lesson treatments, having served their immediate purpose, are now to be rescued from yellowing files and preserved under the covers of a book, I am but voicing the hearty sentiment of the entire staff of the paper.

May God's rich blessing rest upon the pages of this book as it takes a deserved place in the libraries of lovers of Motor-minded, Jehu-driving boys.

HOWARD A. BANKS,
Associate Editor "The Sunday School Times."

Philadelphia, Pa.

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BUILDING

Say, fellows, look at Solomon building a temple! Ever see anything like that? Yes, I have. I saw some boys building a dam. It was a peach of a dam when they got it finished; and the little stream that trickled along between the hillsides filled it up by next day, making a lake big enough to put a boat in. But, oh, how those fellows worked! For a whole week they brought rocks—big rocks—logs, and mud. Some of those stones and logs were dragged and rolled a quarter of a mile. They built right skillfully, too; they ricked it and they anchored the cribs; they piled in the rocks and braced the supports.

Work? I should think they did. From early morning until dark they worked, hardly stopping long enough for meals. But it was truly *some* dam when they got through. Then came the big moment for which they had laboured and endured: they closed the small outlet protected by several sections of terra-cotta pipe at the base—and let her fill!

Solomon went at building the temple pretty much the same way. The boys who built the dam said they were going to make the best *boys'* dam in all that country around, and they did. Solomon said he was going to put up the largest, the strongest, the finest, the best-looking temple of all for God. He put one hundred and fifty thousand strong men in the forests and in the quarries, getting out the finest timber and the best stone; he had these materials brought by sea and by land; he employed workers in brass, and stone-cutters and gold-beaters wherever he could find the most skillful, regardless of the cost, and he himself directed the work.

Well, it was a peach of a temple, too. Nothing like it had ever been seen before. Crowning the highest hill in Jerusalem, overlooking all the country around, its marble walls, its shining brass pillars, its white chiselled columns, and its golden interior, it shone like a gem of dazzling beauty. When Solomon had finished it, he invited the Lord to come into it, and "the glory of the Lord filled the house."

Fellows, we are all building some kind of a temple, and we build some on it every day. I saw a bleary-eyed dope fiend going along the street the other day. He has built a temple—a temple to the god Appetite. His temple is truly a sorry looking shack, but it is good enough for the god he serves. I know a very seedy individual, going around begging a living of whomsoever will give him a dime or a nickel. He has built his temple to the god Idleness. It is a ramshackle affair, to be sure, but it is plenty good for the god he serves. I know another fellow who has built a very ordinary looking temple—rather poor inside and out. He served the god "Let Well Enough Alone." There are many temples like his, and little joy is in them; but they are good enough for the god "Do-Little."

I think of one more temple builder. Early in his boyhood he learned that the human body, with its wonderful soul, is a temple for God to live in. Said he, "If God is to live in my body, then it must be fit." He began to think of everything he did for his health, for the training of his mind, his hands and other members, as fitting or *unfitting* the temple, according to whether it was good or bad. He quickly saw that his choices of entertainment and recreation were as important as his work, in the building he was putting up for God's dwelling. One day he made the most important discovery of all: it was that after all he might do to make the temple fit, it could never be so until the doors were flung wide and the Lord Himself should come in. Then, like Solomon, he "dedicated" it—and the Lord Jesus came in and made the temple fit, for "the glory of the Lord filled the house."

Which simply means that he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ. A fellow's biggest and best and grandest work is the Temple of the Lord.

Let's get at the job.

Read 2 Chronicles 5:1-14.

II

WORK

Say, fellows, shake hands with Mr. Work. Humanly speaking, the way in which you meet and hook up with this gentleman will have more to do with determining your success in life than any other one thing. Mr. Work is a member of the most amazingly successful concern in the community. His senior partner is Mr. Faith. "Faith and Work, Unlimited"—that's the style of the firm, and they certainly have put across the biggest contracts ever known to the world.

Some time I hope we may have the senior partner with us, but Mr. Work is here to-day, and we shall get a-plenty from him. In fact, "Plenty" is his middle name. Let's look him over. He is full of life and vigour. See his muscles, firm and hard. Watch the flash of his eye. Something there that inspires a fellow. Notice how he is in demand. Everywhere, people want him. Get that cheery smile; it grew on a well done job, and stays there by repetition of well done jobs. Observe his steadiness, his confidence, and, withal, his acceptable humility. Why, he looks good either in Scotch cheviot or in overalls.

I want to tell you a secret about this fellow. He is often mistaken for another celebrated and much honoured one—Mr. Genius. Thomas Edison says that genius is just another name for conscientious hard work. That being so, any fellow can make a success and an honoured name who is willing to dig—and dig intelligently.

But the best thing that can be said about work is to repeat what our Lord said: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Work is a divine characteristic, a divine institution. Our great God works. Jesus Christ His royal Son worked incessantly when upon earth, and works now continually. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the most tireless workers in the universe. Now what do you think of anybody who could despise work? What would you think of one who refused the work at hand and sat idly by, or went off on some useless excursion to escape it, while God, unwilling to lose a minute, ceaselessly works?

Of course, fellows, I'm not saying we should never go a-fishing or play a game of ball. Recreation is in the divine program. Every proper recreation is a help to good work. We owe it to our job and to ourselves to keep fit, and recreation is a part of the keep fit schedule. We only need to be careful and keep work and recreation in their right proportions.

The bitterest pills a fellow has to take are those produced by idleness. Idleness usually lets down the portcullis and the devil comes across and takes charge. Not that work alone is sufficient to keep us clean and out of trouble; oh, no, that would be a fatal error, and many have fallen by it. The firm, you remember, is "Faith and Work, Unlimited." Mr. Christian Faith is the senior partner of this firm, and is absolutely necessary to the truly successful career in the great business of life. We are simply looking over Mr. Work to-day.

One other wonderful thought, to me, about this matter of work, fellows, is that when a boy is born into the world, his work is born with him—his own particular task, his life-work. God Himself arranges it. Isn't that fine? Who could do it so wisely? So you may depend your job somewhere awaits you, if you have not already discovered it, and it is a perfect fit.

How to know your task? First, ask God. Pray over this thing. Then do the thing next at hand, the duty calling now. Do it the best way you know and put your level best into it. It is the surest way I know for a fellow to find his best level; and usually you *work upward* to it when you seek it in that way.

Listen, fellows, this is Gospel—"Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Read Romans 12:11 and Proverbs 22:29.

III

INVISIBLE!

Say, fellows, have you ever thought what a fight you could put up if you were invisible? Why, you could walk right up in front of a fellow and smash his nose or knock him down before he could put up his guard or smash back—and even then he couldn't see you to hit you. Of course that would be a cowardly thing to do, but I'm just saying "Suppose." And this is to introduce right here your arch enemy, the devil, who is not a "suppose" at all, but is very real, very personal, and very invisible,—always present and ready to do his cowardly, dirty work.

Somebody said people are like a lot of safes. We may be generally of the same pattern, but each has a different combination. Perhaps none of us knows the combination to any but our own, but the devil carries them all in his note-book, and he never makes the mistake of trying to throw a fellow with a drink when his combination is a cigarette, or vice versa.

The devil's finger is in all our affairs, and we can keep nothing secret from him. No matter what we try to do, he is ever present to try to make us do it his way. Even when we worship God, or pray, or sing, he has the audacity to try to make suggestions. You think the Wright brothers were clever to "conquer the air," and they were; but the devil has won the title of "Prince of the power of the air"! His airplane is instantaneous and noiseless; he requires no special landing field, but can light on the lobe of your ear with a precision that is uncanny, and, lighting there, he whispers things into your heart that you would not dare to utter with your lips. *There* are three points scored on the Wrights in one breath, and there are many others.

The devil has won victories over the best men we can think of. Oh, how he got David, and spoiled a wonderful record being made by the "man after God's own heart." All in a trice he tripped David and led him to break six of the ten Commandments at once—five to ten inclusive! And he got Moses for a bad fall, and Elijah and Abraham and Jacob. He simply crept up unseen and caught them with their guards down.

But in spite of the fact that he took a fall out of each of those strong and saintly characters, he met his match and more than his match when he tackled our Saviour. He made the strongest attack that could have been made, but Jesus overthrew him and put him to flight, and to-day's big news is that there is *a way* for you and me to throw this fellow down. Simple enough, if you are

on your guard. Did you notice how Jesus handled him? He quoted Scripture to him. Scripture to the devil is just like salt on a snail. He can't stand it.

Jesus used God's Word, and that is invincible even against the devil, our mightiest foe. Go into your Bible and select an assortment of "devil-chasers." Memorize them and have them ready for instant use. Like David, choose five smooth stones from the "Brook" and put them in your scribe; then you will be ready for this giant, who stalks abroad as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Only, he doesn't roar: he is noiseless and invisible—don't forget that.

Read Matthew 4:1-11.

IV

MR. ALMOST

Say, fellows, meet Mr. Almost!

He is one of the saddest, most pathetic figures in all the Bible story, not because he was a villain or a murderer come to judgment, but because he was so good and fine, and so nearly perfect, "on points," and yet—flunked!

But he was a lot lower down on the honour roll than he thought. "What lack I yet?" he asked Jesus. Really, he couldn't see that he lacked anything at all—and that alone was a sign of failure, if he had only been wise enough to see it.

Think of it, fellows, here was a man clean and safe and upright, as touching the law, yet the fires of torment were leaping up to meet him, along with Ananias the liar, and Judas the betrayer. Ananias did give a *part* of his money to the Lord, and Judas threw his blood money back into the bribers' faces, but this Mr. Almost closed his fingers tight over all his gold when the Lord called for it.

Mr. Almost kept the Commandments from the time he was a boy. He worshipped God only; he bowed down to no idol; was very careful to speak God's name reverently; wouldn't carry so much as a toothpick around on Sunday because it would be hauling wood and breaking the Sabbath; honoured his parents; of course he never killed a person; was pure in deed; took nothing which did not belong to him; told no lie on his neighbours; and he never wished another's property might be his own! Mr. Almost was a *pious man*.

Jesus saw through Mr. Almost, saw through his luxurious robe and his clean, washed skin, clear down into his stingy heart, and put his finger instantly on the trouble. Jesus has a way of doing that. "Having kept all the Commandments, and wanting to be perfect," said Jesus, "now go, sell your property, and give the money to these poor starving, dying people about you."

Mr. Almost had actually *run* to meet Jesus, to ask Him that question, "What lack I yet?" says Mark's Gospel. Yes, *ran*. He evidently had no suspicion as to the answer he would get. Doubtless he thought the great Master would tell him of one more hand-washing necessary before retiring, or possibly some gnat's burden which Mr. Almost had been carrying around on his sleeve on the Sabbath. Flick that off and be perfect! Mr. Almost wanted to make his perfection secure. He had all kinds of earthly securities; now this one more, the security of heaven, guaranteed by Jesus, and he would rest satisfied. He would just nail that down in passing. But Jesus touched him *where he lived*, and he crumpled up like some high floating dirigible whose gas tank explodes in mid-air.

Fellows, really I didn't want to bring Mr. Almost into this volume. He gets on my nerve—and do you know why, fellows? *He's too much like me!* for I am rich. Yes, rich in all the abundance of God's wealth which He has given me. I live in a wonderful land, a land of freedom and independence and opportunity—the richest and most powerful in all the world—and as a citizen of it all its resources are mine. I have plenty to eat and sufficient to wear, lots of friends and well-wishers. Life is beautiful and bright and comfortable; while just at my elbow, fellows, are many poor, starving, dying human beings—men, women, little children. The world is closely drawn together now, and there is never a time but that in some section of it there is famine and suffering. If we have the means to give and will give it to relieve human suffering, there are always reputable agencies ready to properly dispense it.

None of us can despise Mr. Almost, fellows, if we eat a square meal and turn a deaf ear to the calls to help the suffering and the needy.

This is the acid test.

Read Mark 10:17-27.

FISHING

Say, fellows, the biggest and finest surprise a certain boy ever got was on that day when he was called out of the shop to the manager's office, and, reaching there trembling with fright, was told that he was promoted and would from that time have a share in the profits of the business!

It was almost too good to be true. Immediately the shop looked different—the whole plant looked different—the men, the tools, the materials, the very smoke from the big chimney, all took on a kind of glory. The rows of machines looked like a parade and the mingled roar and grinding of them sounded like a brass band at a picnic. The dull routine of a daily schedule was suddenly changed to a thrilling program in every detail.

Something had happened—not to the shop, but to him. His interest was changed. Now, instead of simply doing his daily task for daily pay, he was to share in the big objectives of the whole plant; he was taken into confidence and partnership with the management. He was actually to share and rejoice in the achievements of a business which exported its products to every corner of the world! With what joy he realized that his capacity for higher and larger service had been recognized, and that now he would have fellowship not only with the men of the shop, but also with the head of the plant.

Fellows, that is about what happened to Peter and Andrew and James and John that morning on the shore of the lake. They were simply engaged in making a living. One day was pretty much like another. Sometimes, perhaps, the fishing was good, sometimes not so good. Life was just a day to day affair, and rather disappointing somehow, to souls with capacity for so much larger and finer things. Suddenly the Master, the Creator and Proprietor of the world, appeared and said: "Boys, it's a dull life at best—just fishing for fish; come and join me in a really big and worth-while task—fishing for men!"

And those four men caught the vision and followed Jesus. Life for them took on a new meaning that day. Instead of a daily grind it became an inspiring program with a grand objective.

I am glad that God is so great and that His plans are so large that He is still calling out men to share them with Him and work out their fulfillment. And you and I, if we are wise, will gladly hear that call and promptly respond, for we will realize that the transient things we daily seek are not sufficient to give us any real or permanent satisfaction, and that we have a capacity for larger and better things.

Oh, I don't suppose we can all be ministers and missionaries, though many of us may have that highest of all privileges, but we shall also find that a merchant's life can be so planned as to be a means of rich service to God; that a lawyer, after all, can be a force for Christ's kingdom; that an engineer can lay out his life-work so as to make straight the path and level the road for the King; that a school-teacher can use his influence to bring pupils to the Master Teacher; that a physician has peculiar opportunity to quicken the spiritual lives of his patients; and that any legitimate occupation can be made to serve man's chief end, which is "to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

And when you and I catch and follow that vision of our life task, whatever it is, the whole plant changes, whether our job is in the shop or in the office, or on the farm or in the schoolroom or pulpit, because we have tasted of the power and fellowship of a Spirit-filled life and a God-used career.

Listen, fellows, He stands now in the morning of life, on the shore of your little lake and calls you to a wonderful partnership!

Let's follow Him!

Read Matthew 4:18-22.

VI

SHOWING OFF

Say, fellows, it's great fun to "show off." Honest now, isn't that so? If you've got some rare thing the other fellows haven't got, what fun to have them come from all over the block to go up in the attic with you to see it and watch you "work it"!

I knew a boy who made an airplane. Of course it was just a toy, but it had all the parts. He had gotten a pattern from a mechanical magazine, with explicit instructions; he scoured around and got the dozen or more materials necessary, then worked for days and some nights in the basement. Finally, the thing was completed. It had a twist-rubber propeller, and would actually fly a little—not much. But it was a thing of beauty, and its varnished butterfly planes spread majestically and glistened in the sunlight. There were the stays and the rudder, the pilot's seat and the complicated triggers by which it was supposed to be governed. Well, the boys came from far and near to look at it, and the biggest fun the owner had was showing it to some new boy who hadn't seen it before. That is all right, too, if you do it in the proper spirit, but nobody likes to see

a fellow get "cocky" over his luck, no matter how good or how rare it is.

Solomon had the show stuff all right. The Queen of Sheba heard about it away down south in her African kingdom, and came many miles with a caravan of camels to see for herself. This man Solomon was a wonder. He answered her best riddles without batting an eyelash—and she had some corking hard riddles, too. When she tired of testing him he showed his wonderful house, his gorgeous throne of ivory overlaid with gold, his great flocks and herds for his household table, his army of servants, his courtly ministers, his treasuries piled with gold, and a hundred other sights richer and finer than she had ever known.

But the big event of that show day was the temple! Of course it was, for Solomon had made it the biggest and finest thing in the kingdom. Even if he hadn't told her she would have seen that. And there was but one way to explain it: Solomon's God, to whom the temple had been built, was the secret of Solomon's glory and power. That was the impression the queen carried home.

It is said that when one of the princes of India visited England, he was overcome by the display of the wealth and grandeur of the empire. After seeing the palaces of Buckingham and Windsor, and the Halls of Parliament; after getting a glimpse of British shipping and commerce plying to every known port; after viewing the greatest navy in the world and witnessing a review of the army at Aldershot—he exclaimed to Queen Victoria:

"Tell me, Your Majesty, what is the secret of it all?"

In answer the queen took a Bible from a near-by table and placed it in the prince's hand. "This," she said, "God's Word, is the basis of all—God is the giver."

Fellows, if there is anything you take pride in, remember the Giver. Don't make the mistake of Nebuchadnezzar, who actually talked to himself about how clever he was and how great he was to build Babylon by the might of his own power (Dan. 4:30, 31). Even while he spoke those boasting words God punished him by taking it all away from him.

But it is not sufficient simply to refrain from boasting. You and I must see to it that God gets the glory, for God has given whatever we have that is worth-while. Let the presentation be so made that whoever witnesses it will pass out saying: "Surely God is the secret of that fellow's success!"

Real and permanent greatness is the kind that exalts God above all.

Read 1 Kings 10:1-10.

VII

KEEPING FIT

Say, fellows, I wouldn't take a lot for the privilege of handing you young champions this message: for it comes right out of the heart of a King to the princes of the Blood.

Yes, something doing in athletics this time,—and the Big Event for which each one of you is preparing, whether you know it or not.

"Find all that in the Bible?"

Sure! that and more. Why, fellows, don't you know the Bible has more dealings right where you live and play and work and study and eat than any other book that was ever written? Just let me read you a part of to-day's Scripture lesson out of Weymouth's translation, which is the same as your Bible—only saying it in the kind of language spoken to-day instead of that of many years ago.

Listen to First Corinthians 9:24-27: "Do you not know that in the foot-race the runners all run, but that only one gets the prize? You must run like him, in order to win with certainty. But every competitor in an athletic contest practises abstemiousness in all directions. They indeed do this for the sake of securing a perishable wreath, but we for the sake of securing one that will not perish. That is how I run, not being in any doubt as to my goal. I am a boxer who does not inflict blows on the air, but I hit hard and straight at my own body and lead it off into slavery, lest possibly, after I have been a herald to others, I should myself be rejected."

Now, fellows, it was Paul saying that—writing to the Corinthians, who knew all about the Corinthian games and races, and contests of strength, skill, and endurance. And so do you know how the coach lays his hand on your shoulder, looks you straight in the eye, and says: "Listen, son, we've got to win that game,—you understand? From this on, cut the big eats. No rich stuff and no stuffing. Simple diet. No smoking. No late hours. Early to bed. Keep clean; exercise daily according to directions. Keep fit! Do you get me?"

And you meekly nod and say: "Yes, sir, boss." Do you have to do that? Oh, no, you could drop off the team if you didn't like the conditions, but you don't want to drop off and you comply with the conditions. You surprise yourself by your self-control. You are in on that game, and you're in to win. It is the event of the season. It will be the thrill of a lifetime to win. So you are temperate

because you want the glory of winning—glory for your team; glory for your school.

Fellows, thus your body becomes the temple of a living hope. And it is all right. Bless your hearts, there are few things finer than that self-mastery which enables a boy to deny his natural appetite for the sake of an ideal—even though it be a sporting ideal.

And I think God designed it so. He is continually teaching us the deeper and richer truths by leading us up to them through our experiences with things we can touch and taste and see and hear.

To-day He is pointing you and me, not to the temporary honour of an athletic victory, but to the eternal honour of gaining the mastery over our appetites for the sake of keeping our bodies, minds, and hearts for His own indwelling. And He, Himself, is our Coach, doing something which no other coach can—remaining constantly beside us, within us, establishing that wonderful endurance—that indescribable something within us which strives and strives and conquers!

Fellows, talk about thrills! there is nothing like the thrill that comes of being used—effectively used—by Him. The thrills of our athletic victories die away with the shouting, but the deep satisfaction of "keeping fit" for God's service grows finer and finer as the days go by.

Oh, say, fellows, *this* is the thrill of Real Life!

Read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20.

VIII

QUESTIONING

Say, fellows, make a note of this: If you question Jesus in the effort to trip Him, you throw yourself down; but if you question Jesus in order to know and do His will, you may confidently stand upon your feet and defy anything that threatens your peace, your happiness, or your success.

"How can a fellow question Jesus in these days, like the Pharisees?" did I hear you ask? This way: You can question God's Word, its truth, its justice, its wisdom in your particular case. Millions are to-day questioning in that way; millions who do not want to change their ways, millions who would like to overthrow God's laws, because they want to go on in their wickedness and our Lord's teachings are a continual reproach to them. But they are having no better success in it than the Scribes and Pharisees had in Jesus' day.

"Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chimes;
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

"'How many anvils have you had,' said I,
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' said he, and then with twinkling eye,
'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'

"'And so,' I thought, 'the Anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon,
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.'"

Now, fellows, those Scribes and Pharisees ought to have known better than to try to tangle Jesus in His talk. Already they had been astonished by the wise words He said, by the unmistakable "authority" shown in His manner and teachings, by the power of His mere word over diseases and devils. These men were the devil's own servants. There are many such to-day, and they never seem to realize until too late that *their* master will allow them to walk right into a hopeless fix—caught in their own trap.

Let's run our eye down the closing verse of this chapter of Matthew, as it tells better than any other how completely squelched were these critics of Jesus: "And no one was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that time forth ask him any more questions."

But there is a kind of questioning which we do want to practise. One of the wisest and finest things a fellow can do is to make it a rule to ask Jesus *some* questions every day in His Word. Make a place in your day's schedule—make it in the morning, first thing if possible, or very soon after you are up. Open your Bible with a question, and let that question be: "Lord Jesus, what would you like to tell me to-day out of these verses of Scripture which I am about to read? What thing in my life would you warn me against, or what thing should I do which I am not doing? Or, is there a better way I should try?"

"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

IX

LOYALTY

Say, fellows, what is the most loyal thing you ever did? I should like to know. Was it when you waded into a big bully who was licking your little brother, and took the drubbing yourself? Or was it when some fellows accused you of being tied to your mother's apron strings, and you flashed back at them: "Yes, and she is the finest mother a boy ever had!" Or was it when you sat up all night in a coach on a railroad trip to root for your team next day on the enemy's field?

I heard of a British boy in Flanders who was brought back of the lines for surgical treatment, and when they opened his shirt they found tattooed on his breast the words: *For My King!* I read of a French lad whose arm had to be amputated at the shoulder, having been shattered by a German shell. When he regained consciousness, the surgeon, moved with deep sympathy, said, "Oh, my poor boy, I am so sorry you lost your arm!" The boy's eyes snapped as he answered: "Lost! No, don't say that; I *gave* it to France!"

Each one of you fellows has a tremendous capacity for being loyal to some thing, some principle, or *somebody*. It is a costly part of your make-up, because it will cause you to make sacrifice. What are you choosing as the object of your loyalty?

Fellows, I want to offer you King Jesus as the One upon whom you can spend your loyalty to the limit. There is none like Him. He is the chief among ten thousand. When He gives you a task He gives you at the same time the power to do it. When He sends you to men, He opens the hearts of those to whom you are sent. You can undertake anything for King Jesus without fear, no matter how difficult or how impossible the task may seem.

Why, fellows, think of those two disciples going after that colt for Jesus their King to ride upon! He sent them for it. The beast belonged to some one else, yet they were to untie it and bring it. If the owner objected, all they were to say was: "The Lord hath need of him." That would settle it. They brought it as directed. That was faith, and that was loyalty.

To-day King Jesus wants messengers—not to send out for asses, but into the haunts of sin for lost men and women; and into the social, commercial, and industrial world to present His claims. Some, hearing the call, are answering, "But how do I know I will succeed in that sort of business? Will I be contented in such work? Will it pay? Will it keep me in a comfortable living? Will men come when I tell them?" Listen, fellows, King Jesus says: "All power is given unto me—Go!—and lo, I am with you always!" That is sufficient, it is the King's own word for it; and here is the place where you can exercise your priceless loyalty to the limit, and never know a moment's regret. The King Himself goes with you.

The loyal servants of King Jesus never have to root for a losing game; victory is assured from the beginning.

Read Mark 11:1-11.

X

A GOOD SPORT

Say, fellows, I overheard a remark the other day as I passed a bunch of boys down on the corner. One of the boys was saying, "Oh, he's a good sport, all right," and I wondered just what that boy thought it took to make a good sport. About that time one of the boys whom I knew pulled out of the crowd and coming my way overtook me, so I asked him who was the "good sport" the fellows were talking about.

"Why," he said, "it was Jim Love; when he was in the two-mile cross-country foot race the other day, with a good chance of getting ahead of Tom Locke, who won it, Jim stopped long enough to help a guy across a footlog with a sack of potatoes or something—and even then came in just a few yards behind Tom. He would have won, but for that stop; but he said the old man looked as if he was about to fall off the footlog. Tom saw it, too, but he waded the creek and got a better lead on Jim."

It did me good to think of those fellows classing Jim up as "a good sport," after I knew what had happened. They had the right idea. I believe our Lord would have called Jim a good sport, too, if He had been telling the boys of to-day about it, because the Christ spirit in a fellow is what makes him a "good sport" in the highest sense. Once when a proud Pharisee was trying to trap our Lord

with a "catch question," Jesus answered him with a story very much like that which made the boys call Jim Love a good sport.

The Pharisee asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbour?" and Jesus told him about the Good Samaritan. A man was travelling from Jerusalem down the rough mountain road to Jericho, and was attacked by bandits, beaten, robbed, and left lying beside the road half dead. A priest came along, but he was in a hurry; he had important religious duties awaiting him, and besides, that fellow looked as if he was in bad and it would take a lot of time and trouble to "undertake" him, so Mr. Priest just hummed a little tune to himself, looked at the sky and passed on.

Then came a Levite. He got down off his donkey and stepped over and looked at the poor fellow. Yes, he was breathing, but so near dead he probably would not last long, so why worry? So passed on the Levite. But next came along a man whom the priest and the Levite despised because he was a Samaritan. They regarded him as a very poor sort of a citizen.

But the Samaritan had a heart in him and he had a way of saying to himself when he saw anybody in distress: "Suppose I was in that fellow's fix, what would I like to have done for me?" When he asked himself that question on this occasion, the answer came quick and strong: "Get down and help him all you can; yes, your business is urgent, too, but here is a fellow-man in hard luck and you've got the stuff to help with!"

That is the way the heart of a good sport talks back to a fellow, and a good sport listens when his heart speaks, and a good sport acts quickly. So the Samaritan got down off his donkey and ran to the man, felt his pulse, spoke to him, loosened his shirt and looked into that ugly wound all bleeding. Then back to his travelling sack and out with the oil and wine.

Pouring in the soothing and healing stuff, he doubtless said: "There now, old fellow, you're feeling better already; just keep steady a bit, and we'll get you out of this; a little water? yes, hold on a minute—" and down to the trickling stream he runs and brings a cool drink in his little leather cup.

Ah, it was fine to see that beaten man revive! He opened his eyes wide and looked the gratitude he was not yet able to speak. Soon the Samaritan got the whole story of the attack, listening with sympathetic indignation as the wounded man told how it happened, how he was taken by surprise by those cowardly ruffians, stripped, robbed, and beaten into insensibility. Directly he was trying to raise up on his elbow, and the Samaritan said:

"Now you just put your arm around my neck and hold steady while I lift. That's it, get your weight on your right foot, lean forward, and I'll get you atop this beast. Ah! that's the stuff, you're getting stronger every minute—now steady just a moment, let me pick up that oil bottle—all right—Get up! Bess—steady, girl, keep your hoofs in the path, and we'll make it fine. There, that's the movement.

"The inn is only a mile down the road now, friend, and there is food and a good bed awaiting you—oh, well, that's all right about your money being taken, I'll take care of that. The innkeeper and I are good friends, and likely with the good treatment you'll get you will be on your way in a couple of days—"

And so they go, the donkey picking her way carefully over the rougher places under the restraining voice of her master, while the wounded man leans heavily upon his benefactor.

Then, you know the rest, fellows. That despised Samaritan saw the thing clean through. He did not leave "his neighbour" until he had spent a night with him at the inn and had an understanding next morning with the innkeeper as to his safekeeping until able to resume the journey.

And what did our Lord teach in that graphic story? Why, simply this: Anybody whom you can help is your neighbour. If there is a poor man at my door needing something I can give, he is my neighbour. Or, if there is a rich Chinaman six thousand miles across the seas, needing the spiritual help I can send him through my prayers, my gifts, or my personal attention—he is my neighbour. Distance, short or long, is not the measure of neighbourhood; but need and my ability to help are the tests which determine how near by is my brother man.

The Boy Scouts have a fine motto: "Do a Good Turn Daily." There is just one better—"Do a Good Turn Whenever You Can," and that is loving your neighbour.

Read Luke 10:25-37.

XI

FEASTING

Say, fellows, a man raised a glass of water to his mouth to take a drink; some one passing struck his elbow, and—! Now an interesting thing has happened: each one of you fellows got a picture, complete in all details, to a climax. Yet there was no real picture; it was all in your imagination, spurred by twenty-one simple words. And it was a *moving picture*, too, and it went away past the word-spurs, because you painted the balance of it yourselves like a flash. You saw the glass fall

and smash on the floor, and you saw the water spatter the man's feet and trousers—then some of you saw him jump back and look up quick and kind of mad like at the person passing, and maybe say something rough.

Well, that's a wonderful machine you've got there, fellows; anything that can make a moving picture out of a thin line of material like that—a really for-the-moment interesting picture, with all the finishing touches—has a most valuable and useful outfit. Now Jesus knew His hearers had outfits of that wonderful kind, so in speaking to them He helped them draw pictures which would enable them to see some very interesting and startling things—things which they needed to know worse than a dying man needs a doctor.

Most of the pictures which He drew in this way were to show what the kingdom of heaven is like. Men in those days, just as nowadays, were walking around bumping right up against the kingdom of heaven without knowing it. So Jesus drew pictures to help them see this wonderful kingdom, in order that they might not only become glad citizens of it but also to escape an awful fate.

The picture I want to present is of a great and rich king who was also both good and generous, making a marriage feast for his son and inviting a large number of guests.

Now, fellows, use your fine imagination again. You saw the king's surprise when the first servants reported; you saw him knit his brows (like this) and stand silently thinking a moment before deciding to send a second word; but can you imagine his astonishment a little later, when two of that second squad came running in, all breathless, and told him that though they fully explained the magnificence of the wedding supper, some turned upon their heels with a flimsy excuse, others rudely laughed outright in the messengers' faces, and—oh, the horror of it!—still others actually stoned and beat some of the messengers to death!—and their bodies were even at that moment lying in the street, being licked by dogs.

I say, can you see the king now? I think you can, for you have heard what he did. Yes, his servants went out again to those same people, but this time with swords and spears and fire, a terrible army of them, marching to the dread drum-beat of judgment, "and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city."

Yes, fellows, I know what you are saying. You are saying, "Well, I don't see how anybody could be as big a fool as that!" And yet, do you know that people are just as foolish to-day? Jesus told that parable to help us, too. The kingdom of heaven is just as close to you and to me; the greatest King of all—that's Jesus—is inviting boys and men to come in to the feast of usefulness and happiness and joy of an out-and-out Christian life, a feast which He has Himself prepared, and some are turning their backs upon His call, unwilling to take the King's own word for it that they will have the time of their lives, which will grow sweeter and finer and better as the days go by, and never, never end!

I tell you, fellows, there's nobody who can make a feast like Jesus; things taste even a lot better than they look on the card, for He always gives more than He promises. Don't *you* make the mistake of turning down His invitation. It would be a tragedy. Let's answer His gracious call to-day like this:

"I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain or plain or sea;
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord;
I'll be what you want me to be."

Read Matthew 22:1-10.

XII

STEWARDSHIP

Say, fellows, how much is a boy worth in money? The United States Labour Bureau in 1914 estimated the average cost of rearing a boy to the age of sixteen was then \$1,325. It must average at least \$1,500 now. Well, fellows, that is what you cost; are you worth it? I am talking of actual, not sentimental, values. Father and mother wouldn't take a million dollars for any one of you, I suppose, but that does not mean you are worth it. An investment of \$1,500 ordinarily is expected to yield at least six per cent. a year, which is \$90.

I know a fourteen-year-old boy who is earning \$7 a week. He gives it all to his widowed mother on Saturday night. She gives him back a dollar of it. He first takes out ten cents for his church pledge and five cents for Sunday-school. Then he puts fifty cents in his savings bank. He has about \$25 in the bank. The remainder, thirty-five cents, he spends as his fancy dictates. He is a steady boy and it is reasonable to count upon his putting in eleven months a year at his work, allowing one month for vacation. His gross financial value to his mother for the year, therefore, is not less than \$280. It costs her about \$12.50 a month to provide his food and clothing. That takes off \$150, so his net financial value a year is \$130, which is six per cent. on \$2,166. Thus you see that fourteen-year-old boy is a paying investment on considerably more than the average cost of a

sixteen-year-old boy, and I do not wonder that that fellow's mother would not take a million for him, for the money part of his value is the least of all.

But this is not by any means an accurate way to arrive at a boy's real value. The more fortunate boy will be going to school nine months of the year. He is preparing for a later very much higher value than the boy who is denied an education, and while he may not be earning money now, he is earning a certain knowledge, skill, and development which will give him equipment of high value. At any rate, sooner or later, fellows, you find yourself with a capacity for earning and accumulating money. And, remember, in your relation to your money, that after all it is not *yours*, but God's—no matter how it comes into your hands.

In Luke 16 is the account of Dives, whom God permitted to be rich, but who made the fatal mistake of using his wealth for the sole purpose of gratifying himself. He built a luxurious home, he bought fine clothes and feasted every day on costly food. There were suffering and want all about him, but he turned his face away from the needy. One poor fellow named Lazarus, too weak to walk and all covered with sores, was laid at this rich man's gate where he was bound to see him day after day.

The dogs came and licked the poor man's sores, but Dives passed him by. Lazarus got a servant to ask for the scraps taken from the rich man's table, but he needed other help. God gave Dives money and gave him an opportunity to serve his fellow-man with it, but Dives failed to catch the idea, somehow. He foolishly spent his money upon himself, and one night Dives lay down to sleep on a full stomach and woke up in torment.

Fellows, money was his undoing. Money can be a curse, or it can be a blessing. All depends upon whether or not you recognize God's ownership, acknowledge it, and act upon it. Some of the saddest lives ever lived are those built around a wrong conception of their relation to money. Some of the happiest and most successful lives are those built upon the principle that money is a God-given trust to be used for Him.

Fellows, what are you going to be worth—to God, and to your fellow-man?

Read Luke 16:19-31.

XIII

TALENTS

Say, fellows, one morning in spring a boy came to me and said: "Dad, let's go fishing; I saw the bass jumping in the lake just now, and that means they are ready to bite."

"All right," I replied, "you get the bait and the lines ready and we will go at four this afternoon." He did so.

Then we went around to the point on the lake where he had seen the fish jumping. I made a dandy throw, first try, and as the bait began bobbing in and out among the flags I could just see myself hanging a beauty. I was watching the line so hard that I forgot the boy for two or three minutes; then, turning, I saw him standing there looking very sad.

"What's the matter," I said, "why don't you unwrap your line and fish?"

He whimpered: "I want to fish for bass, with a big line, like yours."

"Why," I said, "you couldn't handle a big rod and line like this; and if you could, you would get it tangled up in those flags out there; now you just unwrap your little line, put a little worm on your little hook and drop it over there by that stump, and you will catch a little perch."

Well, he didn't want to do it, but because I ordered him to do it he cast in his hook. In the meantime, I was watching my minnow again; it was playing beautifully, but getting no strike. I was still watching it intently, when all of a sudden I heard a great splashing beside me, and looking around—there was a sight! That boy's little pole was nearly bent double, and at the end of his line threshing and churning the water at a terrific rate was a big fish! The boy was having the time of his life; oh, he played him, he tightened him and slacked him, but all the time bringing him nearer to the bank.

In about a half minute (it seemed much longer) there was a *pound-and-a-half bass* flapping out there on the grass. In the meantime, the big hook continued to do nothing—and it never did, that afternoon. We went home with the one bass, and that night the family sat around the supper table and greatly enjoyed the fish *caught on the little hook*.

God will honour the fellow that does the best he can *with what he has in his hand*. And perhaps it will be a far greater honour than you ever dreamed of.

When our Lord told the parable He did not mean to make small of the fellow who has only small ability. He condemned the fellow who refused to use what ability he had because it was small and because he did not have as much as somebody else to work with. Let's suppose the last part of

that parable had read this way:

"Then he which had received the One Talent came and said, Lord, you only gave me one talent, and when I saw you giving that other fellow five and still another two, I was all cut up about it. I did not see why you should give them more to work with than you gave me. I boiled inside. I said to myself, Well, if that is the way he treats me, I will simply take his talent and bury it until he comes back; then I will dig it up and hand it back to him just as he handed it to me.

"But then I thought again, and I remembered that it was your property you were distributing, and you had a perfect right to do it as you chose. I remembered that you are both a wise and a kind master; you have never given me a reason to question your love for me and your interest in me; and you know me and my capacity for handling your property far better than I know myself. So I decided to take that One Talent and work with it and do the very best I could with it. And, Lord, I did; and here, see—I have gained another one to go with it; here are *two talents*."

Bless your life, fellows, do you know what his lord would have said to that man? He would have said to him exactly what he said to the other two men.

A poor boy in New York got himself a job at a little lunch stand. He found he had a little talent for making the lunches attractive and people would buy them. He stuck at it, saved his earnings, and after a while bought out the lunch stand. He enlarged the variety of his lunches and added some other goods. And, to make a long story short, he is now acknowledged to be the greatest hotel man in the world.

The fellow who uses the talent he has, be it one, two, or five, and takes Jesus for his partner, is bound to be a success.

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

XIV

FIGHTING

Say, fellows! of all the boys in the Old Testament, David is my choice. There was something about that chap that was "real class."

If David were to happen in your bunch, doubtless when you got to knowing him every one of you would want him for a chum. He was the kind of fellow that real boys like: not a braggart and not a "sissy," but generally when it came to his turn to bat he smashed the ball for a clean hit. Or if he should happen to strike out, he didn't slam the stick to the ground, but with a smile stepped back and turned a handspring and lit on his feet rooting for the next man up. Of course, you know there was not any baseball in those days, but that is about the way David would have played the game.

Out there minding the sheep, David didn't get moody. It might have been a slow job for others, but not for him. No, he had a harp and he made music with it. He had a sling, and could hit a quarter on a telegraph pole with it—if there had been quarters and telegraph poles. But there were other things to use that sling on, and they gave David a touch of real life.

David knew that lions, bears, and wolves lurked in the forests near the pastures in which his sheep must graze, and he got ready for them. Notice, fellows, here is one of the secrets of David's success: he was always ready. His big opportunity came when he arrived at King Saul's camp on that errand for his father, and he was ready for it.

He was ready, first, because he believed God's power was greater than any army, and that God would fight for any one who fought for Him. Did you notice in the Bible account how David told the king that God would handle the matter; and how he also told Goliath out there on the field, while all men held their breath, that it was Goliath plus sword, spear, and shield, against David plus God?

And so God helped. One smooth stone, the first out of the sling, crunched through that big bluffer's head like a baseball through a stained glass window, and the Philistine fell on his face.

Everybody's giant comes some day. Every fellow's big opportunity comes one time, at least, and he can be just as ready for it as David was.

That's the big news to-day.

I like to think of the five smooth stones as representing five characteristics of David's readiness.

First Stone: (the one he slung) *Faith*. We have been talking about that—faith in God. David prayed as he picked up those stones, you know he did.

Second Stone: *A pure heart*. God searched it that day at Bethlehem and approved him for anointing. David was clean. You would never hear him telling smutty stories, nor did he think them.

Third Stone: Industrious habits. Think of his skill in playing the harp, and his effectiveness with that deadly sling.

Fourth Stone: A courageous spirit. A lion's mane, a bear's skin, and a giant's head, of which we know, bear testimony to this. No wonder the shepherd boy could stand before a king and reason with him in the presence of a national crisis.

Fifth Stone: A humble spirit. Listed last, but not least by a good deal. "Thy servant will go and fight this Philistine"; "Thy servant kept his father's sheep and—" "The Lord will" do this thing—not I. David's humility throughout his boyhood and young manhood—indeed throughout his whole life—is one of the fine and strong points of his character.

In the brook that runs alongside your lives, fellows, these five smooth stones and others are waiting for each one of you. Put them in your "scrip" *now* and be ready for life's opportunities; for they are coming, head on, to meet you, and *God wants to be on your side.*

Read the seventeenth chapter of 1 Samuel.

XV

DRIFTING

Say, fellows, there is a little animal in the North Woods, called the weasel. In coldest winter its fur turns snow white and its pelt is very valuable. The white fur of the weasel (sometimes called the ermine) is used to make some of the most beautiful and expensive stoles that elegant and wealthy ladies wear. Therefore, in very cold winters, trapping the weasel is profitable as well as interesting.

Now here comes the queer part of this story: The weasel is small, and any scar made upon its snow-white coat is doubly conspicuous. If the pelt is torn or injured it is rejected; so the trapper must take his captive clean and scarless. The weasel will not enter a cage trap, and the much used snap-jaw steel trap would tear the skin. But the weasel likes to lick a smooth surface, especially if it is the slightest bit greasy; so the trapper smears with grease the blade of a large knife and lays it on top of the snow, secured by a chain attached to the handle, and covers the chain with snow to hide it.

The weasel comes along and immediately indulges its natural desire to lick the smooth blade, and instantly the end of its tongue clings fast to the cold steel. Try as it may, it cannot pull loose without tearing its tongue out, which usually it will not do, but sits quietly by, until released by the trapper, released only to die. Luckless weasel, trapped by the tongue.

Now, fellows, the weasel does no more wicked thing than to follow its natural inclinations; but natural inclinations are not safe guides; they more frequently lead to death. We folks are much like the weasel; we are much of the time dead bent in the direction of what is worst for us. Is not our God good to give us the plain warnings which we as intelligent beings can see and understand—and, seeing and understanding, "Stop, Look, and Listen!"—turn about and head toward safety, success, and happiness! Surely, He *is good*. But what matters how good God is and how plain His warnings if we go right on in the wrong direction?

If a weasel could understand a warning and should say, "Yes, I know, but I am just going to lick this once," what would it matter how clear the warning was?

God's warnings are such as should turn us face about; right now, before we are hard and fast in one of the devil's many crafty snares, for he always lays his snares along the path of our *natural inclinations*. God warns: "Abhor evil," learn to hate it, pray to hate it. "Cleave to the good," learn to love it, pray to love it.

Naturally, we seek our own praise, but face about! seek the praise for another, in true brotherly spirit. Naturally, we are lazy and would shirk our task; but brace up! put vim in the job; that honours God, and incidentally, puts both success and joy in the work. When we get in trouble, naturally we chafe and become impatient; God says, "Be patient in tribulation." That's a "Right-about-face!" for you. We pray once and quit—naturally. God says keep on praying. When folks nag at us and pester us, naturally we blaze out at them. God says, don't blaze, but bless. And that's "To the rear! Hey!"

Naturally, our noses turn up and our heads are lifted to salute the lofty ones; God says look around for those not so well off as we are, and lavish our sociability on *them*. Naturally, we try to "get even" with the fellow who does us a mean turn; God says turn that matter over to Him; He will take care of it. And when that fellow needs help, as surely he will sooner or later (maybe right now), make him the special object of our kindness.

Oh, yes, I know, fellows, it is much easier to do the way you feel like doing. But when your boat is drifting down the current, which is the natural way, it takes a Real Fellow to dig his oars in and turn and row up-stream. And that's what you propose to be: a Real Fellow, and the best part of it is you then become a Yoke-fellow with Jesus Christ; and let me tell you, *He pulls a good oar!*

Fellows, drifting means "over the falls." "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25). Pulling up-stream with Christ means getting to the sunshine of the eternal hills. "But the path of the righteous is as the dawning light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18).

Fellows, I had rather PULL with Christ than DRIFT with the devil, wouldn't you?

Read the twelfth chapter of Romans.

XVI

RESURRECTION

Say, fellows, I'll never forget one exciting morning on the banks of the Etowah River, a treacherous stream that threads its way through the red hills of northwest Georgia. A bunch of us boys were spending that morning in swimming. Not much swimming, either, for only one boy in the crowd could swim, and all except him were under thirteen years old. Bob was fifteen, and a good swimmer. One of the boys waded out pretty deep, and the undercurrent swept him off his feet. There was a cry, and he sank.

Then it was that Bob did a fine thing, which has caused the rest of us to look upon him as a real hero ever since. He ran along the bank, down-stream a little way, and jumped in, rapidly made his way to a point a few yards below where the boy had gone down, dived, and came up with him. The rest of us waded out as far as we dared, to meet him, and all together we drew the couple to shore. But, fellows, that boy was dead—at least he seemed to be, and we were certain of it.

We lifted his limp body out of the water and laid it on the ground. We were three miles from town. Scared? We were terrified! All of us were trembling from head to foot with fright. There were no Boy Scouts in those days, and boys had not learned the scientific way to restore a drowned person to life. We were alone and helpless in the presence of sudden death, and knew not what to do.

One boy suggested that we ought to "get the water out of him," and that was followed by another suggestion, to put the body over the lower limb of a near-by tree letting the head hang down, so the water could run out of the mouth. This we proceeded to do, with a great deal of difficulty, but finally we got it up there, hanging across the limb, pretty much like a wet necktie.

After the body had hung in the tree about five minutes, while we stood about, panting, pale, and terror-stricken, we again took it down and laid it out on the ground. All of a sudden, to our amazement there was a movement about the mouth and a little gasp, as for breath. The rough handling of the body getting it in and out of the tree had had some effect.

Instinctively we began to roll him over and move his arms about. We knew nothing of the proper method, but the mouth opened and he breathed again—then again—and as we let him rest a moment on his back, he opened his eyes and looked at us, from one to the other.

Fellows, can you imagine how we felt? Well, we couldn't speak; we just jumped around like Indians and shouted and laughed and cried. It was wonderful—the most thrilling experience I think I ever had, but I was wobbly in the knees for a week afterward.

The thing which tremendously impressed me was the coming back from death to life—for so it seemed to us. But what do you suppose must have been the feelings of those two women and the disciples, on that astonishing morning when the two Marys went at early dawn with spices to place about the Lord's body,—the body which they had seen die upon the cross two days before; the body they had seen lifted down from the cross and which they had helped to prepare for burial; the body they had seen sealed up in the tomb as the sun went down on the darkest, saddest day the world ever knew?

What must have been their feelings, I say, fellows, when suddenly He appeared before them *alive* and *well* and *speaking*? How they must have leaped to do the thing their risen Lord commanded: "Go quickly—tell."

Do you know what it all means to you fellows who have accepted Him as your Saviour and Friend and Guide?

It means this: that you in your youth, full of life and with all the thrill of growing strength and manhood, have no dead and lifeless program to follow, no fickle and disappointing "rewards" which perish with using; but yours is always a forward, up-going experience—something doing every day that is worth while, something that brings a thrill which does not die out and leave you weaker, but makes you stronger every day, and prepares you for a yet bigger task,—a *living* task and a *living* reward—Eternal Life!

Read John 20:1-21.

XVII

KNOWING HOW

Say, fellows, have you heard of the expert who was called in to start the big engine? Every wheel in the plant had come to a sudden standstill. Something had gone wrong in the engine room, and the engineer was nonplused. To save his life he could not locate the trouble. The superintendent was down there mad as a hornet. A thousand operatives were idle on full pay, and it was like burning money on an ash heap. Still that engineer fumbled around. The "super" telephoned for the expert to come at once and see what was the matter.

Directly, he walked quietly in, glanced at the steam gauge and turned the throttle wheel a bit. Then, with a tiny hammer which he drew from his pocket he lightly tapped some parts of the machine, here and there. He paused at a certain pipe leading to the steam chest, called for a wrench, removed a tap and a plate, peered in, then carefully picked out a piece of cotton waste and replaced the plate and tap. "Now open your throttle," he said to the engineer. The big engine moved off like a thing of life, pulleys began to whirl and belts to whirr, and a thousand hands resumed their work.

In the office the expert handed in his memorandum charge. It was fifty dollars and fifty cents.

"It is all right," said the superintendent, "we're glad to pay it, but would you mind telling me what the fifty cents is for?"

The expert smiled, "Why, that is my charge for the one minute spent in locating your trouble, the fifty dollars is for *knowing how*."

Fellows, your life is a great big costly engine, built with infinite skill, and you are the engineer. It is a wonderful thing running that engine,—wonderful because it is the motive power to turn many wheels and affect many lives. Rightly understood and properly handled it will produce great values, and be a blessing to the world. Misunderstood and carelessly handled, it will cause loss and suffering to you and perhaps many others.

As a boy, I used to go to the engine room of my father's mill and watch the engineer. Continually, he moved about, watching its movements, its big flywheel half below in the pit, half above, and the broad belt that glided over it and disappeared through the brick wall into the mill; now he would be refilling the oil cups, now noting the steam gauge, or polishing the shining brass trimmings almost with a caress. He was the first man on hand in the morning, and the last man to leave at night. Oh, how well he must know his engine, how carefully he must guard its movements, how always he must be on the job, if he would be a capable, successful, happy engineer!

And what is God's Word telling us about it to-day? Listen, "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom [to know God, to know himself, to know his engine], and the man that getteth understanding [how to run his engine]. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. Length of days is in her right hand [a long and happy career of productive energy] and in her left hand riches [the actual wealth which God promises to those who obey His law and love His service, and the inexpressible satisfaction which comes with the honour that honours God first of all]."

Every fellow can have this wisdom for the asking. Every fellow can know how to run his life engine, to avoid the breakdowns, to keep the wheels humming the song of industry and success. Life is the most interesting thing in the world, and God gives it abundantly. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

Now, fellows, here is the whole matter in a nutshell: Your life machine is the most wonderful, the most mysterious, and at the same time the most "runnable" thing that the great God has created; but to run it successfully, as God designed it to be run, you must get your instructions from Him, the Maker of it. His Book of Rules, the Bible, must be your daily guide, and through it He will speak to you in your wonderful day as you live it in His companionship.

Fellows, it is the Life!

Read Psalm 119:1-11.

XVIII

FRIENDSHIP

Say, fellows, if you were blindfolded and walking a plank above Niagara Falls, humanly speaking your chances would be about as good as David's were when King Saul in a frenzy of rage and jealousy was seeking his life. David sized it up when he said: "There is but a step between me and death."

If ever a fellow needed a friend, David needed one at that time.

And a friend he had—a friend with a backbone, a true friend—as brave as any knight who sat at King Arthur's Table Round or followed in the train of Richard Coeur de Lion.

Young gentlemen, meet Prince Jonathan!

He never got to be a king, but he had a kingly spirit—if that means something high and noble. He never deserted a cause which had a claim upon him. He was true to Saul, his father; he fell at Gilboa fighting by his side. He was true to David, his friend, unto the point of death.

You may recall that in a former chapter I mentioned the opinion that David was the kind of a fellow any red-blooded boy would like. On that day of wonders, when in the twinkling of an eye the shepherd lad became the champion of two armies, when the musical fingers of the boy who played a harp and tended sheep did the execution which routed the enemy and laid a giant's head at the feet of the king—that day Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David in a lifelong friendship. It was the kind of friendship which stands the test of adversity.

It was no wonder that David could have the admiring friendship even of a prince on the day of his triumph and for days afterward when all people were singing his praises and he moved upon the high places of royal and popular favour. If the tide had not turned, Jonathan's friendship would have been only an incident upon the page of history, if it had been recorded at all. It would not have been a thing so fine, so inspiring, as to have thirty millions of Sunday-school folks discussing it to-day.

But the tide turned, and there came a day when it was expensive and hazardous to be a friend of David. Jonathan's position became both delicate and perilous. Saul his father was a despot who would take his own son's life if he sought to excuse or defend one whom the king conceived to be his enemy. Jonathan's friendship stood the test. His own life hung lightly in the balance, but Jonathan would rather have given his life than fail his friend. He took it in his hand that evening at the royal feast of the new moon; and he played with death as the javelin of the infuriated Saul came hurtling across the table.

Then it was that this thing called Friendship sprang forth in all its wonderful strength and beauty and found its place in poetry and song. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, said Jesus. Ah! there is the best friend of all—Jesus! And what did He do? Well, He did this, which proves it:

There came a day when you and I were fugitives from the king—not a tyrant king, like Saul, but a just and holy God; not an innocent fugitive, like David, but a sinner meriting the King's wrath and curse; and One stood in the councils of Eternity—the Great White Prince—and said, "Father, forgive him; let me take his place; let me suffer his punishment; let me bear his shame; but him forgive and restore to a place in court and to the joy of the Royal Service."

And the King consented, and the Son came to earth and died upon the cross to satisfy the law and make it possible for you and me, fugitive sinners, to return to the King's Table—forgiven and restored!

Let's go!

Read the twentieth chapter of 1 Samuel.

XIX

ALABASTER

Say, fellows, a bunch of college students were talking over the news that had come to the campus that morning about Bob Allman. They were not only surprised; they were mad, for "Bob Allman had done the biggest fool thing ever committed by any decent fellow that the college had sent out,"—that was the unanimous verdict. And of all the bunch in last year's graduating class, Bob was the last one you would have suspected of such a thing, he had so much at stake. He was the clearest-headed, the best-balanced, the finest physical specimen, the smartest chap in the lot. Bob was one of those rare fellows who could stand high in his classes and be popular with the boys and the professors alike. He was president of his class and captain of the 'varsity football team, and everybody was glad of it.

The amazing news had arrived, in a letter from Bob, himself, to one of the boys stating that he was that very week at Vancouver, taking ship for China, where he had accepted a position as school-teacher on the banks of the Yangtse; there he would preside over a room full of Chinese boys about seven hours every day, while they monotonously swayed backward and forward to the droning of their "study voices" in the characteristic Chinese fashion.

Bob's friend showed the letter. He had no more sympathy for Bob's reasons than the bunch had; it was "simply a horrible mess—an outrageous slaughter of talent." That was what they decided. Bob's letter had said:

"I don't suppose you will understand it now; I hope you may, later; but out there are living (dying, I had better say) about four hundred and twenty-five millions of people, practically without a knowledge of Christ. I know Jesus Christ, not only as my Saviour, but as the very finest and best friend a fellow ever had. I know what the knowledge of Him can mean to *one human life*. I know that He wants those people to meet Him and to know Him as I do. It has suddenly dawned upon me that I can go over there and help introduce those strangers to my Lord, and by doing so not only please Him but save them from eternal death.

"I couldn't be happy at anything else, Gus. Maybe you will smile—if it doesn't make you mad—but just wait, old fellow; give me time. Unless I am the worst fooled mortal that ever lived, I have got hold of the really big job—one that takes all that is in a man. Oh, it's easy to make money, and it's easy to do some stunt that wins applause; but after it all, when 'the tumult and the shouting dies,' what have you got?

"And what have I got? do you ask? Well, first, I've got about the best inside feelings you ever could imagine. I've got a happy heart. I've got the courage of my convictions. But, best of all, I've got my Master's smile; and one day, if my faith does not fail, and I don't believe it will, I'll get His 'well done'—and that will be worth it all.

"Gus, I wish you were going with me, old fellow. Smile, but think it over. You will graduate next year. Say, I'm going to expect you. But in the meantime, remember: Nothing you've got is too fine or too rare to lay down in service to Jesus Christ!"

Fellows, that was fifteen years ago. Want to take a look at Bob now? It is a thrilling picture I see. A group of fine buildings—a great Christian college in China, built for the most part by the Chinese themselves. Bob is the president of it. He wouldn't swap positions with the President of the United States, nor would he care to be a captain of finance or a Supreme Court Judge. Bob has for fifteen years been "living the life," and it's going finer each year.

He has had the supreme joy of seeing Christian Chinese business men, statesmen, and great leaders go out from his college to take their places of influence and leadership in the affairs of an Empire—in some respects, particularly in population and undeveloped resources, the greatest upon earth. Bob himself has been called time and again into the highest councils of the nation. He is engaged in introducing men—and through them a great multitude—to his Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, fellows, boys have alabaster boxes, too—and there's only one place to break them—at the feet of Jesus.

Read Mark 14:3-9.

XX

TELLING IT

Say, fellows, do you know it is impossible for anybody to tell with words the whole story of the cross. The only way you can tell the story in its real power is to *live it*.

I have heard there was a high-caste Chinese boy, the son of a wealthy mandarin, governor of one of the Chinese provinces. This father was very ambitious for his boy, hoping that one day he would succeed him as chief executive. Therefore to secure for him the most modern and progressive education, he sent the boy a hundred miles away to a school on the Great Canal, taught by American missionaries. "To get the Western learning," he told the boy, but not the foreign devils' religion.

The teacher in Yuan Ki's room was a six-footer, a college graduate, and an athlete. Yuan Ki was much impressed. He secretly admired him, but was ungraciously curt to him. This was Yuan Ki's way of making the teacher "keep his distance." But the teacher seemed not to notice it. He was always kind to Yuan Ki, even as he was to the others.

One morning at chapel teacher talked about his God. Yuan Ki sneered at what he told. Actually, teacher had said that his God had come down to earth and had given up His life on a cross, as a sin-offering for all people, even His own enemies. Yuan Ki wrote his father about this "ridiculous story."

One day Yuan Ki was taken sick with a high fever and placed in the school hospital. That night as he turned his feverish head from side to side on the pillow, he felt a cool hand laid on his brow. It was the teacher. Yuan Ki turned his face away, affecting not to see him. The second night, he kept the boy's feverish brow cooled with iced cloths until the fever subsided. Yuan Ki was distressed at the situation, but all the more determined to ignore the teacher's kindness.

At noon recess one day the boys were playing on the sloping grounds between the school building and the river. It was strictly against the rules for the boys to go past a certain low wall, toward the water. But Yuan Ki and Wang To, seeing the teacher sitting near one of the windows and knowing how it would disturb him, ran over the wall and jumped on to the deck of a house-boat

moored near by. Yuan Ki saw the teacher look up in alarm and start as if to jump from the window, which was ten feet from the ground. Yuan Ki ran to the outer end of the house-boat, intending to jump to the deck of another house-boat alongside, but in doing so, slipped and fell into the swift current. The boy could not swim, and after a brief struggle he sank and knew no more.

It was two days later that Yuan Ki came to consciousness. He was puzzled quite a little until he figured out that he was in the hospital bed again, and it was in the early dawn of the morning. There seemed to be nobody else in the room. Yuan Ki could see through the open door, across the hallway, into the large reception room opposite. There was a long, strange-shaped, box-like thing, with some candles burning near by. Curiosity getting the better of him, Yuan Ki got up and crept across the hall. Coming close to the casket, he looked through the glass cover—and there lay the teacher.

Just then a hand was laid on Yuan Ki's shoulder, and the nurse hustled him back to bed, scolding him for his imprudence. "But," said Yuan Ki, "the teacher—how did he die?"

"Lie still," said the nurse, "and I will tell you. When you fell into the water, teacher jumped from that high window to the ground. It seemed to sprain his ankle, or something, for he limped badly as he made his way to the water. He reached you just as you went down the last time, and bore you up. A man ran out on the deck with a boat-hook and reached for you both. He caught your sleeve and hauled you in, but the current carried teacher out of reach, and then we saw him sink. He was an expert swimmer, but the sprain must have caused him to lose consciousness."

Yuan Ki's next letter to his father read in part like this: "My father, my heart is broken, for I shall not see your face again. I know that what I shall tell you means that your hopes for me will be crushed and that you will disinherit me; but, oh, my father, I have learned now what is the love of Christ. Teacher had tried to tell us about his Christ, who said: 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.'

"And now, my father, there is but one thing for me to do, and that is, myself, to take the place which this noble servant of his Master has left vacant—his Master—now my Master, too, for He has accepted me and I have accepted Him. I have resolved to train to go to my countrymen and tell them of this wonderful God, the like of whom there is none other."

Jesus gave *all* of Himself for us. We cannot give less than *all* of ourselves for Him.

Read Mark 15:16-47.

XXI

READY!

Say, fellows, once in my life—and only once—I had a chance to shoot a deer. It was in the Tennessee mountains. A party of us boys travelled over a rough mountain road all of two days before reaching the hunting grounds. About daylight of the third day each one of us was given a "stand," that is, stationed at a point where the game would likely pass when started by the hounds. The seasoned old guide cautioned us to keep still and watch. "One thing sartin," said he, "deer is in thar, an' when they comes out they comes this a-way."

I had never been deer hunting before. I have never been since. It was my one opportunity, and as the party left me, to distribute themselves at other points of vantage along the "run," I took up my stand under considerable excitement. In an hour I heard the dogs far in the distance. They were evidently running. That meant the game was running, too,—how many and in what direction I could only guess.

Every nerve and muscle was tense with expectation. The music of the hounds grew fainter. "Evidently circling again," I mused. I was getting to be quite a huntsman, and chuckled at how David Crocketty my observations were.

Another hour I waited. A squirrel came out on a limb, and with its antics and barking helped me pass the time. A while I watched it, now and then dropping my eyes to a level for the expected deer. Suddenly, as I dropped my eyes, the most thrilling sight confronted them. They nearly popped out—my eyes. There, within fifty feet of me, stood a magnificent buck.

I shall never forget the picture. His beautiful, keen limbs slightly quivering, his sleek sides glistening in the slanting rays of the sun as they throbbed in and out with his rapid panting. His head held high, the antlers looked like a picture.

All this had happened in less than five seconds. I only had to veer my gun two inches. My hand was on the trigger, and with a perfect "bead" on his left shoulder—right where the old guide had said the night before was the spot to aim for.

Snap! left barrel.

Snap! right barrel.

Off like the wind, Mr. Buck!

Fellows, I have never been sicker than I was at that moment, but once. My sickest was in the next moment, when I unbreached my gun and found *there was no shell in either barrel!*

Foolish?

You can call it any name you please and I won't defend it. Think of me at the camp-fire that night, fellows.

Foolish? Yes, I suppose that is the right word. It is a much stronger word, though, than we realize. Jesus used it in this parable of the ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom. But He used it to describe a real tragedy, the greatest tragedy of life; the tragedy of being unprepared at His coming.

And when is He coming, fellows? Nobody knows. He has not even told the angels that secret. We don't have to know it. We only have to be ready.

And how to be ready? Simple as A B C, fellows. Just be busy, doing God's will—or making an honest effort to do it, and asking Him to help. Anybody can be ready to meet Him when He comes, if he wants to and will try. Just be doing your work and playing your play, as He would have you do it.

But, fellows, it is a big risk to "put off" getting ready. Do it now while you are young, with all life before you, by saying: "Lord Jesus, here is my life. Use it in just whatever way you choose. Plan it for me and help me carry out the plan." That is the way to bag the Big Game. Some of life's greatest opportunities come but once, and then by surprise. The happiest and most successful life is the God-planned life, and a God-planned life never misses the Big Opportunity, because it is ready—always ready. Ready for life, however long or short it may be; ready for death whenever that must be; ready for the Coming of the Lord Himself, which may be any moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Are you ready, fellows?

Read Matthew 25:1-13.

XXII

REMEMBERING

Say, fellows, all through the United States some years ago there sounded a slogan. It was a slogan of hate,—a slogan of revenge. It was the rallying cry of the Navy, it was shouted by the Army. Newspapers carried it daily on the front page, alongside their titles; business houses had it printed on their stationery; it was engraved upon souvenirs; it hung as a motto upon the walls at many public gatherings, and it became a household word throughout the nation: "Remember the Maine!"

Remember—remember—never forget. And the purpose in remembering was Retaliation. One night while the United States battleship *Maine* lay peacefully at anchor in the harbour of Havana, an explosion tore a great hole in her hull and she quickly sank, carrying down many officers and men to sudden death.

There was hardly any doubt that Spanish officers had from the shore treacherously exploded a mine underneath the battleship, and later investigations seemed to confirm this theory. Immediately the United States, an outraged nation, arose to drive the Spanish army from Cuba and her navy from American waters, and the spirit of revenge was kept alive by the slogan, "Remember the Maine!"

Now, fellows, those are just the cold facts to show how powerfully can be used the word, Remember—how powerfully to kill and to destroy; how powerfully to nourish the harsh and cruel side of our natures. Not that it was wrong for America to lift the Spanish yoke from helpless Cuba, we are not dealing with that question. That with which we have to do to-day is the energy and force developed by *remembering*. Like dynamite, it can be force for good or for evil. Remembering the taunts and cruelties of our enemies usually carries us into a cruel and destructive program.

I am so glad this lesson presents to us the good side of that really great word Remember, for to-day it is Remember Jesus. When you link that Name with a word it transforms it; link that Name with a life and it transforms it. Jesus Himself gave us the slogan. He was so intent upon our keeping it in mind that He instituted a feast by which we might commemorate it.

Even the food of that supper had a significance: Bread, to represent His own body nailed upon the cross for us, and wine to represent His blood which flowed for us. I think, fellows, if you should give your life to save another, you would not like that one to forget all about it, would you?

But Jesus had more than that in mind. He knew that "remembering" would mean much to you

who are trying to live a straight-out Christian life. Celebrating at stated times by this Remembrance Supper would help you to remember Him also *between times*. It is in these between times we so much need the power which comes by Remembering Jesus.

Am I downhearted because I have been mistreated? Remember Jesus. He was most mistreated of all men. Am I feeling that I'd like to "get even" with somebody and redress a wrong? Remember Jesus. He did not strike back, but laid down His life for His enemies. Am I feeling that I cannot hold out in this Christian program? Remember Jesus. He is right by my side and will help me hold out. Do people seem to misunderstand me? Remember Jesus. He understands, and that is sufficient. Does it look as if I am about to make a failure? Remember Jesus, through whom we are more than conquerors.

I tell you, fellows, it is the biggest and finest Remember of all, because it makes us strong, it makes us happy, it enables us to overcome, it makes us invincible!

Remember Jesus.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-34.

XXIII

GETTING EVEN

Say, fellows! I saw a big touring car sideswipe a Ford runabout and knock it several feet to one side on the country road. Of course each of the drivers thought the other was to blame, and a warm argument followed.

The big car was unhurt, and proceeded on its way, but the flivver had its running board and fender badly battered. While the young fellow of the runabout examined to see what further damage his car might have sustained, the prosperous-looking gentleman was speeding up the highway, chuckling over his own car's escape from injury.

I asked the man of the Ford if his engine had suffered. No, he thought it was all right; he would crank up and see. Good! She started off with a clutter, and he asked me if I wanted to ride. I had not far to go, but gladly accepted, for I was rather struck with this young fellow's grip on himself. It took self-control to avoid making the air blue with abuse. The way that big fellow had hurried on, leaving the runabout in trouble, was certainly not on the square, to say the least.

A turn in the road brought a fresh surprise. There was the touring car, a hundred yards ahead, standing in the middle of the road, hood up, and the big man peering into the engine. There was room to pass, and I wondered what the man at the wheel in the runabout would do. Would the little car rattle past with its damaged fender? It would be only human nature to sing out some sort of a taunt: "Thought you were in a hurry!" or "Don't block the road!"—and yet this young fellow did not seem to be that kind. His self-control during the incident back there in the road made me expect something different, and I was not disappointed. The runabout did pass, but stopped ten yards ahead, and my companion got out.

"Engine trouble? Need any help?"

The big fellow's face was a puzzle, as he looked up with a worried grin and mopped his brow with a grease-smear hand. Yes, there was engine trouble, and it was serious.

To make a long story short, when last I saw them as they turned the curve of the road ahead, the big car's front axle was connected by a chain to the rear of the runabout as it chugged away in low gear dragging the big one to the nearest garage.

Say, fellows! it takes a dead game sport to do a trick like that. Any cheap skate can whiz past and give his enemy in trouble the hard-boiled eye, but it takes a fine soul to be generous when the natural impulse calls for spite work.

In the small hours of that fine morning, as Saul slept and as his guards were heavy with sleep about him, David put one over on his pursuer—an act of kindness which overwhelmed him with shame. David had not only to fight a natural impulse to get even, but he had with him an adviser who used the most persuasive arguments to induce him to take Saul's life. Indeed, Abishai proposed to do the deed himself, as though that would leave David clear of guilt in the matter. But no, David was a man of principle, and he knew three very vital things:

1. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," said the Lord.
2. A magnanimous spirit wins, and no sad regrets cloud the victory.
3. He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city.

Read twenty-sixth chapter of 1 Samuel and Romans 12:20-21.

XXIV

GREATNESS

Say, fellows, if I should make up an unusually good story about you, some noble thing you did, or some kind and generous act, to whom should I tell it, to be sure it would be believed? Yes, I see you know of whom I am thinking—your mother. I might tell your brother and sister, and they would say: "Phew! are you sure it was Dick?" I might tell your employer, and his eyes would roam around over the objects on his desk; or your teacher, and he would look at the sky and say: "Think it will rain?" I might tell your father, and he would be grateful—but surprised! But let me tell your mother! There I would find one who is ready to believe anything good I would say about you.

I tell you, fellows, a mother is a wonderful gift to a boy, for her prayers alone. Long before you learned to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep," she was praying that you would be a great and good man some day. Those prayers of mothers have kept many a boy from going wrong. One night in a great city where I had gone to find work I had fallen in with some young fellows who "knew the ropes," and being far from home and lonesome I was glad to accept their companionship. They invited me to join them in an "evening lark" to which no loyal Christian would lend himself, and though I was a nominal Christian I was tempted sorely. I regarded myself as "my own man," having just turned twenty-one.

But just as I wavered between right and wrong, my mother's face flashed before me. It was only for an instant, but it was enough. I heard her voice, heard it in prayer. That night a thousand miles away she was praying for me, and saved me from what might have been a fatal step. I firmly believe, fellows, but for my mother's prayers that night and many nights, before and since, I should not now be enjoying the privilege of talking about the great things of life and the Kingdom to you.

Treasure that dear mother, if you have one, fellows; she is God's peculiar gift.

Well, James and John had such a mother, and she did the most natural and motherly kind of a thing. She wanted *her boys* to go away up high; they must even stand in the highest places, on the right and left hand of the King in His glory. Like all mothers, she was ambitious for her boys.

Then Jesus in His wonderful way explained that the road to true greatness was not that which the world was following, in which those in power and authority were overbearing masters to their inferiors; but it is a path of service to mankind, a path already blazed by Himself. Last night in the local evening paper I saw these headlines: CHATTANOOGA DOCTOR ATTAINS EMINENCE. The article stated that a very remarkable invention for the removal of foreign particles from the lungs or bronchial tubes, such as might be accidentally swallowed, had been successfully demonstrated before a national medical society, and had been written up in the *American Medical Journal*; it was said that the discovery had brought great honour to the doctor in the world of medicine.

That was the recognition, but what had preceded? Days and nights at bedsides of suffering; days and nights in the laboratory; days and nights of study to relieve pain; hours of weariness unknown to the world, but borne on by the thought of doing a service to humanity. And do you suppose the final publicity is what rewards this doctor? Hardly. A reporter on his local city paper sought an interview, after the far-away medical journal had published the first news, but the doctor, in his service overalls in the midst of treating his patients, declined the interview, saying it would involve a technical description which the general public would hardly be interested in. Then it was "Good-morning," and the doctor returned to his work.

True greatness does not care to make one dash to fame, then loaf in its glory.

The thing our great Commander wants us to be earnest about is doing our best, wherever the place of service. He will look after the reward. He is even more ambitious for us than our mothers are.

Read Matthew 20:20-28.

XXV

"PAW, I WANTA BE SOMEBODY!"

Say, fellows, away back in the mountains of western North Carolina, far up on the mountainside, at the head of a cove, there lived a fifteen-year-old boy. He had sisters and brothers and parents, but they dwelt in a little tumble-down shack and were wretchedly poor. Jake was the oldest of the children, and he had to work hard in the little patch of corn on the steep mountainside, which barely yielded a crop.

Down the path a mile or so there was a little log schoolhouse where a lady teacher gave some of the mountain children lessons in "readin', ritin', and 'rithmetic." Jake had passed and repassed

that schoolhouse many times and wished that he might "go thar and larn," but Jake was too important a hand on "the farm" to "waste enny time at sich"—so thought his parents, neither of whom could read or write. "An' Jake was pow'ful handy 'bout fixin' things, like tools en sich."

One day, when "the crop" was pretty well "laid by," Jake came to the shack and, throwing his hoe into the corner, said: "Paw, I wanta be Somebody!" Then Jake went on to say he had been thinking that now the corn was in shape to go ahead and make what it would, he "might put in some time ev'y day at the schoolhouse a-larnin' how to read and write."

"But y'ain't got nothin' to buy books," was suggested.

"I'll see 'bout that 'ar," said Jake.

Next morning when the teacher arrived, Jake was waiting at the schoolhouse door.

"Teacher," said he, "I ain't got no money to buy books, but I kin git up the wood ev'y day for the stove, 'n I kin sweep out the schoolhouse 'n keep it clean—cain't ye loan me a book 'n let me come 'n larn?"

Jake's terms were accepted. No boy was ever prouder of a university scholarship than Jake was of that chance to "larn" in the little mountain schoolhouse. Jake went after "larnin'" as a boy goes for pie at the picnic dinner.

A few months later, the school was visited by the superintendent of one of the large North Carolina mountain mission schools. When the teacher told him about Jake, he offered him an opportunity to enter the mission school and succeeded in persuading his parents to let him go. Jake was put to work taking care of the farm machinery in the agricultural department of the mission, but with ample time to pursue his studies in the schoolroom.

It was noticed that he had special aptitude for fixing the farm implements and adjusting the parts—even making some of the missing parts at the old blacksmith forge. The superintendent was so impressed with this that as soon as Jake's education had made pretty fair progress, he secured him a position in the dynamo room of a large manufacturing plant in a near-by town. Jake had accepted Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Master while at the mission school, owned his Bible, read it faithfully every day, and was a consistent young Christian.

It was a triumph for Jake, when he got a discarded dynamo out of its corner and saved the purchase of a new machine. His employers soon saw that he was entitled to even a better chance than they could give him, and after they had some correspondence with a great electrical manufacturing firm in New England, Jake one day bade farewell to his "Tarheel" friends and took a north-bound train.

At the great electrical plant, his career was continuously upward.

It takes five figures to name his salary. Every Sunday morning you will see Jake and his family get into their big car and motor into the city, where Jake teaches a large and enthusiastic class of young men.

The mountain boy has realized his wish: he is Somebody!

No fellow can do a finer thing than make his life count as a force in Christianizing the nation—to make it stand out a shining light, pointing the world to Christ. And one effective way to do that is to apply himself, with a Christ-loving heart, to the opportunity that comes to his hands to build himself up in a Christian way and in a business way. For good business and Christian integrity are twin screw propellers.

The fellow that gets the good job, the fellow that suddenly finds himself in a position of power and privileged service to his world about him is the fellow who is found faithful to the smaller work or the smaller opportunity that lies next to his hand.

Oh, fellows, it is the only life!

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

XXVI

"LET DOWN YOUR FEET!"

Say, fellows, something happened two summers ago at a well-known resort in the mountains, which even at this late day it quickens my pulse to recall. I was one of the very few eyewitnesses of the "tragedy," and it nearly put me to bed with nervous prostration. It was about twilight one evening when I passed near the lake on my way to our cottage for supper.

The gay throng of swimmers had apparently all dispersed to the hotels and cottages for the evening meal and preparation for the concert in the auditorium. That lake was a very popular place in the afternoon; there were accommodations for all grades of swimmers—from the expert divers who used the platform, spring-board, and tall diving ladder on the deep side, to the

smallest children, who paddled and waded in the shallow water under the watchful care of their nurses on the other side. The lake was not over a hundred yards wide at the widest.

I was just noting how deserted and quiet was the place which only a few moments before had been fairly alive with a happy throng of sport lovers, little and big, when I saw coming toward the platform from the bath house a tall, thin man in his bathing suit. He looked so pale and weak and thin that I wondered if he could possibly be thinking of going into that cold water at that time of evening and *alone!*

I had not long to be in doubt about it, for straight out on the platform he went and then *on the spring-board!* He lifted his arms above his head and pointed his hands together as a man going to dive. The man looked so weak and thin that I felt positive he would not be able to swim in that water, so chilled by the mountain springs that fed it. I wondered if he knew how cold it was and how weak he was.

Should I run the risk of "butting in," and warn him? Suppose I did not and he should begin to sink, could I jump in that fifteen-foot water with my clothes on and save him? These thoughts flashed rapidly through my mind, but in the twinkling of an eye he was off the spring-board, head downward into the water.

I held my breath and waited for him to rise. It seemed he had gone to the bottom and stuck there; the water became actually smooth again, and almost still, where he had disappeared. I thought he would never come up. My heart jumped into my throat.

Then he came up—very near where he had gone down—and faintly struck out swimming. I thought of course he would at once make for the piers of the platform; surely a fellow swimming as weakly as that, all alone, and in water cold and deep, would not risk himself far from shore. But, to my amazement, he was apparently starting for the other side!

It was then I discovered I was not the only witness. On the other side of the lake, down close to the water's edge, and watching with evident anxiety, was a lady. It was easy to see by her movements that she had a strong personal interest in the swimmer's actions, and that she was very anxiously watching him. She had evidently come down to keep him company, or as a precaution, while he took his solitary evening swim.

These things, which were taken in at a glance, coupled with the fact that the swimmer was plainly growing weaker and making very poor progress, confirmed all my apprehensions, and I was just thinking I must quickly take measures for his relief when I saw coming out of the bath house on a dead run, two husky young fellows in bathing suits, making for the spring-board.

At the same time the lady shouted: "Father! Father! can you make it?"

The swimmer gurgled something which sounded like, "No."

He had gotten about half-way across and was merely struggling to keep his head above water. The two huskies went off the spring-board so close one behind the other that it looked foolhardy, and struck out rapidly for the drowning man, but he had gone down his second time already.

It was a race between life and death. I said: "They will never reach him in time." The lady screamed. Then a new voice broke upon the still evening air. A boy over on the walkway by the dam shouted at the top of his lungs: "*Mister! Let down your feet!*" The struggling man heard it; he did let down his feet, rose up about waist deep in the water *and walked out!*

Fellows, as I walked on up the hill toward supper, trying to work my heart back down where it belonged, I did some tall thinking. Had I ever "drowned" in shallow water? Sure, I had. The great big things God has planned for you and me to do seem impossible because we do not take into account that they are to be done through God's power and not our own.

We summon the nerve to tackle the task, but, forgetting Him, like Peter trying to walk on the water, we sink. We foolishly try to do the thing in our own strength, when there at our hand is the great power of Almighty God just waiting to flow through us and accomplish it gloriously.

Oh, fellows, if you would just let down your feet on the mighty power of God, you would walk out of all your difficulty. Here is a great overpowering temptation getting the best of you—and you, drowning in shallow water.

Let down your feet! Here is an inspiring challenge out of God's Word, to put forth your hand and heart and mind and help win the world for Him. You are tempted to say: "Who am I?" Let down your feet, and you'll see who you are. You are a child of God, through whom He is willing to do mighty works.

And you will rise upon your feet, you poor, weak fellow, and you will hold aloft the Banner of the Cross, and you will achieve for God in a way that will set all the bells of heaven ringing.

Read Matthew 28:16-20.

AN "UNASSISTED TRIPLE PLAY"

Say, fellows, when that "Indian," Wambuganss, put three men out with one unassisted play in the world's series and retired the Brooklyn Dodgers with bases full, twenty thousand frantic Cleveland fans rose as one man and sent up a yell that sounded like the roar of Niagara. It comes but once in a generation for a lone baseball player to make an "unassisted triple play" in a world's series, and doubtless that night the Cleveland second baseman was the most envied baseball player in the world. For one man to do, alone, what thousands of onlookers could not do, was enough to turn all fandom topsy-turvy in a delirium of amazement.

There is something in you and me, fellows, that leaps to its feet and screeches with delight when we see any one rise to the demands of a crisis and do the fine thing. Now, I want you to turn to a place in the Bible where is described a finer thing than could happen in any world's series. It has always seemed to me to be about the most wonderful event that ever happened. It is John's account of one of the most wonderful miracles that Jesus performed.

More than five thousand hungry people lingered on the hillsides near the lake shore, and there was nothing for them to eat. Jesus was testing His men that day to see how far they had recognized His divine power. He turned to Philip and said: "Where shall we get food for them?" Philip did not know it was a test question; neither did he realize that Jesus could turn every blade of grass to a loaf of bread if He chose to do so. Therefore, Philip replied: "I do not know, Lord; it looks as if they will have to go home hungry."

Now Andrew was casting about to see what he might discover to help out the situation, and his eye fell upon a boy standing near by with a rather familiar shaped bundle in the folds of his tunic. Andrew sniffed, and saw the tails of two dried fish sticking through. Andrew had a long nose for fish. He knew what it was: the boy had brought a lunch with him.

"How many barley cakes have you, son?" inquired Andrew. "Five," answered the boy. "Wait a minute," said Andrew. Something had flashed into his mind. It was a big moment for Andrew; he was on the verge of doing a fine thing, himself, and he stepped quickly to where Jesus stood.

"Master!" he said, his eyes snapping with the very thought of what *might happen*—"Master, there's a lad here with five barley cakes and two small fishes—" and (oh, the tragedy of it!) then he must have caught Philip's hard-boiled eye. He must have thought, "Now, Philip is saying I'm a fool for suggesting such a thing—and I guess I am"; for he quickly added "*—but what are they among so many?*"

Jesus calmly turned His eyes on Andrew, as though He said: "Almost!—Andrew—almost did your faith win a victory; make the men sit down on the grass, and bring the lad's lunch to me."

Now, fellows, I can imagine Andrew going back to that boy and saying, "Son, the Master has need of this food you have brought; shall I take it to Him?" And this boy's first thought, naturally, was: "Then, what will I do? I'm a long way from home; I'm hungry, and I was just fixing to eat it myself—but—"

The boy had been listening to Jesus as He talked to the crowd. He had seen those wonderful eyes melting with compassion. His own eyes had feasted upon that majestic countenance, and his ears had tingled, and his boyish heart thrilled with the marvellous words which fell from the Master's lips. "Surely," he had thought, "this *must* be the Messiah, for no other could speak like Him, nor work these marvellous cures." So quickly he brushed aside his self-interest, and held out the little bundle of fishes and bread.

Now, fellows, watch—What?—a triple play at a world series and twenty thousand fans leaping and yelling like mad? Bless you, no. Something happened right then which will be remembered a millennium after baseball has been forgotten. Jesus took the boy's lunch and fed five thousand hungry men, besides women and children, until they could eat no more.

I have many times tried to picture in my imagination that glad and astonished boy. His eyes must have nearly popped out when he saw what was going on, the Master giving out the bread and fishes—and the bread and fishes *never giving out!*

And the big news to-day, fellows, is that you and I can make a play like that. No matter what it is you've got in your hand, let Jesus use it. He can do more with it than we can. No matter whether it is much or little, give it to Him. In fact, that's the way to save it and make the most of it. He said so (Luke 9:24) Himself; give it to Him. It matters not so much *what* it is in your hand; the thing that matters is *what you do with it*. Give it to Him. You may not hear the bleachers roar over your gift, but, listen, fellows, when a life is surrendered to Christ the battlements of heaven ring with a shout that encircles God's throne, and the score is for Eternity!

Fellows, let's play the REAL GAME.

Read John 6:5-14.

FORGIVING

Say, fellows, I want you to take a look at Simon Peter to-day. He is as interesting as a fast game of volley ball. And he did get some hot ones handed to him. Impulsive fellow that he was, he was always getting his foot into it. Peter was a plunger; he wanted to *do things*, and do them right now. Loyal soul—he would fight for his friend at the drop of a hat; but he was subject to fits of depression, and at such times his heart would fail him, or he would lose his grip on himself and do something to regret sorely afterward.

Now, fellows, Jesus loved Peter with a mighty love, and He spent much time helping him to gain self-control and learn to be a steady, thoroughgoing, dependable Christian. Many times Jesus had to call him down sharply. Once He even called Peter "Satan" (see Mark 8:33). It really was Satan to whom Jesus spoke—Satan operating in Peter, as he operates in you and me sometimes when we are weak enough to permit it; but it must have been an awful jolt to Peter to get that from his Master.

Peter gradually improved. He was making an honest effort to be the man he ought to be; but there one thing which gave him more trouble than anything else. He got to the point where he could close his jaws tight and keep from calling down the fellow who made him mad, but he couldn't keep from surging inside. He would surge when he went to bed, and he would be still surging when he got up—all inside. After a while he got to where he could forgive, but when the offense was repeated it was "all off," and Peter would find himself surging again. Now the second surging was just as uncomfortable and made him feel as mean as the first, so Peter began to wonder just what would be the limit, according to Jesus' idea, to which a man must forgive and then surge and feel good over it. You see, Peter was trying to train by the rules of Jesus, so it was quite the proper thing for him to ask Jesus about it when in doubt. A good sport is always ready to listen to the Coach.

Jesus was teaching the Golden Rule, the law of kindness and of good-will. He had just been showing how to make peace with one who has done you an injury, when Peter spoke up and asked the question which brought forth one of Jesus' most remarkable parables. Peter said: "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times?"

Seven times! Think of that. It was going some, wasn't it? Doubtless Peter thought so. Perhaps he said to himself: "Well, for once I have proposed something which will show the Lord that I have learned to be a longsuffering Peter. Just imagine it: Forgave him Sunday; he repeated the offense Monday, and I forgave him again; also the same on Tuesday. He deliberately did that dirty trick again on Wednesday, and I still stood my ground on the forgiving program. Thursday and Friday the rascal repeated the offense, and I forgave, and did it again on Saturday; that was seven times, and lo! when Sunday came the ungrateful wretch was at it again, and I'm done. Seven times! It was a wonderful test of my control, and I shall present it to the Lord—"

And what did Jesus say? Why, Peter must have staggered under that answer, for it revealed to him far more than the "four hundred and ninety times" program. In the light of that parable in Matthew 18:21-35, it revealed to Peter that God had already forgiven so much that was sinful in him that he might just as well settle down to a program of forgiving his brother every day for the balance of his life, if he did not want to forfeit the forgiveness of God. No more surging for Peter.

And that is what the lesson means for you and for me to-day. A missionary once said, "We cannot outgive God." It is quite as true that we cannot out-forgive God. And, moreover, we dare not harbour unforgiveness in our hearts against any fellow-being, for when we do it we are dangerously close to the edge of a fearful precipice, where one slip would put us—with the Tormentors.

Let's all shake hands—hard!

Read Matthew 18:21-35.

XXIX

PARADOX

Say, fellows, do you know what a paradox is? It is something which seems to contradict itself. I saw a man hold in his hand something worth one hundred dollars. I would have been willing to give him one hundred dollars for it. He destroyed it right before my eyes; yet his action caused nobody any loss. Now there is a paradox, and it seems quite puzzling, doesn't it? It looks quite impossible, you may say. But the explanation is very simple. What the man held in his hand was his own check on the bank. He had made a slight scratch on it which did not affect its value, only its neatness, and he preferred to tear it to pieces and rewrite it.

Here now in the eleventh chapter of Matthew, our Lord in His impressive way is teaching in a paradox, and you may mark it well, for it indicates a specially important proposition. He says: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your

souls." It seems queer that in coming in answer to that invitation you should have a yoke to put on.

But your first wrong impression is that the Lord is sorry for folks who work. Not at all; work is a blessed privilege. Pity the poor idler, not the worker. Be sorry for him who is by any cause debarred from working, not for the red-blooded fellow who is feeling the thrill of accomplishing something. Our Lord is sorry for those who are "heavy laden" while they work—laden with worry, with anxiety, with fears and forebodings—yes, even with a guilty conscience.

Then the yoke. Who would think of a yoke in connection with rest? I suppose you fellows have seen oxen wearing yokes. They do not look very restful, do they? Yet Jesus clearly says His yoke is "easy"! Well, let's see.

For a moment, think of life as a great game. In many respects it is just that. It takes skill and wit and patience and determination to win the ordinary game; also the willingness to take a lot of punishment at times. There are three things about the game of life which are like all other games: (1) We must either win or lose; (2) there is uncertainty; and (3) we all want to win. But there are also three things true of the life game which are not true about other games.

The first of these three dissimilarities is that in the life game you have got to play whether you will or no. You can beg off from a game of tennis, or baseball, or dominoes; but the life game you have got to play, willing or unwilling, sick or well, fit or not fit. There's no choice; you've got to play—you *are already playing*.

Second, you must play against an adversary who is not only more skillful, more speedy, more enduring, but is *invisible*, and whom, humanly speaking, it is absolutely impossible to beat. Such a game! Such an adversary!

But the third dissimilarity is the most remarkable of all, and it is the shot which carries the big news to-day,—there is a rule by which you can certainly win. Can you say that about any other game? In other games, your rival can apply the rule as well as you, but in the game of life the rule is only available for you, and it is an absolutely sure winner. Turn to your Bibles and look at it, in the twenty-fourth verse of the ninth chapter of Luke: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Losing your life for Jesus—which simply means *investing* it for Him. Whatever you do, do that thing in His name and in a way worthy of Him. Your *life*, you know, is simply made up of the events of the twenty-four hours of each day. Invest each event with Jesus. That means your play as well as work. It means clean play and good hard playing to win, but in the way Christ would approve, honest, fair, chivalrous—and it is true sport, I tell you. That is a part of what it means, wearing Jesus' yoke, simply doing the thing as Jesus would do it.

Read Matthew 11:28-30.

XXX

FRAUD

Say, fellows, the greatest circus man who ever lived said the American people like to be humbugged, and proceeding on that theory, P.T. Barnum got together more animals and performers and freaks under canvas than had ever been seen before. He made a tremendous fortune. There is something in human nature which makes us an easy mark for any pretentious thing that comes down the pike with banners flying. The bigger the claim and the larger the figures, the more readily we fall for it, but simple things must be proved.

When we are told there are 290,680,493,115 stars we accept it without question, but if there is a sign saying "FRESH PAINT" we touch the paint with our fingers to see if it is really so.

Fellows, there is a big sign posted all over the country, carrying in large letters the two words, "It satisfies." It is the expensive advertising propaganda of cigarette manufacturers, and the "satisfaction" they are offering you is that brief and fleeting sensation of being doped, so that "stern realities are changed to pleasant seemings." It matters not to them that your health and morals and money and life pay the cost, just so they sell their product. They tell you cigarettes "satisfy." It is a preposterous fake. They do not satisfy—they produce further craving—and they know that that craving grows, until the habit is formed and their "satisfied" victim becomes a hopeless slave—known as a cigarette fiend. There is only one drawback for the cigarette manufacturer, his consumer is too short lived; the cigarette devitalizes, pauperizes, and destroys. Like the shock troops of the German army, they must be continually recruited—recruited in numbers which almost stagger the imagination.

Did you know, fellows, that to keep up the consumption of cigarettes at the present rate of manufacture there must be *two thousand* new smokers *daily* to contract the habit? Nearly all these new smokers must be boys, for men are not fooled into this practice so easily.

In a village I recently saw a large bill-board sign at the top of which in bold letters were the

words, WANTED: ONE MILLION RECRUITS! Upon reading farther, I found it was the advertisement of a certain brand of cigarettes, and the manufacturers boldly stated that the "one million recruits" were wanted to join the large and growing army of "delighted smokers" of their "richly blended" cigarette.

You don't have to fall for it. You do not *have* to be one of the two thousand daily new recruits to the cigarette manufacturer's army of shock troops.

But the sly wolf comes in disguise, and in this case the disguise is "satisfaction" offered. Once the wolf gets its victim it throws off the disguise and stops talking about "satisfaction," but simply hands the "coffin tacks" across the counter, and takes your money, health, morals, success, and real satisfaction, in exchange, while you—well, you proceed to drive the tacks, one by one.

Says the cigarette: "I am not much of a mathematician, perhaps, but I can ADD nervous trouble; I can SUBTRACT from physical energy; I can MULTIPLY aches and pains; I can DIVIDE the mental powers; I can take INTEREST from work and I can DISCOUNT chances for success."

Dr. Heald, writing in *Life and Health*, says cigarettes are in many cases the direct cause of cancer, blindness, deafness, heart disease and dyspepsia. He further says they dwarf the body, benumb the brain and weaken character.

That cigarettes "hinder the development of the body" is testified to by the following physical directors of universities: Drs. Seaver and Anderson, of Yale; Dr. Hitchcock, of Ambrose; Dr. Meylin, of Columbia—as a result of repeated and careful measurements both of smokers and non-smokers.

Judge Ben Lindsey says: "No pure-minded, honest, manly, brave boy will smoke a cigarette."

"Home-Run" Baker says: "I do not smoke—never did. If any youngster wants advice from one who doesn't mean to preach, there it is: Leave cigarettes alone!"

Dr. Coffin, of the Whittier Reform School, says: "Of the 1,700 boys who have been inmates of this institution, 1,670 were cigarette smokers!"

There is "satisfaction" for you; no, not for you, but only satisfaction for the cigarette manufacturer and dealer, such satisfaction as comes from ill-gotten gains, which after all cannot be permanent.

Yes, "it satisfies"—the cigarette,—it satisfies—satisfies the devil, and *he* laughs, and *his* is the only real long laugh that the cigarette affords.

The cigarette-tree is known by its fruit. Cut it out.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

XXXI

THE BIG TASK

Say, fellows, some years ago France gave a man a large task. The man's name was De Lesseps, and the task was to cut a ditch seventy-two feet wide across Panama, to unite the two great oceans. Part of the cutting was to be through hills two hundred and fifty feet high. It was a big order, and although De Lesseps had the resources of a great republic back of him, he failed to deliver. Aside from the gigantic feat of digging and removing stone and earth, there were malaria and yellow fever in the swamps, which killed thousands of labourers, and there were theft and bribery in the financial management, which swallowed up the money. These things were like giants invincible, blocking the way against success.

Twenty-two years later the United States tackled that same job. General Goethals was sent to Panama, and he put it through. Himself a skillful engineer, confident of the success of the enterprise, and with all the resources of Uncle Sam back of him, he set to work. Surgeon-General Gorgas stamped out yellow fever and malaria by draining the swamps and eliminating the mosquito, making the canal zone practically a health resort.

Thus, with unlimited financial power, the latest discoveries of science and invention, skill, and an ample supply of labour, coupled with faith in the plan and an unconquerable spirit, the man cut through, two oceans came together, and the world's commerce passed back and forth in an endless stream.

It was a big order, nobly executed.

Yet, fellows, there was an infinitely bigger order given to those twelve faithful, believing men, when our Lord calmly told them to go out and do five things, namely: "Preach the Gospel, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils"—infinitely bigger, in that it required infinitely more power. Jesus furnished the power, the disciples furnished the faith and effort, and the five things were done.

There was the malaria of sin in the way, and mountains of unbelief, but they *cut through*, and the ocean of God's love, on one side, and the ocean of man's need, on the other, were united!

Had you thought of it, fellows, that every Christian is challenged and commissioned to do a big, hard task for Jesus? The task is big and hard because it requires Almighty Power, but Jesus supplies the power. Our part is simply to throw ourselves into the job. We hesitate because we forget that God gives no task but that He sees us through, and the bigger and harder the job the more abundant and free is the supply of power. Our part is to *proceed*. He will see that we succeed. We take a step at a time; we go by the blueprints while He holds the future in His hand.

"A man went down to Panama,
Where many men had died,
To slip the sliding mountain
And lift the eternal tide.
A man went down to Panama,
And the mountain stood aside."

That's the poetry of it, fellows, but the practical prose is like this:

A shovel.
A pick.
And dig.
And dig.
And dig.

Read Matthew 17:14-21.

XXXII

POWER

Say, fellows, Marconi has succeeded in lighting an incandescent bulb eight miles away without the use of a wire. It is the transmission of power by wireless. Experiments have also been successful in electrically guiding, starting, and stopping, without visible connection, a torpedo or even a battleship from the land or from a ship. The human voice has been projected through the ether from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco, by wireless telephone.

These things are sufficiently marvellous to make us gasp—and yet how far they fall short of the things which Jesus did, as recorded in the eighth and ninth chapters of Matthew. The centurion's servant was sick some distance away. It would have been miracle enough if Jesus had gone to him, touched him, and healed him; but Jesus met a new brand of faith in the centurion, and He more than matched it with a new sample of His divine power.

He simply spoke, and the man in the distance was instantly made well. In Hebrews 1:3 you will find this phrase: "By the word of his power." It was that word which created the universe; by that word He had created the centurion's servant; and now by that same wonder of wonders He reaches through space and re-creates; He lifts the sick man off his bed, twelve miles away (it might just as well have been thousands of miles), puts him on his feet, sound and well, and serving his master!

Now, fellows, you and I can link up to that power, and we only have to apply for a connection; we need not make a journey to get it. When we want light or fuel gas or a telephone in our home, we simply apply for it; the company connects the house with the supply mains, and the power comes within reach of our hands. But here is divine power available, and we do not get it because we do not ask for it.

The centurion had unusual faith when he believed Jesus could command the forces of nature and be obeyed, just as he [the centurion] could command his household servants and be obeyed, and Jesus met that faith in a marvellously unusual way. You and I are continually making mistakes and failures and "messing things up." We want to be a success in life. We want everything we undertake, in work or play, to "pan out" well. But unseen forces are at work to hinder, and circumstances intervene which we cannot control. Here's the magic secret: link up with Jesus' power.

I asked a modest tennis player how he had managed to win out in the finals against an opponent who was much his superior in skill and training. He replied: "I'm afraid I took an 'unfair' advantage of him—I prayed to win"; and he smiled. I heard of a famous quarterback on one of the big 'varsity teams who linked his game with prayer and got unusual power in the play. And why not?

But there is more to the secret. To make that "linking up" effective, it must be accompanied by complete surrender of the life to Jesus' authority. Power is unsafe unless divinely controlled—worse than that, it is fatal.

Let's put the whole matter in Jesus' hands, and we'll have a great time!

XXXIII

CHRISTMAS

Say, fellows, when it was announced in the Edison home seventy-three years ago that a boy was born, and his name was Tom, it was a great day for the world. It was a great day for you and for me—though we were not yet born. Think a minute how it would be without the electric light, now illuminating every city and town in the world—at the touch of a button in millions of homes and halls and offices and factories turning darkness into day. It is wonderful that the birth of one boy named Tom should mean so much to the world. Yet who can say that had Edison not been born none would have discovered the incandescent lamp?

It was another wonderful day when Mr. and Mrs. Watt announced the birth of their son James—a wonderful day for the world and for you and me. Think of how many ways steam power, through manufacture and transportation, adds to our comfort and pleasure. Yet who can say that no man would have discovered and harnessed this giant to serve mankind if James Watt had not seen the light of day?

Still another wonderful day it was when the Bells announced the birth of a boy whom they named Alexander Graham—a wonderful day for the world and for you and me. How would we get on without the telephone? Yet who can say that no one would have invented the telephone if Alexander Graham Bell had not been born?

But, oh, fellows, the supreme birthday of all time was that which was announced by the angels to the shepherds watching their flocks by night in the Judean fields; it was that birthday signalled by a glorious star to the Wise-men who came to Bethlehem with gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. The birth of Jesus means more to the world and to you and me than all the other birthdays combined. Those other birthdays brought material blessings. The coming of Jesus into the world not only made possible the highest enjoyment of all material blessing, but—far more important—made possible the most wonderful *spiritual* blessing imaginable, and that is the only benefit which can endure through life and eternity.

Neither can it be said that if Jesus had not been born some other might have brought us salvation and life and joy, for "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Edison was used of God to give us light to read by; Jesus gives us light to live by and to die by.

Watt was used of God to give us steam power with which to manufacture and to haul; Jesus gives us power to overcome evil which would destroy us, body and soul, and that power is infinitely more necessary.

Dr. Bell was used of God to supply us with the means of speaking and hearing over long distances; Jesus gives us connection with God and shortens to whispering nearness and forgiveness the long distance of separation between an outraged Heavenly Father and a disobedient child.

Read Luke 2:1-20.

XXXIV

AIMING HIGH

Say, fellows, on the train sometimes a fellow-passenger becomes confidential and tells a story right out of his heart. One of this kind came to me the other day.

There were two brothers—clever boys, keen, alert, ambitious. They lived in a Christian home. God spoke very clearly to both of them, calling them to lives of consecrated service for Him.

A—— decided to train for the ministry. B—— said the ministry was poorly paid. He felt that A—— was needlessly committing himself to a life of sacrifice. He shuddered at the prospect of a poor preacher's hand to mouth existence. As for him, he would sell *his* talents in the world market, where brains and training counted for something and brought a large price. Not for him the narrow life in a small corner, when a young man of ambition and push could live and have a good time in the big current. A fortune, a fame, and a life on the high road of ease and pleasure were the things really worth striving for, and for these he proposed to drive.

Twelve or fifteen years have passed since these decisions were formed. A—— finished his seminary training, was licensed as a minister, and accepted a little country charge. It was hard

sledding, the salary was small, and the work was more or less discouraging, but it was a clean course and a clear road, and he buckled down, throwing into his work all his resources.

B— went to a large city and got a trial job as reporter on a big daily. He had a mind for writing—a good vocabulary, and a flow of language which gave promise of carrying him to the goal of his ambition. He wrote verses in good style, and had had a number of poems in his college magazine. B—'s program, you remember, put special emphasis upon "having the good things of this life while you may." Putting the emphasis there is likely to warp one's judgment as to what are really "the good things," and so it proved in B—'s case, for he spent his salary on luxuries, and for the temporary gratification of his appetite and his ideas of "a good time."

He had to call on his father periodically for money to pay for dire necessities. It was not surprising that B—'s jobs changed frequently and he went from city to city—the general direction of his fortunes, habits, and health being downward. Just now he has a job on a little weekly paper in a village. His bare pittance in these parlous days of H.C.L. hardly sustains his solitary bachelor existence. He is a broken-hearted and discouraged man—not old in years, but with the snap and vigour of young manhood gone. He is in debt, and there is small chance of his getting out. He is practically a cipher in his community. Life is one daily reminder of failure, and the relentless bearing down of bitter disappointment.

But look at A—. He is the happy and enthusiastic pastor of a large and growing congregation, which congregation is simply "daffy" about him. They pay him a good salary, even as salaries go in these advanced times, and he is absolutely free from financial care. He has a commodious and comfortable home, presided over by his wife and blessed with little children. His congregation recently made him an anniversary present of a three thousand dollar car, replacing one they had previously given him, of a cheaper make.

My passenger companion (who, by the way, is the father of these two boys) said when he was at A—'s home recently, two dressed turkeys were sent in by two families of his congregation on the same day. His is one of the progressive churches of the state. It supports a number of outpost missions, "manned" by the members of his congregation. He is held in high esteem, not only in the community but in the state. And with all this, he seems to be only upon the threshold of his life-work, with a career of greatest usefulness laid out invitingly before him. Endowed, like his brother, with unusual natural ability, he is finding widest scope for the free play of all his powers; and these powers being fully consecrated, are illuminated and energized by the very-power of God.

Now, fellows, which of these two was wise? Which would you rather be?

Truly God means what He says when He tells you and me to-day: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you!"

Read Matthew 6:25-34.

XXXV

WAITING

Say, fellows, are you "game" to consider a tough little word in the language to-day? All right, brace up, for it is one of the hardest things a fellow has to tackle, and the main reason *why* it is hard is that you can't tackle it, but have to wait.

There! I have said it—the word is W-A-I-T.

The boys who went to France say they didn't so much mind "going over the top" as they did the sometimes long waiting and suspense which preceded.

In every fellow's boyhood days there are necessary periods of waiting; not idle waiting, mind you. The "prodigal son" couldn't stand it, you remember. "Dad, give me what is coming to me, and let me get away from the humdrum life of the farm. I want to see life!" and he picked his fruit green and ate it. That poor fellow got an awful stomach-ache—and it was the worse ache of *emptiness* and not of fullness!

But maybe you are wondering what all this has to do with these three parables of the kingdom spoken by our Lord. Just this: they are "wait" parables. The servants of the man who had sowed wheat in his field, said: "Master, look! tares are coming up with the wheat—what shall we do?" Their master said, "Wait." Then when the harvest ripened and the thing could be safely handled without injuring the wheat, the tares were separated and destroyed. A fellow struggling along, trying to do right, finding it up-hill work and the denial of many so-called pleasures, sees another fellow running a loose and reckless program, doing all the forbidden things, yet without injury apparently.

It looks as though one can disobey all the rules, have a fine time, and suffer no setbacks. What's the use stinting and pinching oneself into a straight and narrow track when those out on the broad way are having all the life—and getting away with it? Well, bo, you just *wait*. It looked

awful gloomy for the Allies all through those trench waiting months of 1915 to 1918; but in 1918 Chateau-Thierry popped through. The strength of an ally had been developing, and there followed in rapid succession the victories of Belleau Wood, the Argonne, and St. Mihiel—and Right came into its own.

Remember, the waiting time of a boy's life is that time of silent growing of the moral fiber, the character, and at the proper moment he will rise in the full strength of a well-rounded manhood and take his rightful place in the world of things, while tares which were ever so flourishing go to the dump heap and the trash burning.

The mustard seed was very small, lying there in the ground. It had to *wait*. Even when it came up and looked about, it seemed there was hardly a chance for so fragile a stem, but it *waited*, and while it waited, it *grew*. After a while it became a full-grown bush, and the birds of the air came and lodged in it. There is a legend about trees longing for birds to come to their branches, some trees growing lonesome or jealous because other trees seemed to be more inviting to the birds. That is much like human nature. We naturally like to be sought out. "Wait" is the watchword; keep sweet and hustle, and soon enough our branches will reach high and spread.

The woman put the yeast in the dough, then set it by to *wait*. What a mistake it would have been to try to cook it at once; the bread would have been almost as heavy as lead, and totally unfit to eat. But while she waited, the leaven *worked*—and so while you patiently wait, doing God's will as best you know how, *God works*, and what a mighty Worker is He! Then, as you grow, He gives you a part to do alongside with Him; He and you work together.

Let's not be in too big a hurry for the Eats, fellows; let's work and wait—and then how good the Reward will taste.

That is the style of the kingdom of heaven.

Read Matthew 13:24-43.

XXXVI

ACTION

Say, fellows, there come times when a fellow must act, and act promptly, or lose his chance to clinch a good thing. In the preceding talk our key-word was "Wait." To-day it is a shorter, quicker, sharper word, and one that a boy likes better. A-c-t—that's it. *There* is movement,—something doing. The word is all pep, touch and go! We like it, don't we?

When he was twelve years old, Thomas Edison was a newsbutch on a road running out of Detroit. As the train left Detroit one morning, Edison, as usual, went back into the first-class coach with the morning papers. Near the front sat two young fellows, acting very gay. They hailed everybody who passed in the aisle, and they hallooed out the window at folks and objects as the train rolled along. They were on a lark, and wanted everybody to know it.

"Morning papers!" called out Edison.

"How much are they worth?" sang out one of the jolly fellows.

"Five cents," said Edison.

"Oh, how much for the whole bunch?" retorted the young man.

"Why," said the newsbutch looking a little surprised, "there are forty—they're worth two dollars."

"We'll take 'em," said the noisy passenger, and whipping out two crisp one-dollar bills, took the papers from Edison and handed them to his companion, who threw the entire bunch out of the train window. Evidently these young men had plenty of money to spend, and were inclined to make a sensation and attract attention.

Edison quickly took in the situation. "Phew," said he to himself, "here is a chance for real business," and he hurried forward to the "baggage" where his supply trunk was stored. He quickly returned with an armful of magazines, some rather out of date.

"How much are they worth?" promptly inquired the young spendthrifts.

"Twenty-five cents apiece, or \$5.50 for the pile."

"Take 'em," said the spokesman, and paying the money he and his companion dumped the magazines out of the window.

Back to the "baggage" went Edison, and returned with his basket of fruit, candy, chewing-gum, and other things. Again the transaction, and goods, basket, and all went through the window.

Then Edison rushed once more to the "baggage." He piled everything he could lay any claim to into his supply box, some things old, some new, some unsalable, dragged the box through the train, crossing its open platforms between coaches with some difficulty, and at last drew up

nearly breathless before these reckless buyers. Quickly he pulled off his coat, hat, collar, tie, and shoes, and piled them on top of the box and announced: "Everything I've got is for sale!" The price was paid, and the young men directed their servant, who was near by, to drag the box to the back of the coach and throw it out, which order was obeyed.

The newsbutch with a chuckle went forward to tell his friend the baggage man about his "streak of luck," while he fondly fingered a fat little roll of bills down deep in his trousers. His entire stock in trade had been transmuted into the coin of the realm, his profits were secure, his losses were nil. He had found a good thing, he had recognized an opportunity, and he had let no grass grow under his feet while he laid hold upon it and reaped the golden harvest.

Fellows, there is something like that, only far better, offering to you this moment. It is the *treasure*—not of perishable value like gold, but of eternal value. Jesus Christ is offering to take you into business with Him and let you deal with values so much finer and higher than anything else that the surprise and joy of them will last through all eternity.

Read Matthew 13:44-52.

XXXVII

A CORONATION

Say, fellows: This is David's big day. Let's enjoy it with him. Let's get in the crowd gathering at Hebron and see a coronation.

And what a crowd! About three hundred and forty-four thousand mighty men of war—all the tribes of Israel were represented there that day—and they came over the hills of Judah from north and east and south to put a crown on David which would make him king of all Israel.

For many years David had waited for this day. At the death of Saul, two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, had proclaimed him king, but ten of the tribes had crowned Saul's son, Ishbosheth, as his father's successor. So David waited seven and a half years longer, and then the whole kingdom came under his rule.

Many times during those long years when a fugitive from Saul, hiding in caves or seeking the protection of heathen kings, it must have seemed as if God had forgotten him, and once David did almost break down, but he rallied, took a fresh hold, and "carried on."

Now, fellows, it must be a fine sight to see a man receive a royal crown, but it is a finer sight when there are fine qualities in a man deserving honour and reward. No head deserves a crown unless there are crowning virtues in the life. What were some of the qualities in David which merited a crowning on that great day?

One was his faith. Faith in God; faith in his fellow-man; faith in himself. It takes faith even to start anywhere, and it takes more faith to arrive. David's faith was of the coronation variety.

Another was his patience. David waited. He did not try to force matters. Whenever God was ready—that was David's time. In one of his great psalms, he wrote: "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." David's patience was crowned.

Another was David's continual kindness to a foe. He was even kind to Saul's memory and rewarded the men who reverently took Saul's body from the wall of Bethshan and gave it decent burial. David's chivalry was crowned.

But, fellows, the fine thing to know is that the same princely qualities can exist to-day in each one of us; not for crowns on our heads, but for a great satisfaction in our hearts. Faith, patience, and a knightly spirit are just as possible possessions now as they were in David's day. They are spoken of in slightly different terms by Paul in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians,—Faith, hope, and love. You can have them all. They are priceless, but you can have them if you ask for them.

Be a prince of the Royal House!

Read 2 Samuel 2:1-7.

XXXVIII

DO IT RIGHT

Say, fellows, down-town the other day a man tried to save a boy who was caught near some wires, and got killed himself for his trouble. Hard luck, wasn't it? Yet he had nobody to blame for

it but himself. He took hold of a wire which carried the electric current for the street cars. He broke a law of nature and got punished. There was a way he could have gotten the wire away from the boy. A Boy Scout did it later *with a pole*.

Just the difference between touching with the hand or touching with a stick—very little, perhaps, but the law of electricity made the difference important, so that the one meant death—the other, life!

Now here comes along King David trying twice to move the ark of the Lord up to Jerusalem, where it ought to be, the first attempt proving fatal because he was foolish enough to try to handle it as the Philistines did, instead of doing it strictly by the rules God had made—rules which David should have known very well, because they were in his Bible (Num. 4:4-6, 15; also 1 Chron. 15:11-15). The rules required that the ark should be carried on poles resting on the shoulders of certain men set apart for that service, but David permitted them to put it on an ox cart, attended by Ahio and Uzzah, two well-meaning fellows, no doubt, but not according to the rules. One of the oxen stumbled, the ark jostled, and Uzzah put his hand on it to steady it. Presto! Uzzah a dead man on the side of the road!

They called David from where he was marching at the front of the procession, and when he got back there and saw what had happened, it gave him an awful shock, for he knew he was just as guilty as Uzzah—and perhaps more so. He ordered the men to take the ark into Obed-edom's house beside the road and be careful to pick it up by the poles. Then he went on back to Jerusalem without it. He got out the Book of Numbers and went over the rules about the ark very carefully. For three months he studied the matter. Then he went after the ark again—this time in God's way. He called for the priests and the men appointed to carry the ark; he organized a band and a great choir of singers, and went to Obed-edom's house. There they picked up the ark by the poles and started. Still David was scared, and when they had moved forward only ten yards ("six paces") he made them stop, while a sacrifice of oxen and rams was made to the Lord.

David was overjoyed when he saw everything going well, and he began to dance and to sing. All the way to Jerusalem he danced and shouted for joy.

David thought a lot of the ark, because it meant the presence of God, and that meant in this case the blessing of God. As he grew older and wiser he had greater reverence for God's house and all the holy things which were tokens of God's presence. In one of the psalms he wrote:

The Lord is in His holy temple;
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.

The least a boy can do for God's honour is to keep quiet in church.

The best a boy can do for himself is to put God at the very center of his every interest—the fear of God, love for God, and reverence for all His holy law.

Take hold as God says, and everything will go fine!

Read 2 Samuel 6:1-11.

XXXIX

KEEPING FAITH

Say, fellows, it takes a real sport to live up to a promise when conditions shift on him. If there is a streak of yellow in his system he will find some way to kick out every time. Life is a big game, and it takes a real man to play it on the square—if only square and no more.

But, fellows, what can you say about that one man in a thousand who plays the game of "Remember and Pay" as finely as David did?

Young gentlemen, please meet Mephibosheth, this man of the twisted feet and outlandish name. Kings did not usually choose such to live in their courts and sit at the royal table. Only the fine-looking men and beautiful women were invited to become members of the king's household.

But, worse still, this Mephibosheth, being a grandson of Saul, was at any time a possible pretender to the throne. It was the custom of kings to get rid of such. Not so David. When he finds out about the poor cripple over there across the mountains east of the Jordan, he sends for him and invites him to come and live at the palace in Jerusalem.

Now you will find David's promise to Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20:14-17; and his promise to Saul in 1 Samuel 24:20-22. David had only agreed that when he became king he would not kill Saul's descendants. He could have fulfilled his promise by simply allowing Mephibosheth to live as he was doing, visiting around, kind of sneaky like, without any pocket change, among the few friends who would take him in.

What do you suppose Mephibosheth thought when the messengers showed up one morning at Machir's house and called for him to appear before the king? Scared to death, don't you think?

No doubt he thought it was all over for him now, except the "slow driving and music on the hill." Why, when he came before the king he bowed clear down to the marble floor, doing obeisance, and called himself a dead dog. Then, what happened? He had to pinch himself to see whether he was dreaming. He never got over the surprise of it as long as he lived. King David helped him up on his crutches and told him to cheer up, for from that time forward he should sit at his table, and be as one of the king's own sons.

More than that: with all the thoughtfulness and fine courtesy of a Christian gentleman, David turned over to this cripple his grandfather Saul's estate, together with Saul's servant, old Ziba, with his fifteen sons and twenty slaves, to till the land. That was to provide Mephibosheth with an income.

Now, what do you know about that, fellows? It was playing the game of kindness to win, wasn't it? Win what? Why, to win the satisfaction which can only come to one who keeps his promise—and then some, for good measure!

Yes, it takes even more than a good sport to do that. It takes one who is willing to be Christlike.

Read 2 Samuel, Chapter 9.

XL

THE GAME THAT CAME NEAR BLOWING UP IN THE SEVENTH INNING

Say, fellows, have you heard the sorrowful news about David? Too bad! Just as we were beginning to think David, with his fine manly ways, his love for God's honour, for God's ark, his bravery, his fairness and kindness—just as we were thinking he would make a clean record to the end of the game, now here comes an awful flunk!

It's kind of like when the score is 2 to 0, in favor of the home team, and we are feeling good—then all of a sudden in the seventh inning the boys go all to pieces, and let the other side put four men across the plate.

Strange how David fumbled and played badly when he had had such a long winning streak, but so it must ever be when you get the idea you're "it" and can't slip. David let down, and away down. Fellows, would you believe it if it were not in the Bible—he broke all the commandments from the sixth to the tenth, inclusive. God says whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. David sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. Absalom, his son, committed all the sins his father did, and added some, for he broke the fifth commandment also, and broke his father's heart.

David was very fond of Absalom, and would have done anything for him, but that boy didn't appreciate it. He was a good-looking chap; the girls admired him, and a lot of foolish fellows hung around him, flattered him, and made him vain.

Absalom had the big-head. If there is a sorry sight upon earth it is a fellow that is stuck on himself. Absalom was conceited and proud. He wanted even to be king in place of his father, and was unwilling to wait for what would have come in due time. Many a fellow spills the beans by being unwilling to wait. He ruins his best chance by trying to pick the fruit before it is ripe. If there is ever a time when patience is golden it is in the time of youth. A boy wants to stop studying and training, and take a short-cut to fame and success. It is usually a bad mistake.

Absalom's blunder was fatal. He tried to land on his father's throne by treachery; he landed in a tree, caught by his head. He thought to win a crown; he got three hot darts between the ribs from Joab. He planned to have a pile of wealth quickly gained, but by the end of the week his handsome form was buried deep beneath a pile of rocks. Ever afterward when an Israelite passed that monument of dishonour, he picked up a stone and cast it upon the heap to show his contempt for the memory of a disloyal son.

Oh, fellows, the tragic day of a boy's life is when he decides to throw over a good father. No matter what prize is offered. It may be to get more liberty; it may be to escape restraint or rebuke, but it is a bad trade at best. Ordinarily a boy's best man friend is his father. If this does not seem to be the case, usually it is because the son won't allow it. Many a father longs, like David, for his boy's confidence and companionship. Many a boy could have in his father the finest chum imaginable, if he would give his father a chance to show him what a real chum is.

Fellows, let's give Dad some of that fine Scout loyalty and watch him warm up to it. He may have some chum qualities you never thought of.

*Read 2 Samuel 11:1-27, and
2 Samuel 15:7-18.*

XLI

THE BITTEN APPLE

Say, fellows, I was visiting a boy friend one afternoon and while we played his mother called him. Wondering if there was anything wrong, I waited and listened while he answered the summons. I could hear her speaking to him as she said: "Bob, here are two apples—one for you and one for Wade."

Then I waited, and as Bob did not return at once I stepped to the corner of the house to see what kept him. That fellow was sitting on the step digging his teeth into one of the apples. I thought: "Well, that's polite, starting on his own before he gives the other to his guest!" It rather disgusted me. Directly Bob came round the corner, kind of sheepish like, and what do you suppose he did? Well, fellows, he offered me *the bitten apple!*

That was enough for me. Take it? I guess not. I turned on my heel without a word and went straight home. I don't think anything ever inspired more contempt in me as a boy than that piece of petty thievery.

Of course, fellows, that was not a Christian way to treat an erring playmate, and I fear I had very little charity in my heart; I am just telling you frankly how that act of Bob's impressed me. And it was only in the beginning of Bob's eventful career. Twenty-five years later, Bob's name was in the daily papers all over the country. He had gotten away with a big sum of money that belonged to others who had trusted him, and now he is a poor hunted fugitive from his native land, if indeed he is alive.

The boy who begins taking just a bite of somebody else's apple is likely going to pull off *something big* some day!

Suppose Bob's mother had handed him seven apples and asked him to save one of them for her, and he had made away with the whole lot, don't you think that would have been pretty mean and low down?

Listen, fellows, something mighty close to that—only a lot worse—is happening with boys to-day who look upon themselves as the souls of honour. I am just wondering if they fully realize it. It is not in their relationship to mother, but to God their heavenly Father and creator. He has placed in your hands and in mine, each week, seven full twenty-four hour days. He says, "Six for you and one for Me."

He trusts you to keep that One Day, the Sabbath, for Him. How do we discharge that trust? Are we worthy of it? God does not lock us up in a dark room on Sunday and handcuff us and chain our feet to the floor. No, He trusts us; He prefers to trust us. He wants us to honour His laws about the Sabbath, of our own free will. That is the kind of service God likes—willing service.

And, fellows, you cannot abuse that trust and escape the penalty. God has commanded in His Word, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." No man, no boy, can continually break the Sabbath day and get away with it. Sooner or later he will come to sorrow because of it.

On the other hand, God distinctly promises blessings upon those who honour His Sabbath (Isa. 58:13, 14).

Fellows, God is the best "payer" that ever promised. He always pays more than He promises. His day concerns our happiness, our health, our prosperity, our usefulness, our success. All these vital issues are involved.

And I am going to tell you just one more fine secret. It is a nugget of pure gold. The best way to avoid violating God's Sabbath is to get busy honouring it with service—service to Him. Go regularly to Sunday-school and to church service—and go *on time*. You will find something to do there.

Spend your Sabbath afternoon in the study of God's Word, read some good book that will feed your soul; spend some time in some work of mercy. Take a bit of something good to eat to the poor fellow in jail and tell him you do it because you love Jesus Christ and are trying to serve Him, and want him to love Christ and serve Him, too. You will find it a short day, but, oh, such a fine and happy one, and you will go to bed refreshed. Next morning you will wake up whistling and you will turn off work at the store or at school like a forty-horse tractor.

*Read Exodus 20:8-11, and
Isaiah 58:10-14.*

XLII

MY KINGDOM

Say, fellows, I heard a boy quoting Shakespeare the other day. He was coming out of a movie with two other boys, just as I was passing. They had probably been in there an hour or more, for they seemed glad to get out in the fresh air. But the boy's exclamation was what caught my attention; it was this:

"My kingdom for a cigarette!"

To be sure, Shakespeare makes Richard III say, "My kingdom for a horse!"—the boy changed a word; and it was just a careless remark expressing his craving for a smoke, but it raised a question in my mind: Did that young fellow realize he said a very important and true thing? When Richard III cried out, "My kingdom for a horse!" he was dead in earnest; he was fighting for his very life against overwhelming odds, and he was really willing to surrender his kingdom for some swift means of getting away from that desperate scene of carnage. But if the cigarette boy had been faced pointblank with the proposition I do not believe he would have agreed to give up *his* kingdom for the "coffin tack."

Yes, this boy had a kingdom; every boy has a kingdom.

As I paused on the corner, the three boys entered a store and quickly came out, each with a cigarette in his mouth, taking deep inhalations and expelling smoke through lips and nostrils as they sauntered down the street.

I was still thinking of the boy's kingdom. Through a wonderful plan God, the Creator, puts each boy over an empire. Perhaps you may think it is a small one, but to him it is greater and means more for his success and happiness than any empire on earth. God places a scepter in each boy's hand and says, "Govern!—Rule over your kingdom!" And it is a very wonderful kingdom, with four splendid provinces called Physical, Mental, Social, and Spiritual. Each of these provinces is capable of producing great values and making rich and powerful almost beyond belief.

God also places at each boy's hand the resources for fighting off the enemies of his kingdom. This defensive armament, which is also for building work, in part consists of common sense, information (or education), will-power, determination, aspiration, and physical strength—and to make each of these effective, He gives His Word and sends His Holy Spirit to guide and sustain. If a fellow just realized it and would use what God puts in his hand he would have a kingdom he wouldn't exchange for Solomon's.

But, fellows, what a pity when a boy will exchange his kingdom for a cigarette; in comes the cigarette; down goes the physical province—the cigarette destroys the delicate tissues of the mucous membrane; down goes the mental province—the cigarette makes the mind dull and listless and takes away its snap and vigour; down goes the social province—the cigarette makes its victim shun the best and seek the lower grades of social life and activity; down goes the spiritual province, the most precious of all—for spirit chokes and dies in the atmosphere of the cigarette and its inevitable accompaniments.

This, of course, is just one of the enemies of a boy's kingdom; I have spoken of it particularly because it is the one which seems to catch boys off their guard most easily. There are many others. Intemperance of any kind is an enemy to the best interests of your empire. Send out a proclamation to yourself, to-day, and put all provinces on notice that *you* are on your throne and God is your Counsellor—and that henceforth none of the kingdom's enemies will be admitted across the border.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:9-15.

XLIII

A TOOL BOX

Say, fellows, on one of my boyhood birthdays I received a tool box. It was a peach of a tool box, too; not one of the dime store variety, with a saw the same length as the gimlet, but with a set of tools that no amateur carpenter would despise. I was greatly delighted with that tool box, and immediately began planning the things I would make. Mother wanted a shelf on the back porch and a coop for an old hen just off with her chicks; my dog needed a dog house, and I even aspired to a rowboat for the pond. I could hardly wait for material before getting to work. Fingering over those tools, my eye fell upon a motto graven on the inside of the lid of the box. It read:

BE SURE YOU ARE RIGHT—THEN GO AHEAD

Very good advice, I thought; but perhaps intended for fellows who knew less about tools than I did. I guessed I was not so apt to make mistakes, knowing so well what I wanted to do, and being so determined to do it. Several dollars' worth of lumber and nails were laid in, and I entered at once upon the work of "general manufacturing." Fritz was wagging his tail and barking as if he had scented the dog house in my plans, so I decided to attend to that first. It would have been better to start with the shelf, as that was simpler; but I slashed away on the dog house, and soon had some stuff sawed up for the framework. It didn't match. I sawed some more, and that didn't match. I began to think perhaps Fritz didn't specially need a dog house anyhow; so I tried to work

the dog house materials into the chicken coop, but that wouldn't go, either. Then I sawed some more for the chicken coop. It was not as simple a proposition as I had thought it would be, besides there was a confusion of design somehow in my mind. The day wound up with nothing accomplished, except a lot of good material butchered to the point of kindling wood only. Next morning I tackled something I "knew I could do,"—the shelf. But that proved to be a surprisingly obstinate job; the supports I sawed at different angles, and when trying to force the joints together by nailing, I split them both. The shelf was a failure.

Then I saw a light.

I was rather dejectedly pondering the situation as I stood by the tool box, and my eye fell again on that motto! In not one instance had I made sure I was right before I went ahead. My zeal had been without knowledge. I had mistaken "Purpose" and "Determination," as the high prerequisites, instead of "Being Sure I was Right."

Fellows, Saul the Pharisee had zeal without knowledge. He blazed away upon the presumption that Jesus was an impostor. Why, the Jesus idea was preposterous, Saul mused. God's Kingdom was to be set up with a great capital at Jerusalem and a great and powerful king on the throne to whom all the world around would come and pay tribute. Anybody who claimed that the King had already come and been crucified like a thief was a dangerous fanatic and should be haled to prison or put to death.

This brilliant young Pharisee, carefully trained in ecclesiastical law and the traditions of the elders, went forth bitterly persecuting the followers of Jesus—even witnessing and approving the cruel stoning of Stephen. This showed Saul's Purpose and Determination, which he mistook for being Right. Well, we know that after that Saul suddenly "saw a light"; but think of the havoc Saul wrought before he came to his senses. Think of the Service Time wasted. Think of the fine Material destroyed—sawn asunder. Think of Stephen!

Fellows, are you building anything these days? Are you sure you are Right? Or are you just blazing away at something because you have warm red blood and all the zeal and purpose of youth? There is one thing each one of you is building. You are building a Life. Oh, fellows, be sure you are Right, for it is the most important structure you will ever put up, and remember that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Be sure you are right—then go ahead. When your life is built on Jesus, you may go forward with confidence. Any other way means wasted time, wasted material, regrets, disappointment—and Failure at last.

"I have not built my house on sands,
Tho' golden sands there be;
I have not built with greedy hands
A building fair to see;
But my house on a solid Rock,
And not the Builder I,
But guest in house to stand the shock
When tempests rend the sky.
Lo, Christ! the Builder of my house,
He laid foundation stone,
So reck I not if storms carouse,
For He will hold His own."

Read Acts 7:59-8:3.

XLIV

SAUL NIAGARA

Say, fellows, if there were two hundred railroad tracks out there, and on each track, every moment, passed a freight train carrying fifty cars, each car holding fifty tons of water (maximum load for the largest tank car), the two hundred trains, with their ten thousand cars per minute would not be more than sufficient to carry away the water as fast as it tumbles over Niagara Falls. With crushing and destructive force that mighty volume plunges downward into a great stone bowl which it has carved out for itself, so deep that if the Woolworth Building were set down in it not more than half of it would show above the top of the Falls. Engineers have estimated the total energy of Niagara Falls at sixteen million horse-power!

Fellows, I think of the life of Saul, afterward known as the Apostle Paul, as somewhat like Niagara River. The great river flows majestically, uninterruptedly, more than half of its length, having a fall of not more than twenty feet in twenty-two miles. Then suddenly something happens. Something tremendously tragic and startling happens. It plunges headlong over a precipice. Here is power gone mad.

Saul, the Pharisee, the scholar, the zealot—the colossal mind—sweeping everything before him like an irresistible tide, riding upon the crest of power, haling men and women to prison, breathing out threatenings and slaughter and making havoc of the church, fell headlong to the

earth, as a blinding light burst forth from heaven and the voice of the Lord sounded in his ears—the "still small voice," yet mightier than the roar of any cataract.

"Who art thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Saul's conversion was complete. Convert means to *turn about*. It means an entire change; not to be robbed of one's powers, but to have those powers diverted into another and entirely different channel.

Look again at the Falls—that great destructive mass tumbling over the cliff, beating rocks to pieces and slashing gigantic gorges in its course. What is happening? Science is harnessing the power of the cataract and with it producing light and heat and power for the cities of Canada and the United States. Darkness is dispelled, warmth takes the place of chill, the wheels of industry are humming, and men and women are enabled to live and make bread for their little ones, because of the conversion of a mighty force into life-giving usefulness.

Fellows, some people seem to think to accept Christ as the Master of their lives means to take away or paralyze their powers—to deprive them of some special activeness they possess and which they shrink from giving up. Bless you, there could not be a worse mistake. To accept Christ means to have those same powers, even though they might have been devoted to evil, now turned into channels of finest, highest service—the kind of service that really satisfies the cravings of the human heart. I see a boy who, because he is of an intensely sociable disposition, seeks the companionship of a gang of fellows around the loafing places and pool-rooms in the evenings. Touched by the spirit of Christ, those social qualities will be even more enthusiastically devoted to winning other young people into Christian life and service. I see a young fellow with an unbroken will, glorying in his freedom, as he sees it, to resist the counsels of wiser ones against his evil habits, cigarettes or any other destructive thing that may have gotten into his life. That same will-power, that same stubbornness, touched by the power of Christ becomes the rock-ribbed steadfastness that has enabled men to put through great achievements for God. I see a boy who can invent much devilment and get himself and others into an almost incredible amount of trouble and sorrow. It might be the judgment of some that "killing is the only thing good for him," but touched by the spirit of Jesus, that boy becomes a veritable genius for doing effective things to promote the Kingdom of God—and no fellow in the community happier than he. He verily throbs with the joy of living.

No, fellows, you don't turn a river back up-stream to convert it; you simply harness it, and its powers flow on, but for good and not for destruction. If you want to be a power that blesses wherever it touches, and dashes back into your own heart the spray of the salt and the tang of the fresh morning air, hear to-day the Voice of your Master, and quickly answer: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Read Acts 9:1-19.

XLV

"TURNING THE BATTLE AT THE GATE"

Say, fellows, now and then a thing happens which sets our blood tingling and makes every nerve in us want to send up a mighty shout. For instance, when the score is against us in the ninth inning, and with two men out and the bases full, our pinch hitter comes to bat, coolly waits, picks out the "good one," and swats the pill over left-field fence! Or when Hindenburg's hordes are pouring into the Marne wedge, almost to the gates of Paris, Foch calmly waits—and prays while he waits—then at the crucial moment hurls those chafing reserves against them, turns disaster into victory and enshrines the names of Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, and the American Marines in song and story for ages to come.

Fellows, every life is a campaign, and it is the biggest game of all; into this great contest come crises now and then, and the way we meet them largely determines the result. If those crises have not begun to come in your life, let it be the sure sign to you that God is holding them off while He gives you the opportunity to make the necessary preparation for them, for come they will. There will be times when the storm is breaking around your head and the ground will seem to be crumbling beneath your feet. Such times come to every fellow who sets his face to a principle and determines to stand like a man, no matter what it costs.

Fellows, Paul was that kind of a man. He had that steadfastness to principle, that firmness of purpose, which gave him poise when all about him was tumult. Other men lost their heads; Paul kept cool. It was a critical moment around the temple court that morning; the Jewish mob was murderous, the Roman chief captain was petulant, and he was cold and relentless as steel.

Paul had to handle both on separate grounds to keep them from "handling" him—and both at the same time. He shrewdly "played both ends against the middle." He drew from his quiver two keen but entirely different arrows, and both "went home." To the chief captain, he whispered one small word, "I am a Roman citizen." That made the grim warrior's jaw drop. It thoroughly frightened him and gave him such profound respect for his prisoner that on a later occasion he did Paul a very vital service.

To the mob of Jews clamouring for Paul's life, Paul having gained the chief captain's permission, turned and informed them in the Hebrew tongue that he was a better Jew than any of them, and he made out his case so well that they listened—and before they realized it, Paul had accomplished his object and delivered his shot, which was to proclaim Christ as "that Just One," the Saviour of the world—including the despised Gentiles. The Truth had gone home, and they gnashed their teeth, tore their own clothes into shreds, and threw dust into the air, while Paul was taken into the castle for further examination and, for the time being, was safe.

Fellows, baseball does furnish now and then a moment's thrill—and thank God for the clean game; a world war makes the earth tremble for many years—and may the Lord have pity upon its victims; but Paul was grappling the Big Event upon which Eternity shivers—the Disaster of rejecting Jesus Christ! And as we look upon Paul's life, his superb manner of meeting great crises as they came, how he held not his own life dear, we think of one of the great sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

"In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength TO THEM THAT TURN THE BATTLE AT THE GATE."

Fellows, if you and I want a career that will give highest satisfaction now, and will best bear record in Eternity, let's make Christ at once its dominant Theme and sustaining Power!

Read Acts 21:27-40 and 22:1-24.

XLVI

A KING IN RAGS

Say, fellows, a little ragamuffin—so the story goes—was being set upon by a mob of larger boys in the streets of London many years ago. These big bullies were jeering him and throwing sticks and cans at him. The little fellow was plucky and defiant, and it made them all the more cruel.

Suddenly there appeared in the crowd a tall swarthy young fellow slashing the tormentors right and left; until, after a stiff and unequal fight, in which the rescuer was greatly outmatched in strength, the cowardly ruffians were put to flight. That little ragamuffin was no less a personage than the King of England, and the curious circumstance by which he got into those rags and into that cruel torture is told by Mark Twain, in his most interesting story-book, "The Prince and the Pauper."

In a later chapter we see the little king restored to his rightful place upon the throne, and there amid the splendour of the court with all the lords and ladies looking on, a tall, swarthy young man advances and kneels and is knighted by the king. It is the same young man who broke through the crowd, and at the risk of getting his own head cracked took the part of the helpless little ragamuffin, not knowing he was a king.

That sounds like a romance—and it is; but, fellows, the same thing in all its interesting elements and its happy outcome is happening to-day in the streets and homes of your town and mine. All about us there are folks being set upon—cruelly set upon. The tormentors may not be ruffians in flesh and blood. They may simply be cruel circumstances. Sometimes fire, sometimes sickness, sometimes financial loss, sometimes accident, sometimes a combination of a number of pestering calamities, getting the victim down and making life very miserable in mind and uncomfortable in body.

Now think of the folks in your block, fellows; how many of them are in some sad plight which would make you shrink from exchanging places with them? They are being set upon; can you get in there and help in some way,—you with your good free strong arm, your big, sympathetic heart, your pocketbook, your resources of interest and fun?

And whom will you choose to help, and why? Will it be Tom Jones up here on the corner, who broke his arm and needs somebody to come sit with him and talk,—Tom Jones, who is rich and has a car of his own, and who will likely share it with you when he gets well, if you are good to him? Or will it be little Willie Bell over there across the railroad, who is a hopeless cripple, whose folks are poor as anything, and who can probably never repay you in any sort of way?

Do you know, fellows, why some folks choose the Willie Bells to help? Why, it is because they love Jesus Christ. They believe God's Word as it tells us in to-day's wonderful passage in Matthew: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me.... Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see *thee* hungry, or thirsty, or naked, or sick—and helped?... And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

You see, fellows, it takes some faith and some imagination. Ask God to give you, first, Faith. Then

ask Him to give you a consecrated Imagination. Then you will see in every unfortunate person that you can help—you will see *your King*. You have His own word for it, to justify that imagination and to confirm it.

Oh, yes, you may sometimes in your zeal help somebody who is unworthy. Don't let the fear of that make you miss the blessing. The very fact that you go to him in the name of your Christ and for His sake, may be the means of helping that poor unworthy one to cast off his rags of sin and become clothed in the righteousness of your King.

I tell you, fellows, it is a wonderful thing to be in the service of such a Master. All your efforts for Him are given full value. Even your mistakes, if honestly made are transmuted into the gold of satisfaction. Let's launch out for Him, to-day. Let's take Him at His word, and see how it works.

Read Matthew 25:31-46.

XLVII

SHAKING UP PHILIPPI

Say, fellows, that was one exciting day in Philippi. Not since Mark Antony's Roman legions went tearing through to meet and destroy the armies of Brutus and Cassius, nearly a hundred years before, had the town been so shaken up; and all because of two inoffensive looking Jews who had quietly walked in there and told about Jesus Christ. They had come over the winding road from Neapolis, nine miles distant on the seashore, where they had gotten out of a ship from Asia. A poor crazy girl, a fortune teller, heard the message, her heart was changed and she became sane and normal; it put an end to her "fortune telling" and this enraged her masters, who had Paul and Silas arrested and put into prison.

That created some stir, but it was nothing to what was to follow. The jailer seemed to take special pains to make his prisoners secure, putting them in an inside cell and making their feet fast in the stocks. These fellows looked so unworried that he probably suspected they had a well-laid plan to escape. The jailer was further surprised to hear the two prisoners singing—actually singing some of their hymns, though they must have been in great discomfort.

Away into the night they sang. The other prisoners heard them and marvelled. Surely these new jail-birds had something which they, the old ones, did not possess. The jailer, as he retired, doubtless remarked to his wife: "Well, there's something uncanny about those two men; here it is midnight and they are singing and going on like two schoolboys on a picnic excursion!"

He hadn't been asleep long, when a brick fell out of the mantelpiece near the jailer's bed and the furniture about the room began to dance a jig. Mrs. Jailer screamed and the children began to cry in terror. The door creaked and pushed off its hinges, falling with a slam-bang. The jailer jumped and landed in the middle of the floor. A flash of lightning put a photograph on his staring eye that he never got rid of to his dying day. The prison walls were cracked and falling, the doors were down and the dazed prisoners were groping about.

Alas, poor jailer, the thing of all most dreaded was about to happen—his prisoners would escape! Earthquakes were bad enough, but the sudden thought he got of himself answering to the governor next morning with his life for the escape of those put in his charge was more than he could bear. Reaching for his sword he placed it, hilt to the ground, to fall upon its point and end his life right there;—then he heard a clear voice coming through the darkness: "Stop! don't do that. We're all here; nobody wants to get away."

It was one of those psalm singing Jews! he recognized that at once, and putting up his sword he called to his wife to light the lamp quick and bring it; then he rushed into the cell where Paul and Silas stood, their feet free from stocks and hands unmanacled, and fell down on his face before them.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And the Philippian jailer was thinking about the peril of his soul, for like a flash it had been revealed to him that these men were from God. Paul's answer came quick and true: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." And thy house—for Paul saw behind the jailer his crouching, trembling wife and children. Paul told them all about it then, and as the blessed truth came into their hearts, they stopped trembling and began to find new hope in Jesus and a new joy in service. Immediately, the jailer and his wife got basins of water and washed the bruised stripes on the backs of the men. They saw in those stripes the suffering Saviour's wounds which they would like to soften; very differently they had viewed them the evening before. Right there Paul baptized the whole household, and quickly afterward the jailer straightened up the tumbled down kitchen stove and Mrs. Jailer cooked something good and savoury for the men of God to eat.

Fellows, it ends like a fairy tale, which says "they lived happy ever after," for the record says the jailer "rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house." And in this one word, "Rejoiced," I would like to hand you the strangely wonderful and fine thing in to-day's lesson. Rejoicing puts the climax of satisfaction of joy into any experience. Let it stand the test proof of rejoicing and you've got the true value. If believing in and serving Jesus Christ could bring rejoicing to a jailer and his

household under such circumstances, surely then we can better understand the force of Paul's word to Timothy when he speaks of "the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."

Here is a jailer. A jailer's office at best would not be much of a rejoice shop. This jailer's life is in jeopardy when his prisoners escape. His jail is cracked open, the doors are down and he cannot shut them. The prisoners are walking about. At daylight he must reckon with the authorities. Yet he is rejoicing. And the secret of his rejoicing is in his believing—believing God.

Fellows, it means everything to believe—to believe like the Philippian jailer did. He not only accepted Christ and was baptized, but he immediately began to minister to Christ's servants. It was the one way in which he could in those first moments of his belief express his faith, and he did it. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

This is the thing which is crowned by Rejoicing.

Read Acts 16:16-34.

XLVIII

GO IN YET—AND WIN!

Say, fellows, look in upon three interesting personalities—Paul, Barnabas and Mark; each one widely differing from the other two, yet their lives bound up together in the biggest enterprise the world ever knew—the winning of the world for Christ.

They are planning another big "hike"—one that will be full of hardship and perils, and Paul and Barnabas are having a hot discussion about Mark. Barnabas wants to take him and Paul wants to leave him—and why? Well, last year when they were taking a trip of this kind, Mark left them and went back home. Paul says he's done with Mark; if a fellow hasn't got a backbone better than a stick of spaghetti, he doesn't want to load up with him. Barnabas, on the other hand, thinks a lot of Mark; in fact, Mark is his nephew and he has a strong interest in him. He knows Mark made a mistake back there in Pamphylia, but who does not make a slip sometime? "Let's give him another chance; he will make good because he is deeply sorry; I have talked to him and I know that he is determined to redeem himself."

"No," says Paul, and his jaw is set; "I would like to give him another chance, but the Cause is too great and too important to take chances on a fellow who has thrown a chance away."

So it goes. Both men are determined, and there happens the only thing that can happen under such circumstances; they separate. Paul chooses Silas as his companion, while Barnabas takes Mark with him. Barnabas was one of the biggest-hearted fellows you ever saw. His very name means, "Son of Consolation." He couldn't bear to see a fellow denied the chance to make good. Paul, himself, had been befriended in that same way by Barnabas at Jerusalem only a few years before. Humanly speaking, it was through the friendly offices of Barnabas that Paul had risen to prominence in the church.

Fellows, I am not criticizing Paul (far be it from me), because Paul was doubtless conscientious in his stand about Mark; but let me tell you fellows—don't ever miss a chance to help some poor fellow who has made a mistake, to make good. One of the finest things that will come to your experience will be seeing your touch of sympathy and encouragement put life and hope into some unfortunate "Down but not out."

What happened to Mark? Why, he made good. He made so good that Paul afterward sent for him, and he and Paul put through some great schemes together for Jesus Christ. And that was not all; one of the four Gospels bears Mark's name. Think of what an honour that was! Peter got him to help him write it. Yes, Mark made good.

I heard of a fine young fellow the other night, only eighteen years old, who because he had made a mistake—had made a bad break and lost his job—who knowing he was himself to blame—had formed some habits that contributed to his downfall—for all that was hopelessly dejected and actually saying he wished he could die. Well, what do you think of that? With all the best and biggest part of his life before him, with youth and health and loving parents, and some good friends ready to help him, wanting to die! Piffle!

Do you know, I just wanted to slap that fellow on the back and bring him to his senses. Make good? Of course he could. "Come back?" Sure! There is just one thing to do with a failure, fellows. Get on top of it with both feet and bury it—with success.

I heard of an old horse, too old and sick to work. His owner wanted to get rid of him but was unwilling to shoot him. The old horse just wouldn't die. He was that spunky. One day, he dropped into a well in the pasture, but he hit the bottom still upon his feet. His owner, thinking it a chance now to rid himself of his horse, took a shovel and began vigorously shovelling the dirt in to cover him. But as each shovel of dirt landed on the horse's back, he shook his skin, like horses do, and trod the dirt down under his feet. Soon, the horse's back appeared at the top of the well, and in

another moment the old fellow climbed out and began to crop the grass.

"You are beaten to earth? Well, well, what's that?
Come up with a smiling face.
It's nothing against you to fall down flat;
But to lie there—that's a disgrace.

"The harder you're thrown, why the higher you bounce.
Be proud of your blackened eye!
It isn't the fact that you're licked that counts;
It's how did you fight—and why."

Fellows, what must be the opportunity for rising, to a fellow whose God says to him: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness!"

Read Acts 15:36-41.

XLIX

GREEN FRUIT

Say, fellows, did you ever spend two days making a kite and just about the time she was all ready, bridles adjusted and tail properly balanced, it set in to rain?

Can't you see that beautiful thing, done in blue, all spangled over with silver stars, leaning up there in the corner, panting for its maiden voyage into the empyrean? And you have wound on a stick a fine strong cord from the ball you purchased and hold it in your hand as you stand by the window, looking with disgust and disappointment at what seems to be developing into "a United States rain." No, son, you might as well get a book and settle down for the afternoon, for there is no kite-flying to be done to-day. Thank your silver stars if you get her up by tomorrow!

And right here, fellows, make a note of this: whenever you are balked in a scheme, stopped in your plans—right spang up against a stone wall!—ninety-nine times out of a hundred it will prove a godsend and a blessing to you in the end—IF you take it right.

I wish every fellow could get the habit under such circumstances, of stopping still a moment and saying to himself: "Hey here, this thing has a *meaning*—what can it be?" That will yield a better dividend than fretting over the interruption. As a rule, he will discover something he can be doing while he waits, something that immensely strengthens the main chance.

When Lord Clive, "the founder of the Empire of India," sailed from England for Madras, at the age of eighteen, all impatient to enter upon his life plan, storms overtook the ship and so far diverted her course that within a month young Clive found himself stranded in a port of Brazil instead of India. There he had to remain nine months before he resumed his voyage; but what did he do? Chafe over the interruption and delay? Bless you, no; he seized the opportunity to master the Portuguese language, which accomplishment proved to be a tremendous asset later on, in his great constructive work in India.

Paul and Silas, as they travelled through those provinces of Western Asia Minor, all afire with their great purpose of preaching the Gospel, met blank disappointment. Upon arrival at each point they were confronted with an unmistakable message from the Holy Spirit to keep their mouths shut. What could it mean? What was the use? Should they give it up? Should they sit down and sulk? No, said Paul, we will keep agoing; the Lord will show us what He wants us to do when He is ready. And sure enough, the big orders came one night in a vision to Paul, in which a man appeared and delivered to him the great Macedonian Call—the call which opened up to that patiently waiting servant "God's Greater Plan" for his life—a far more splendid one than he had ever dreamed of.

Fellows, I cannot give you any finer thing out of that period of Paul's life, so full of fine things, than the thought of patient waiting upon God's plan—His plan *for you*. And it does not mean to sit still; rather the contrary. "All things come to him who (hustles while he) waits." That is the revised version of an old saw, and I like it better.

Here is a sad case of a young fellow I know. He had an ambition to shine, but he wasn't willing to do the tedious grinding and polishing so vitally necessary to shining. He had a chance at college, but he also wanted to be a social lion, all too soon. He could not afford it in the first place; he couldn't spare the time from his studies, in the next place; but he spent his dad's money anyhow and he let his classes go bang. He did the social stunt—on credit. Result: he got E's and F's on his grades and he was shipped. The faculty regards that kind of a student as demoralizing to the morale of a first-class institution. In fact he could not be called a student; he was an "inmate," and it is hard to make an alumni out of inmates.

This young fellow landed back home for the summer, "out of luck," in debt, and a cruel disappointment to his doting parents. He had done the social stunt, but he picked the fruit before it was ripe, and now it's hurting him inside.

He flew his kite in the rain!

He decided he would make good by being a civil engineer. He wanted to be a civil engineer right away, but when he started in he found that the first stages of civil engineering consisted in carrying a chain and a rod up and down hill in the heat and taking orders from a smart chap who looked through a telescope and made notes, so within a few days he quit; he wasn't willing to pay the price. He thought he would play the violin, but he wasn't willing to spend hours practising the scales and simple fingering, so he laid aside the violin. He wanted to play Schubert's Serenade right off, but on learning the cost, he contented himself with whistling it.

Fellows, he is of the sort that make up the great throng of fourth-raters in the world to-day, drifting here and there; or settling down with a family on his hands and a little two-by-four job to eke out a bare living. And you fellows may as well face this fact: you've got to *stint*, if you're going to pull off a stunt. No stint, no stunt. Stinting is only another name for work and patience and economy combined, and it brings its inevitable fruit—Success!

Read Acts 16:6-15.

L

THE BEDOUIN SLAVE

Say, fellows, I heard a story from the banks of the Nile which stirred my blood. It may be only a legend, but it contains a big thought, and I want you to have it. All day upon the hot sands the battle had raged, and as the sun was setting a Bedouin chief fell, mortally wounded. Quickly his watchful body-servant eased his master's dying form from the back of the Arabian steed and dragged him out of the thick fighting to a protected spot where he might say his last word and die in comparative quiet. The chieftain's words were few but significant. He simply said to his man: "Go and tell Allah that I come." The loyal slave knew what it meant: only his spirit could carry a message like that, and the clay house it occupied must be destroyed before the spirit would depart.

Possibly he hesitated as his hand grasped the hilt of his dagger, for life was sweet even to a slave; back home was a slave-maid in the house of his master, and she had been promised as his bride upon return from this campaign in the valley of the Nile. Many a daydream of the future had served to shorten the tedious marches over the hot sands as he rode beside his master. Long after the camp was asleep the slave gazed at the star which seemed to guard her whose life and future were bound up in his own. But only a moment he paused; one more look at his chief, whose fast ebbing blood stained the sand upon which he lay—this chief who was not only his master by right of actual ownership, but one who had been always his benefactor and friend—one searching look into the eyes whose merest glance he had learned to interpret for a last sign of recognition; then with a firm, unfaltering hand he drew his blade and thrust it deep into his own heart, that his spirit might be free to fly "to Allah," with the announcement of his master's coming.

Now, fellows, there is something fine about that, even if it be only a romance. Loyalty that rises to the height of complete self-forgetfulness challenges the best that is in us. But, after all, the picture falls to pieces because it is built upon a false faith and a suicide. I am glad that you and I can to-day, in real life, take part in something finer—something requiring just as superb loyalty, and for a Cause that is really worth the best that is in us.

Jesus Christ is the Chief of all chieftains. His last words upon earth were, "Go ye—tell them." They were not the words of a dying chief, but of one gloriously alive and triumphant over death, the last and greatest enemy of all; not the command of one powerless in the presence of his foes, but one who could say, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" not a master who must send his obedient slave on a fearful and futile mission alone, but one who girds his courier with the assurance, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Saul caught a great vision of service when Jesus spoke to him in the way. Prostrate upon the ground in the blinding light, Saul did not say, "Lord, let me die!" He said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to *live and do*?" You and I may say just as big and fine a thing as that to our Lord to-day. Jesus' command to Saul was in substance, "Go ye—tell them." It is the same to you and me.

Will it cost you anything to obey? Yes, it will cost you your life. But not in the hopeless way the Arab's slave gave his. Your hand is on the hilt of the dagger, but Jesus is not requiring a man so much to die for Him these days; He is calling for living couriers, those who will give their lives *in life* for Him. So you plunge the dagger deep into—not your heart, but your false pride—that thing which keeps you back from "announcing" your Master's Name. You plunge it deep into that thing in your life plan which would interfere with a real program of witnessing for Jesus. With God's help you stab that habit of thought or act which stifles your impulse to do His will and embarrasses you in trying to serve Him. It is what Paul meant when he said to the Galatians, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts."

Fellows, every one of us can be a herald of our Master's coming to the souls about us who have

not realized His near approach. No matter what our "business" or "profession," if it be a fair and honest one we can make it a help to our witnessing. There is no proper relationship in life which may not afford the opportunity to tell about Jesus Christ and His deathless love.

Saul became a messenger of Christ for his whole time. Comparatively few are called of God into the ministry; but every boy should seriously face the question, under God's guidance, whether or not he be one of those few. Take a pencil and draw a vertical line on a sheet of paper. On one side the line put down the reasons why you should go into the ministry; on the other side, the reasons why you should not. Be honest with yourself and with God. Weigh each reason, for or against, upon your knees. Ask God to give you a clear vision of the course He wants you to take. With all the earnestness of your soul, ask Him, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Be still and listen. And then, fellows, you will hear that unmistakable but "still small voice," and He will send you forth surefooted in a path plainly marked.

Oh, fellows, it is great to have clear running orders, with such a Message and such a Master! Don't miss it.

Read Matthew 28:16-20.

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