



## The *Pulpit Exchange*

It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Corinthians 1:21). So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading (Nehemiah 8:8). Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend (Proverbs 27:17).

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### **Ambassadors For Christ**

Rather than an evangelistic type of message I would rather place at your door a burden, a responsibility. I would place on your shoulders a charge that will be yours to carry as you go on from here. I invite you to turn with me to 2 Corinthians 5:20 for our text where it says, “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

Some time ago, I read an article of the life and the work of an ambassador and my mind went to this passage. We want to consider our text in the light of our work and responsibilities as ambassadors for Christ. That is what I have entitled our thinking — “Ambassadors For Christ.” In Mark 5:19, Christ told the man that had been freed from the devils, “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the

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Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” In Acts 1:8 the disciples were told, “ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

We might as well recognize and accept the fact, whether we like it or not, we are being closely watched and analyzed by oth-

ers. Even in this community as the neighbours see you taking your walks, see you coming and going, as well as back home. As the people of your home community see you moving in and about and through that community they are watching. They are analyzing. They are observing your life and mine. What is their testimony of us? In Acts 4 when Peter and John were called in before the scribes and priests the Scripture says that the leaders,

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“took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Ambassadors for Christ.

Let us look at the context of our text here. 2 Corinthians 5:17–21 says, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (18) And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

1) *Let us, first of all, notice what is an ambassador.* What are we talking about when we say, “We are to be ambassadors for Christ?” Let us first of all look at what an ambassador is to do. What is an ambassador? First of all, the ambassador is the personal representative of his country’s leaders in the capital of another country. He is the per-

sonal representative. He is his nation’s highest ranking diplomat, or highest ranking officer, if you please, in that other country. He is the envoy. He is the messenger from the home country to that foreign one. He is commissioned. He is sent and supported by the home country. Even further than that, not only is he recognized or regarded as the personal representative of his king or of his president (as we would have it today) but his official residence there in that foreign country is counted as belonging not to the country to which he is serving but as belonging to his home country. That simply means that the British embassy here in the United States is like a little bit of Britain here in the United States, on U.S. soil.

Furthermore, within the walls of that embassy only those rules and those laws that apply to the ambassador’s home country are in effect within the walls of the embassy, not the country in which he is residing. For example, in the U.S. embassy in other countries Thanksgiving is celebrated, while in the country where he is serving as ambassador it means practically nothing. However, within the walls of that embassy it is the customs, it is the laws, it is the regulations of the home country that are kept in

force.

An ambassador's allegiance is to his own country — his own king or his own president. He dwells as a foreigner in the country he is serving. He is in it, but not of it. There is a real difference. His citizenship, his loyalty, his love is elsewhere. It is back there in the home country. Though he is serving there, his allegiance is still back home in the home country.

Paul says, "We are ambassadors for Christ." Are we living up to our calling? Is our church a colony of heaven? Are our homes embassies of Jesus Christ? Do His rules, His customs, His laws alone prevail within their walls? How is our allegiance to our King? Is that what is foremost to us? Is there a peaceful atmosphere, a joy in serving, a love and compassion for all as others observe our home and church life? Can they see clearly a little bit of heaven there? How clearly are we serving as ambassadors for our heavenly King?

Going on with the natural ambassador, II) *let us consider a little bit what are his duties.* We looked a little bit at what he is, now what are his duties? 1) *His responsibilities include identifying with and promoting his country there in the foreign one.* That

is his responsibility. You can tell by his manner of dress. You can tell by his manner of speaking and conduct where he comes from and who he identifies with. You can tell it by looking at him. He identifies with and promotes his country in the foreign land.

2) *Another of his responsibilities is that he endeavours to keep good relationships between his country and the foreign one while never sacrificing what his country stands for or represents.* He is true. He is loyal. He is not endeavouring to be antagonistic but he will never sacrifice what his country stands for or represents.

3) *The ambassador provides the official channel of communication between the two governments.* He is to deliver a clear message to those around him of the will, the desire, the plan of his king or of his president. That is his job. There are times when that brings real joy. If that foreign country has experienced some sort of calamity, some sort of disaster, and the ambassador comes with a message, "My king or my president wants to help out. He is willing to extend so much as far as help and financial aid, or some other aid." That brings joy.

There are other times when what the ambassador may need

to say may bring opposition. For example, if he needs to share that his king, or his president is directly opposed to the course of action that this foreign government is considering taking or is taking. His responsibility is to share that, if that is his king's message, or his president's message. He is to do that, not sharing his own ideas but exactly what his leader, his king or his president commands him to share.

That takes a great deal of courage to stand up before powerful men of governments and share a message that he knows they will not appreciate. Nevertheless, he is to do that even if it might imperil his own life. His life is not what is important. The important thing is that he serves his king, his leader, his president faithfully and conveys exactly the message that his president, leader, or king wants him to convey. That is his duty. He provides the official channel of communication between two governments.

4) *His responsibility is to be out attending meetings.* He is actively involved in meeting people, not simply sitting back there at the embassy waiting for them to come to him. He is to go out and to meet them.

5) *The foreign country's lead-*

*ers as well as the people of that country, to a large degree, look at him.* From his life and conduct they draw their conclusions as to what his country is like, what his people are like, what his leaders are like, because they are observing the ambassador. Those are his responsibilities.

III) The article that I read pointed out *one danger an ambassador faces is assimilation.* If he stays too long in the country to which he has been sent, in other words if he does not make fairly frequent visits back there to the home country to visit his own land, to breathe his own "native" air, he becomes what they call "denationalized." That process can go on at times without the ambassador even, at first at least, being fully aware of what is happening. When he first arrives in that foreign country, he is American, he is German, he is British, whatever country is he is representing he is that country through and through. Those who meet the American ambassador see "Made in America," stamped all over him. It is clear. It is evident. There is no doubt. He sees things entirely from the perspective of his home country.

However, gradually, almost imperceptibly at times it seems, if he stays too long in that country, things begin to change. What

happens is that when he goes out he meets people of that country. When he talks with others, he talks with those from that country. He hears a viewpoint of those people expressed. Bit by bit his attitude begins to be affected and it begins to change. Instead of being pro-American or pro whatever country he is representing, he in turn becomes pro whatever country he is in. When that happens, he is no longer effective. He is no longer a faithful ambassador.

The authorities recognize that. Therefore, in order to overcome this, to see this does not happen the ambassador needs to do several things. 1) He must return to his own atmosphere on an often repeated basis. He needs to make frequent trips back to the home country. 2) He must talk to his own kind, his own people. He had to maintain that kind of relationship. 3) He needs to maintain an open direct and daily communication with his control centre. It impressed me that they mentioned that — an open and direct daily communication with control centre.

Let us come back to us again. We are ambassadors for Christ. I see the same dangers for us as well. We too can become “denationalized.” We live in a foreign world that brings many pressures

to bear upon us. There are a lot of spiritual counterfeits out in the world around us. We do not need to look too far to see a lot of empty spirituality where there is a really big profession but practically nothing of a possession. It is all around us. If we are not careful, we become conformed to this world. We are told in Romans 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world.” However, if we are not careful we will become conformed to this world because of the pressure that comes to bear upon us. Due to the atmosphere we may find ourselves in out in the world. It can become easy to adopt a little bit lower standards. “Oh, I do not see what is really wrong with it,” and we gradually begin to shift our focus in life.

It can become easy to lose that sharp distinction between right and wrong. Black and white somehow tends to dissolve into a grey, and the lines of distinction are broken down. It becomes no longer that clear separation that was there before. It can become easy to keep some of the more noticeable outward practices of true Christianity while the heart is more and more inclined toward the things and the ideals of this world. Then, we lose our effectiveness as ambassadors and we become a spiritual casualty.

IV) *How can we guard against this?* 1) *First of all, we need to be aware of the danger.* We need to recognize this could happen to me personally. The person who feels “I am strong. I can handle this. It will not be a problem. I can do this without it bothering me spiritually.” If we imbibe that type of thinking, we are already being affected and changed by the world in which we live. We are already becoming “denationalized” from our heavenly country. “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

We need to maintain the concept, the perspective that we live in a very dangerous world. We have an enemy of our souls who is out there to “deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24). He will do all within his power to cause us to fall, to detract us, to send us on a detour, and get us out of the will and plan of God. We are, of ourselves, no match for him. Therefore, we need to be first of all aware of the dangers.

2) *We too need to maintain fellowship with those of “like precious faith” (2 Peter 1:1).* We need to maintain that fellowship. We need to get back into our own “atmosphere,” with those of our own kind. This is not only to simply build relationships between brethren and sisters but

it strengthens us. It fortifies us. It encourages us spiritually as we gather together and share together on the Word of God. It is a real, stabilizing part of our Christian life experience. It can help us in alerting us to dangers unnoticed by us that our brethren have seen. Therefore, we can be forewarned and prepared.

We should anticipate gathering together as brethren and sisters in times of worship and fellowship — getting back in our own atmosphere with those of our own kind and sharing together around the Word of God.

3) *If we will guard against being denationalized or losing our effectiveness as ambassadors, we too must maintain open and unfettered contact with our “control centre” — our heavenly Father.* We need to maintain a daily, open and vibrant relationship with our heavenly Father. That ambassador has direct and unlimited access to his head, to his leader. He is guaranteed that. He is able to contact his leader at any time. However, that communication with his leader is not for him to tell his king or his president what to do. Rather, that contact is for him to take his requests to his king and receive instructions from his king how to relate to current issues — how to relate to the situation that has

arisen. He learns how to respond to questions and answers and decisions that are made. Even his schedule is under the direction of his control centre. Even his daily schedule. If he receives direction from his control centre today, "You must make contact with this one and this one." He must do it. Even his schedule is under that direction.

As ambassadors for Christ, we need to maintain that kind of relationship with our heavenly Father as well. Our attitude in our communication with our heavenly Father, our heavenly King needs to be that of the psalmist when he said in Psalm 27:11, "Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path." We come before Him and say "Lord teach me. Show me Thy way. Show me Thy will." There is nothing that man can do to disrupt our communication with our heavenly Father. We are guaranteed that access. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden" (Matthew 11:28).

Down through the halls of time man has tried time and time again to disrupt that communication with God's people. Nevertheless, through the bars of the prison cell and out from the

depths of the dungeon, God's people have cried and they have had access. They have had direct contact with their heavenly Father. The only thing that can disrupt that relationship is we ourselves. If there is indifference on our part, if there is neglect, maybe we are so busy — these are the kind of things that can and will disrupt our communication. We need to guard against that.

As we have that communication with our heavenly Father, as we maintain that, we have two things: 1) 1 Corinthians 2:16 tells us that "we have the mind of Christ." What that simply means to me is I can learn to have His outlook on life. I learn to see things from His perspective, rather than mine, because I am maintaining that contact — that relationship with Him. 2) We can find answers to today's dilemmas as we wait on Him. Not only has He promised to hear but He has promised to answer. Therefore, by maintaining that contact, that relationship, we can find answers. Where else should we go? This helps keep us kingdom oriented. This helps keep our priorities where they should be.

V) *Leaving the natural ambassadors, let us come more directly home to us.* What is our duty as ambassadors for Christ? What is

the charge that is being laid on our shoulders? The responsibility that is placed upon us? *Before we can take up the role of an ambassador, we must be from the home country.* It does not work for one country to hire someone from another country to represent them to a third country. To my knowledge that has never happened. If we will be faithful ambassadors we must be from the home country before we can in turn be thus.

In Matthew 28:18–20 we have the commission that is for us. *We too are commissioned.* We are sent. We are supported by the home country. “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” I see there unlimited resources. I see there a commission. I see there the support that is promised, “lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” We have been commissioned. How important is that commission to us? How seriously do we take it? How often do we reflect upon it?

Christ said, “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” (John 9:4). Brethren and sisters, that night is far nearer tonight than it was when Christ spoke those words. “The night cometh, when no man can work.” He told His disciples, “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35). If we look back in history, we see some of the camp meetings, and some of the mass revivals, and we think “The Lord was really working back then.” Today we do not see much. We have revival meetings and very few people show up from the community and there is not a whole lot of response. Does that mean the fields are no longer white already to harvest?

No, the need is still there, but we need to go out and meet them. We cannot simply expect them to come to us. Yes, we need a solid home base for them to come to, but we need to go out and meet them. We have been commissioned. We have been sent. That is a responsibility that God has placed on our shoulders, “Go out. Meet others. Tell them of Me.” Tell them of a Saviour. Point men to Christ. Peter and John

said in Acts 4:20, “We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” That was the burden of their hearts. That was spoken in the face of persecution and possible death. We cannot but speak it. Today, we do not face that persecution, but the challenge is quite great sometimes to go out, speak it, and share it. I trust that we do not respond as they did in Jeremiah’s day when they said, “I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name” (Jeremiah 20:9). It was a fear and a drawing back. No, let us go and share. We have been commissioned.

*What is our work exactly since we have been commissioned?* We are from the home country. We have been commissioned and sent. We are supported. Let us look back to our text in 2 Corinthians 5:18 and look at little bit at our work. “All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.” There is our work. 1) *The ministry of reconciliation.* What does it mean to be reconciled? To be reconciled simply means, “to restore to union and friendship after estrangement or separation, or disagreement, to bring to harmony, to reconcile.” We cannot do that unless we have experienced it ourselves (as we

mentioned before). We must be from the home country. It means that we are to point men to Christ, and to help the fallen men of this world be restored to a union, a relationship, a right relationship, with his God from whom he was separated or estranged by sin.

Point men back — there is an answer to your problems. There is an answer to your need. The ministry of reconciliation — showing to others the way of atonement, the way of restoration through Christ. I am not trying to intimate that we can save or reconcile individuals ourselves to God. Rather, we bring them to the foot of the cross and there show them the Saviour. That is the ministry of reconciliation — leading them to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. That is our work.

*How do we carry it out?* If we have been commissioned, we see our work, how do we carry it out? 1) Back up to 2 Corinthians 5:14. Paul says in the first phrase of that verse, “For the love of Christ constraineth us.” I am one who enjoys word study. That word *constraineth* is an interesting word. It simply means “it overwhelms us.” It is a driving force, not that someone is standing behind us with a whip to administer discipline if we do not do it.

Rather, it is a consuming desire.  
The love of Christ constraineth us. We are impelled to do it. It is not that we are forced into it. Rather, it is as we recall man's terrible condition before God — that awful weight of sin and of condemnation.

We have experienced that renewal, that right relationship with God, that freedom from guilt. We have experienced the joy of fellowship with our Saviour, and we have been lifted up "out of the miry clay," and our feet have been set "upon a rock" (Psalm 40:2). Our ways have been established. Now there is a hope, there is an anticipation of the future. I ask you, "How can we keep quiet when we see others still on the road to destruction?" You see, "the love of Christ constraineth us," because we recognize that there is an eternity. There is a hell. There is a judgment. There is a heaven and an eternal home for those who are born again children of God.

I ask you tonight,

"Have you sought for the sheep that have wandered

Far way on the dark mountains cold?

Have you gone, like the tender Shepherd,

To bring them again to the fold?

Have you followed their weary

footsteps,

And the wild desert waste have you crossed,

Nor lingered till safe home returning,

You have gathered the sheep that were lost?

Have you been to the sad and the lonely

Whose burdens are heavy to bear?

Have you carried the name of Jesus,

And tenderly breathed it in prayer?

Have you told of the great salvation

He died on the cross to secure?

Have you asked them to trust in the Saviour

Whose love shall forever endure?

Have you knelt by the sick and the dying,

The message of mercy to tell?

Have you stood by the trembling captive

Alone in his dark prison cell?

Have you pointed the lost to Jesus,

And urged them on Him to believe?

Have you told of the life everlasting

That all if they will, may receive?"

Tonight, millions are groping without the Gospel. Quickly they will reach eternity's night. Shall we labour onward? Haste let us hold up Christ the true Light. "The love of Christ constraineth us." That is what is the motivating force for our work as ambassadors.

2) I see another aspect of our work, how we carry this out in 2 Corinthians 5:10, 11. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (11) Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." *We persuade men.* I simply see from this that while we sense keenly the urgency of the hour, we also recognize each individual has a choice to make. Our work is not to go out and, as it were, "cram" the Gospel down the throats of those whom we come in contact with. No, we are to persuade them. That simply means that we need to be Bible students so that we can answer questions, give direction and we can "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15).

That means that we need to know what this Book says if we will persuade men. When men

come with their reasonings and their philosophies do you have the Word of God that you can come back with? They cannot argue against that. Yes, they will reason and argue against men's philosophies. However, if we will persuade men, we need the Word of God. So, we need to be Bible students. If we will persuade men, they need to feel our love, our compassion, our interest in their well-being. Do they sense that we carry a burden for their souls? That we love them? That we care for them? That is the work of the ambassador. That is how we carry it out.

3) 1 Corinthians 9:19–22 gives another aspect of how we carry out this work, *we do it in the spirit of humility.* "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. (20) And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; (21) To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. (22) To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." Then,

he says in verse 23, “And this I do for the gospel’s sake.” It was not a spirit of pride but that of service. Paul was not saying that the only way you can help a Jew is if you are a Jew, the only way you can help a Greek is if you are Greek, the only way you can help someone who is weak is if you are weak. That is not what he was saying.

Rather, he was saying we must start where that person is presently and help them on from there. We need to do so without any belittling or thinking less of them because they did not have the knowledge that we did. Start where they are. That is what Philip did with the Ethiopian eunuch. When the man had questions, Philip asked, “Understandest thou what thou readest” (Acts 8:30)? He told him. Philip, “began at the same scripture” (Acts 8:35) and expounded unto him the Scriptures. We need to start where they are and take them on. We dare not think of ourselves as above others. Simply because I was raised in a Christian home, or I have been a Christian for “x” number of years does not make me any bit better than anyone else in God’s sight. Maybe we are more accountable, but we are not a bit better in God’s sight.

Paul’s testimony in 1

Corinthians 15:10 was, “But by the grace of God I am what I am.” — “Not by my own attainments . . . but by the grace of God I am what I am.” Were it not for the grace of God every one of us would be in the depths of sin and wickedness, but for the grace of God. We need to remember that.

We have looked somewhat at the verbal side of our work as ambassadors and how to carry it out. IV) Nevertheless, there is another aspect to this ambassadorship that we want to consider in conclusion this evening. *We serve as ambassadors for Christ by the life that we live.* I was impressed again by the testimony of Daniel in the Old Testament in Daniel 6. They came trying to find something against him. “The presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. (5) Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God” (Daniel 6:4, 5). Can others look on your life and mine and have that kind of testimony of us? The only fault we see is how faithful he is to his God. That is sobering. Many times our wit-

ness may be compromised, our endeavours made futile because our life does not match up with the message we are trying to give.

I remember in another community speaking with a man of that community. He was relating some of his escapades in his speeding down the highway. I spoke to him of that. His reply was “Ah, but there are a lot of Mennonites that do not go by the speed limit. You cannot say anything about that. I know that. I have seen it.” He proceeded to name a few. What happened to the testimony to that man in that community in that church? You see it is also that we serve as ambassadors by the life that we live. The people of the world are looking on at us to see what kind of people we are, to see what kind of country we represent. Therefore, no I am not holding up a standard of sinless perfection, but would it not be heart rending if someone turned away from the Gospel because of inconsistency they saw in my life? That would be heart rending. We do not want their blood on our hands.

*Several characteristics yet that we should see as by the life we live.* 1) The first I find in 1 Peter 1:15, 16 which says, “But as he which hath called you is holy, so

be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (16) Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” We mentioned earlier for that ambassador when he first got to that foreign country “Made in America,” or made in whatever country he was from, was stamped all over him. What stamp are we wearing? What do they see when they look at us? Do they see holiness? Do they see purity? Do they see the life of Christ and the love of Christ in our hearts? “Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

2) *There are other things we could notice* — temperance, honesty . . . the list could go on . . . politeness, courtesy, humility, submission, contentment, but what about our finances? Can we be ambassadors in the area of finances? I believe we can. Do we meet our obligations. Our relationships from the financial standpoint should be such that we should be able to witness to those with whom we have financial dealings. We should be able to give a clear testimony, a clear witness with them.

3) *Our speech* — Titus 2:8 “Sound speech, that cannot be condemned.” Maybe we think we are not frivolous like the world but I find sometimes that some extra, unnecessary (and I call it slang speech) is slowly

creeping in our midst. Sometimes people justify it because it is in the dictionary. "It is in the dictionary so it should be all right." There is language in the dictionary that is not a part of the Christian vocabulary. Those slang words, those unnecessary idle words are such that Christ said in Matthew 12:36, "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." That makes it sobering.

4) *There is the area of nonresistance and nonconformity, and respect for civil authority.* The list could go on. The point I want to make is we serve as ambassadors by the very life that we live, day by day. "We are ambassadors for Christ." How long do we need to carry on this work? Isaiah asked that question when God said, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8). Then Isaiah said in verse 11, "Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, (12) And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land." God is saying that the work of the ambassador, that

charge, is laid upon our shoulders as long as there sinners who have not yet accepted the Gospel of Christ. That will be as long as times stands. That is how long.

That is our responsibility. That is what we take up when we choose the way of the cross, when we choose to be followers of Christ. God has work for us to do. "Now then we are ambassadors for [Jesus] Christ." May God help us that we can be faithful in that as we go from here. When we are in times of concentrated Bible studies as we are here, when we leave the fervour is high, and the ambition is strong. Then, as we get back home and settle back again to the normal, daily routine, little by little these things can fade out. The challenge I want to leave before us is let us carry the burden on. Let us be faithful ambassadors for Jesus Christ.

Think what can be accomplished for the work of the kingdom if everyone of God's children senses their responsibility and faithfully carries it out in reaching out to touch the lost about us. Maybe because of our contact they do not come to the Lord. Perhaps we are simply sowing the seed others may come behind and reap. Let us not be discouraged simply because we are sowing the seed and we do

not see very much of any response. Let us sow the seed. Only God knows what the returns may be. May God bless you as you continue on in your

Christian life experience. May you continue faithful. May that be the portion of each one of us. The Lord bless you.

### Scripture References

<b>Psalms</b>	241		2:16	240
27:11	240	<b>Mark</b>	9:19–22	
40:2	243	5:19	233	244
<b>Isaiah</b>		<b>John</b>	10:12	239
6:8	247	4:35	241	15:10
6:11, 12		6:37	240	<b>2 Corinthians</b>
247		9:4	241	5:10, 11
<b>Jeremiah</b>		<b>Acts</b>	244	5:14
20:9	242	1:8	234	242
<b>Daniel</b>		4:13	235	5:17–21
6:4, 5	245	4:20	242	235
<b>Matthew</b>		8:30	245	5:18
11:28	240	8:35	245	233
12:36	247	<b>Romans</b>		<b>Titus</b>
24:24	239	12:2	238	2:8
28:18–20		<b>1 Corinthians</b>		<b>1 Peter</b>

### From the Previous Issue:

#### The Place of Forbearance in the Brotherhood

From a message by Larry Witmer

Sunday, July 03, 2005

Millerstown Mennonite Church

#### Book Reprint *(continued)*

#### The Seven Laws of Teaching

CHAPTER VII *(continued)*

#### THE LAW OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

##### Practical Rules for Teachers and Learners

The rules which follow from this law are useful both for teacher and pupil.

(1) Help the pupil to form a clear idea of the work to be done.

(2) Warn him that the words of his lesson have been carefully chosen; that they may have pecu-

liar meanings, which it may be important to find out.

(3) Show him that usually more things are implied than are said.

(4) Ask him to express, in his own words, the meaning of the lesson as he understands it, and to persist until he has the whole thought.

(5) Let the reason *why* be perpetually *asked* till the pupil is brought to feel that he is expected to give a reason for his opinions. But let him also clearly understand that reasons must vary with the nature of the material he is studying.

(6) Aim to make the pupil an independent investigator — a student of nature and a seeker after truth. Cultivate in him the habit of research.

(7) Help him to test his conceptions to see that they reproduce the truth taught, as far as his powers permit.

(8) Seek constantly to develop in pupils a profound regard for truth as something noble and enduring.

(9) Teach the pupils to hate shams and sophistries and to shun them.

### **Violations and Mistakes**

The violations of this law of the learning process are perhaps the most common and most fatal of any in our school work. Since

the work of learning is the very heart of school work, a failure here is a failure in all. Knowledge may be placed before the pupils in endless profusion and in the most attractive guise; teachers may pour out instruction without stint, and lessons may be learned and recited under all the pressure of the most effective discipline and of the most urgent appeals; but if this law is not followed, the attainments will fall short of their mark. Some of the more common mistakes are these:

(1) The pupil is left in the twilight of an imperfect and fragmentary mastery by a failure to think it into clearness. The haste to go on often precludes time for thinking.

(2) The language of the textbook is so insisted upon that the pupil has no incentive to try his own power of expression. Thus he is taught to feel that the words are everything, the meaning nothing. Students often learn the demonstrations of geometry by heart, and do not suspect that there is any meaning in them,

(3) The failure to insist upon original thinking by the pupils is one of the most common faults of our schools.

(4) Frequently no reason is asked for the statements in the lesson, and none is given. The

pupil believes what the book says, because the book says it.

(5)The practical applications are persistently neglected. That the lesson has a use, is the last thought to enter the minds of many pupils.

Nowhere are these faults in teaching more frequent or more

serious than in the Sunday school. "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7), tells the sad story of many a Sunday-school class. If that class be taught as our law prescribes, the results might be very different.

## **Youth Book Reprint** *(continued)*

### **Judith**

#### I

#### HAPPY DAYS OF CHILDHOOD

*Who was, "Yeshua"?*

Mr. Weinberg jumped to his feet at this question. Glaring at Judith with furious eyes, he forgot she was only a thirteen-year-old girl and not a rabbi. Beside himself, he shouted: "Who has put such blasphemous thoughts into your head? Where is it written that 'Yeshua,' the son of a poor carpenter of Nazareth, is the Messiah of the Jews? The Messiah must come from the worthy, honorable family of David."

Pale and trembling with fear, Judith sat before her enraged grandfather. Never before had she seen anyone so terribly angry. Still she could not understand what it was all about — what had made him so very angry. She had said nothing that could have offended him to such

a degree.

Looking at the frightened face of his grandchild, Weinberg came to himself again. Trying to undo his harsh action, he added in a soft, caressing voice: "My precious child, throughout my whole life I have had to battle against various heresies that threatened our nation. I am tired of it, and every mention of any heresy provokes me greatly, especially when anybody mentions this 'Yeshua,' whom the heretics worship as their Messiah, the Son of the Blessed. I know that you called him by this name through ignorance, not knowing what you were doing. Nevertheless, it is not good, my child, that you compare this impostor with our glorious Messiah, Whose appearance we

await impatiently in the nearest future.”

“Dear Grandpa, I do not know whether He was the Messiah or not, but I feel so unspeakably sorry that they killed Him, the innocent one, just as they killed the innocent lamb in Egypt. That’s why I asked if He might not have been the Messiah. Perhaps the people made a mistake.”

“No, Judith dear,” answered the rabbi. “The wise rabbis of that time could never have made such a mistake. And even if it had happened, there has been enough time and opportunity to realize it, to repent and to correct the error by accepting His teachings.”

“Were any of His teachings left after His death?” inquired Judith, anxiously.

“Oh, yes, there is a book His followers claim contains His teaching. But this book and His disciples are the best proof that He was not the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed, but simply an impostor.”

“How is it possible, Grandpa, that His disciples themselves say that He was not the Messiah? I cannot understand this.”

“Oh, my child, you are surely more curious than your mother has told me. Evidently you want to know everything at once.

This, however, I can explain to you easily, and I hope you will understand. Look around you and watch the people among whom we live. All people here in Russia, as well as in the other European countries, and in America, call themselves Christians, that is, followers of ‘Yeshua,’ with very few exceptions. But how these Christians do hate us, the Jews, while they are the followers and worshipers of a Jew! There have been times when they have massacred the Jews by the tens of thousands. Even today the feeling is no better. I have lived through several Jewish pogroms here in Russia when they killed Jews without cause or guilt on their part.

“And whatever these Christians are yet preparing for our nation in the future is known only to the merciful God. Only a few years ago a book came off the press bearing the title, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, written by some dishonest, degenerate individuals. In this book the great accusation is thrown against the Jews that we are striving to destroy all governments of the nations and that we are creating chaos and revolution. We are accused of being the cause of all suffering in this world. This book has already called forth several pogroms and

who can tell what its effect in the future will be?

“This is all brought upon us in spite of our loyalty to the countries in which we are scattered, for we have brought much benefit and blessings to these countries.

“Lately the government itself has devised the called ‘Bellis Trial.’ A group of degenerates had killed a boy by the name of Andrew Youshenski at the time of one of their debaucheries and now the government attempts to put the guilt upon Mr. Bellis, whom, as a representative of Jewry, they accuse of having killed the boy in order to get the blood of a Christian for Jewish rituals.

“Through this trial attempts are being made to fix the accusation upon the Jews that we do secretly kill Christians to obtain their blood for our religious rituals. This all is done for the purpose of instilling hatred against us into the masses to our own destruction. And all this is done by the followers of this ‘Yeshua’ — the Christians.

“If ‘Yeshua’ had been the Messiah of the Jews, He would have taught His followers to love our people. But this is not all, my child. They even hate one another. At times they have had the most cruel and bloody wars,

one Christian country against the other. They have killed each other in large numbers. They have burned each other at the stake and cursed each other with the most horrible curses. They have destroyed whole cities and countries. These Christians have exterminated millions of their own fellow-Christians during the centuries. And frequently it has been done solely because some of them thought that others did not believe in ‘Yeshua’ as did they and that the others misunderstood and misinterpreted His teachings. From this one can conclude that His teaching brought nothing good and failed to make His disciples better men and women. They remained rude, bloodthirsty Gentiles as they were before, hating one another unto death.”

“Oh, how terrible!” whispered Judith. “What horrible people are His followers. They are just as bad and cruel as the Jews were when they crucified ‘Yeshua.’ They are not like Him at all. I would never want to be the follower of anybody if that makes the people so cruel and heartless. If His teachings do indeed make His disciples hate the Jews and kill each other, then of course He never could have been the Messiah of the Jews. You were right, Grandpa, in being angry

with me. You see I did not know anything about His bad followers. Please forgive me for entertaining the thought that He might have been the Messiah. I want to serve the God of my fathers and be true and faithful to Him all my life!”

At this Judith threw her arms around the neck of her grandfather and covered his face and his long, snow-white beard with kisses.

“I realize now that Judith should have known this before,” said Mr. Weinberg to his daughter-in-law, who had quietly watched the two. “I had never suspected that such serious thoughts troubled her young mind.”

The gorgeous sunset colors had vanished long since and the air had become cool.

“Now, children, it’s time to go to bed, or Judith will keep us here until morning with her curiosity. She makes Grandfather too tired,” suggested their mother.

Wishing each other a good-night, all retired. It was some time before Judith could sleep. Her grandfather’s narrative about the life and death of “Yeshua” and His awful followers who killed each other and hated the Jews, filled her mind and kept her awake.

“No, He never was the

Messiah of the Jews,” she decided, “and Grandpa was right when he argued with that rabbi.” She fell asleep at last.

Judith was satisfied. She now knew about the things that had interested her most. The life in the open and the love of her mother and the others who surrounded her soon dispelled her serious thoughts about God and “Yeshua.” On Sundays and holidays her father came away from his business in the city for a happy visit with his family.

So the days passed quietly and peacefully. Twice during the summer the rabbis repeated their visit. Again they passed whole days and sleepless nights in discussions and quarrels. Judith noticed it, but she was no longer sufficiently interested to listen. When she heard their heated disputes, she concluded they were quarrelling about “Yeshua.” She was glad her grandfather was wise and able to prove to the others that “Yeshua” was NOT the Messiah.

“How fortunate that there are such strong and faithful defenders of our father’s faith,” was her comforting thought at such moments.

## Youth Book Reprint *(continued)*

### Judith

#### II

#### REFUGEES

*The World War — The Flight from House and Home — The New Home*

#### *The World War*

A FEW YEARS had passed after the events described above. It was the beginning of the year 1914, the fatal year for Europe. Unusual uneasiness and tension were already felt during the first months among the officials and even the inhabitants of the frontier cities. Business was slow. Everywhere the people were talking about the awful cloud of war hanging threateningly over Europe. The Weinbergs, who lived near the German border, felt very uneasy. They could not even decide to leave the city this spring and go to see their old parents.

Finally the fearful day came; on the first of August the hurricane of war burst over the country and soon the whole world was set on fire for many years. The German army crossed the almost unprotected Russian border and invaded the cities and villages. In endless lines, the Russian army was moving day and night from the interior to the border to

defend their country. The peaceful inhabitants fled in haste from their dearly beloved homes, not being able to take even the most necessary things with them. In great masses they were moving along every road toward the interior of the country, anxious to leave as fast as possible the territory stricken with the terrors of the war.

No one even thought of taking the train for all railroads were taken for the transportation of the army and ammunition. Those trains returning from the battlefield were loaded with wounded, crippled young men who had given their life and health for the country. The government had its hands full to take of the thousands of soldiers wounded at the battlefield, and it was impossible to do anything for the civilians. They were compelled to seek ways and means for their own safety. Like a living lava were the unfortunate homeless people moving along every passable

road. Among these masses it was a frequent sight to see children cry for their parents and parents for their children as they lost each other in the stampede. In

many cases they found each other only after many years, and a goodly number of them have never seen their dear ones again.

### **Brotherhood Relationships**

- |     |  |                          |
|-----|--|--------------------------|
|     | Attitudes That Strengthen the Brotherhood                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 705 | Developing Sensitivity and Compassion Within the Brotherhood | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|     | Enhancing Congregational Life                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|     | Interpersonal Relationships: Respect and Confidence          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 503 | Nurturing Constructive Relationships                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 909 | The Place of Forbearance in the Brotherhood                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Church**

- |      |  |                          |
|------|--|--------------------------|
|      | A Growing Church: Facing Issues Related to Growth            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Christian Brotherhood  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Convictions That Fortify the Church                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Dealing With Anti-Authority Attitudes                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1001 | Dealing With Congregational Pride                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Exposing the Errors of Politics and Democracy in Church Life | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 807  | Gates of Jerusalem, The : A Type of Building the Church      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 211  | Misleading Label, The  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Necessity of Group Conviction, The                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Relationship of the Spirit, the Word, and the Church         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | Safeguarding the Social Life of the Church                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|      | “Strengthen the Stakes” — Inspiring Sound Loyalty            | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Discipline**

- |     |  |                          |
|-----|--|--------------------------|
| 401 | A Biblical Basis for Church Standards          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 409 | A Well Disciplined Church                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 205 | Preventing A Gap Between Teaching and Practice | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **Fellowship**

- |     |  |                          |
|-----|--|--------------------------|
| 404 | Influence of Modified Conservatism, The  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|     | Maintaining Consistent Fellowship Lines  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 903 | Preservative Nature of Scriptural Fellowship Lines, The                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|     | Relating to Other Congregations Within Our Fellowship and to Other Fellowships | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 908 | Scriptural Positions on Association, Fellowship and Counsel                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 110 | Understanding the Need for Fellowship Lines                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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