

Christ is Victor

JAN/FEB 2000

“The Importance of Restitution”

If you have ever taken money dishonestly, you need not pray God to forgive you and fill you with the Holy Spirit until you make restitution. If you have not got the money now to pay back, will to do it, and God accepts the willing mind. Many people are kept in darkness and unrest because they fail to obey God on this point. If the plough has gone deep, if the repentance is true, it will bring forth fruit. What use is there in my coming to God until I am willing, like Zacchaeus, to make it good, if I have done any person wrong or have taken anything falsely? Confession and restitution are the steps that lead up to forgiveness.

There was a friend of mine who had come to Christ and was trying to consecrate himself and his wealth to God. He had formerly had transactions with the government, and had taken advantage of them. This came to memory, and his conscience troubled him. At last he drew a check for the amount he had underpaid and sent it to the Treasury of the government. He told me he received great blessing after he had done it. That is bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. I believe a great many men are crying to God for light; and many are not getting it because they are not honest.

A man came to one of our meetings,

... “RESTITUTION” CON’T ON PAGE 2

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ON LINE

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“If Two of You Shall Agree” (Matthew 18:19)

Men of all shades of thought seem to think that unless they gather a whole crowd to support their cause, no one would listen to them or be impressed. To focus the attention of the public or the government upon their project or plan, they crank up a mass rally of their supporters or stage noisy demonstrations.

In industry, thousands of valuable man-hours are lost by strikes for every conceivable reason. Great crowds of whole days shouting or just milling around the factory gates. These striking men are certain that in numbers lie their strength. Politicians too stick on this principle. Take the crowd away from them and they look so sheepish and imbecile.

It is numbers, numbers, numbers; we are brainwashed into thinking that numbers mean everything. But the Lord Jesus said, *“If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.”* Matthew 18:19.

“If two of you shall agree.” It seems a simple enough thing to achieve, but in reality it is difficult to find two people, who will agree on unselfish projects.

Gather two businessmen and say to them, *“Look, there are too many broken homes in this city. The children of these homes are neglected and love-lorn; in time they will become a danger to society, unless we find some way to shower love upon them. Perhaps you must build a special home for them and set aside part of your money for their care.”* They may agree that this would be nice and even necessary thing to do, but one or the other of them or both will find numerous excuses to put forward, to say why he can’t throw in his lot, just then, or that one must wait until his business really takes an upturn. *“It’s a fine idea,*

and a very essential thing to build,” they agree but these two men who have the money, simply can’t agree as to when, where and how they must get started. How many great plans die at the committee stage itself!

Two men can’t agree. Two women rarely agree. Two sisters, but they have diametrically opposite views. Two leaders, but they use completely different methods. So we have a babel of voices, one crying one thing and another the opposite.

But when a man repents of his sins and receives the New Life in Christ, there comes a great longing in him to do good to his neighbours. It is not an aimless and haphazard scattering of money I am talking about, but a strong, fixed, benevolent longing, to sacrifice, to serve and to save others. So, for two young men who are transformed by the power of Jesus, to put their hearts and heads together, to launch some great movement which will transform the lives of thousands, is not hard.

True conversion means renouncing self and reaching out to Christ. When self is still strongly entrenched in you, you cannot say you are truly converted. A person who has come to the Cross of Jesus and seen that irresistible love which claims his all-his will, his mind, his ambitions, his whole personality, truly turns away from doing his own will and begins to do God’s will. Turning from self-will to God’s will is true conversion.

Such a man wants to glorify God, and live a self-denying life. Pleasing the Saviour is his greatest delight. Now for two converted people to pray together and think alike is nothing astonishing. They have the Word of God to unify them. When two people thus pray together with unified hearts and minds, great power is generated;

... “AGREE” CON’T ON PAGE 4

... "RESTITUTION" FROM PAGE 1

when the subject of restitution was touched upon. The memory of a dishonest transaction flashed into his mind. He saw at once how it was that his prayers were not answered, but "returned into his own bosom," as the Scripture phrase puts it. He left the meeting, took the train, and went to a distant city, where he had defrauded his employer years before. He went straight to this man, confessed the wrong, and offered to make restitution. Then he remembered another transaction, in which he had failed to meet the just demands upon him; he at once made arrangements to have a large amount repaid. He came back to the place where we were holding the meetings, and God blessed him wonderfully in his own soul. I have not met a man for a long time who seemed to have received such a blessing.

When I was in Canada a man told me that when he was a boy a man gave him by mistake of money that was called in Canada a "ten shilling" piece. It was just about the size of a quarter of a dollar, and it was gold. Instead of giving the boy a silver shilling, as intended, then man gave him a gold ten shilling piece by mistake, and the boy kept it. The next day the man came back to the boy and said, "When I made change with you yesterday, didn't I give you a ten shilling piece instead of a one shilling piece?" The boy lied, "No, sir, you did not."

For forty-three years that man had that lie on his conscience. At last the Spirit of God got hold of him and he became a Christian. He no longer knew where to find the man so he just figured up to interest and handed principal and interest to an orphanage. So he got it off his conscience at last. If you have anything on your conscience, straighten it out at once. If your mind goes back to some transaction with your neighbour in which you cheated him, pay back every dollar at once.

—D.L. Moody

"CROWN OF THORNS"

"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb to heaven, thence will I bring them down" (Amos 9:2)

God is speaking to the Israelites. Some of them thought that they could escape God. But God says they cannot escape Him. Young people forget that God is watching them and searching them so that He may bless them. How is He trying to bless them? He wishes to give them His nature. But people are afraid of coming into a living touch with God. When people were worshipping other gods in the Old Testament times, He told them, "Seek ye first the Lord." Then He gave them the law. After the people were given the law through Moses, He taught them, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." He could not teach both at the same time. You cannot teach Calculus till you have first taught Algebra. You must know Algebra to understand Calculus.

A lawless people were given the law and they became a moral people. "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." (Deut 18:18) They were to receive a spiritual law through Jesus. When Christ came, He brought them the true life- His very life. In Him was the promise, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26)

Moses saw God in the burning bush. We see God in the bleeding cross. They are both very different. They present two different facets of God. The cross is a new aspect of God. The people of the Old Testa-

ment saw God as a disciplinarian. They did not see the God of love. No one but Jesus could reveal the God of love. Neither Elijah nor Moses nor any of the prophets of the Old Testament times could represent the God of love.

In Christ, mercy and truth are met together. (Psalm 85:10). David was blessed of God. He obtained a kingly crown. But Jesus appears to us with a crown of thorns and suffering. Yet He is the King of kings. Unfortunately Christians go only some distance in religion. They want blessings from God. But what do they do for God? Nothing!

If one of your children chooses to do God's work, you are distressed. There is no sacrifice. When it comes to sacrifice you step back. You seek God for health and happiness for yourself. Are you seeking God when it means many more things in the package? Or are you seeking God at all costs? If the Government were to go against you, would you still seek God? You want to see the mighty God doing great things for you but the bleeding Saviour you do not want. "And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not:" (Jer.45:5)

Do not seek God for a reward. If you are willing to bear the crown of thorns for your neighbour, it is the proper thing. If you are ready to put to shame for Christ, it is the right thing. The final teaching of the Lord is not a kingly crown but a crown of thorns. Have you desired to do anything for Christ? When you seek God first other things will follow. Those who seek God will not seek things for themselves. Some of us have only seen God in the fiery bush. We have to see Him on the bleeding Cross.

—Late Mr. N. Daniel

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This Fellowship is an inter-denominational missionary and prayer group working for revival in churches and amongst students in several countries. We invite every layperson to become God's ally in changing his or her corner of the world. We train people in evangelistic work and to be self-supporting missionaries.

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“Advance Man”

“Song books. Get your song books for the revival,” Billy used his loud speaking voice for another purpose. On the road with evangelist J. Wilbur Chapman, Sunday stood outside a tent in a small town outside New York City. Billy was selling song books before Chapman began the service. In only a few months on the road, Billy had become a valued member of the Chapman evangelistic team.

A few years earlier, Chapman had discovered an important aspect of revivals—organization. He became one of the first evangelists to work and plan to draw crowds, coordinate his meeting with many different churches and get advance notice about the meetings. Billy became Chapman’s advance man. Several weeks before the dates of the revival, Sunday arrived in a particular town. He helped select the choir members for the music and worked with other men to erect the massive tents. Billy also held meetings with local ministers to gain their support.

While Sunday missed Nell and his children, Billy loved the life on the road. Once again the young Iowan was dizzy in motion. He moved from Paris, Illinois to Troy, New York to Huntington, Pennsylvania. From handling the ropes of the huge tents to leading prayer breakfasts, Billy mastered the method to hold meetings and tell people about Christ. Each city held its own unique problems and challenges, Sunday was charged to pave the way for the evangelist Chapman.

During one of his Chapman’s revivals in Indianapolis, Indiana, the crowd buzzed with extra excitement. Former President of the United States Benjamin Harrison sat in the audience with his daughter.

“Billy,” Chapman said, “go ask President Harrison if he will join us on the platform.” Sunday quickly entered the tent and went to the ex-President. “Sir, Mr. Chapman would like you to sit on the platform this evening,” Sunday began.

Initially the President held his hands up in protest. The President wanted to remain in the audience. “But Sir,” Billy continued. “If you sit on the platform, it will encourage others to take a stand for Christ.”

With reluctance, the elderly president agreed and walked down the aisle while holding onto Billy’s arm. The crowd was aware of President Harrison and burst into cheers. As the cheers faded, the people began to sing, “My Country ‘Tis of Thee.” Later, Sunday recalled this event as one of his finest moments on the road with Chapman.

Besides doing everything from collecting the offering to selling copies of Chapman’s sermons, night after night, Sunday was able to watch the evangelist in action. Chapman had pastored

a local church and knew how to listen when he talked with the local ministers. He gained the acceptance of other ministers. Sunday learned from this skilled evangelist.

As Chapman counseled and listened to these local pastors, Sunday understood that these pastors needed their own counselor. Often the success or failure of a revival depended on the local churches. When the local pastors were encouraged, then they could inspire their churches to unite with other churches and reach out to the community.

Besides handling the many details of a crusade for Chapman, Billy gained a practical Bible education from listening to the evangelist. For two years, Billy heard one of the best speakers of his day—Wilbur Chapman. A patient teacher, Chapman gave Billy copies of his sermon notes and outlines. “You’ve got to clearly present the message of Christ,” Chapman said. “But you use stories to make the message practical for the people.” Sunday learned how to make his messages ring true to the Bible.

While Billy received instructions from his teacher, Sunday still maintained his distinct speaking skills. No one thought Billy was a copy of Chapman.

Evans hall was packed full with an expectant audience. Evansville, Indiana was preparing for the upcoming meetings of evangelist Chapman. A two-hundred voice choir sat on the platform in front of the audience along with many of the pastors from the city. Among them was Billy Sunday. After the music, Sunday began to speak to the crowd, “The Bible is a common-sense book,” he told them. “It shows a man where he stands. It also shows that heaven takes an interest in men. There is no greater joy there than whenever a sinner is saved. Heaven knows how great man’s peril has been.”

Billy closed his preaching with an earnest prayer. Everyone in the auditorium was standing with their heads bowed. “I’m inviting you to make a commitment to Christ tonight,” Sunday said. “Every head is bowed before God. If you’d like to commit your life to Jesus, then raise your hand.” Across the room, hands were lifted.

“After we sing the closing song, there will be a short meeting for those who raised their hands,” Sunday said. “If you’ve come with a family, they will wait for you.”

In Paris, Illinois, the crowd had gathered to hear Sunday. The local newspaper editor wrote about the meetings at the Christian Church in the morning and the Presbyterian Church in the afternoon. “Mr. Sunday was the leader at both places. It is evident that his baseball energy has been transferred to his new calling, for he is so much in earnest. It shows in every sentence.”

That evening, eighteen hundred people gathered at the large tent outside of the town.

Everyone expected Chapman to speak but a train accident delayed him in another town. Sunday began to preach from the Bible text of Mark 10:17.

“A rich young man came to Jesus,” Billy said. “He had run to Jesus and kneeled down in front of him asking, ‘How do I inherit eternal life?’ Jesus told him to sell everything and follow him. Sadly he went away.”

The crowd sat in silence waiting for the next word from Billy. “We never know what a man is worth until after he has been tested. No man is stronger than his weakest point. Jesus didn’t ask anything unreasonable. God doesn’t go half way but demands all. He has every right to demand our very best.”

Besides improving Sunday’s speaking skills and teaching him how to preach from the Bible, Chapman also encouraged Billy to improve his appearance and clothing. As another local newspaper wrote, “Sunday doesn’t look like a preacher. He would more likely be taken as a speculator on the stock exchange or a prematurely old young business man. But when he launches into his sermon, you stop thinking about the man, and have to think about what he is saying.”

More than dress and meetings, Chapman also taught Billy how to handle money. During his meetings, Chapman didn’t call much attention to money. An offering was taken in the meeting but they never pressured the people to give money.

“I’ve learned to lean on the Holy Spirit,” Chapman told his young assistant, “rather than

Say What?

“HE THAT
COVERETH HIS SINS
SHALL NOT PROSPER:
BUT WHOSO
CONFESSETH AND
FORSAKETH THEM
SHALL HAVE
MERCY”

PROVERBS 28: 13

on the things of this world.” The evangelist took a modest salary for himself and his staff workers. Chapman’s idea of fun was spending a few days or couple of weeks in a vacation home on Winona Lake, Indiana.

Because Chapman didn’t have a lot of money, he purchased the vacation home in payments. Many years later in 1908, Chapman offered to sell the home to Billy and Nell Sunday. To the Sundays’ surprise, Chapman said, “We’ve got to sell this place because we can’t afford to keep the property. We still owe \$1,500 on the mortgage.” Billy and Nell loved this home on the lake and purchased it for enjoying vacations and family. The experience reinforced a lesson from Chapman—Don’t seek money while serving Christ.

Besides his speaking, evangelist Chapman wrote a short book entitled *Received Ye the Holy Ghost?* This book helped Billy focus his attention on the risen Christ instead of worldly treasures. Billy’s attention turned to prayer and spending time alone with God. Many churches requested that Sunday and Nell speak at their conferences on prayer. Billy grew close in his friendship with Mr. Chapman.

One day between his meetings for Chapman, Sunday’s daughter, Helen climbed onto his lap. Helen had just started school.

“Papa,” she said, “let’s go to bed and tell stories.” Billy shook his head from side to side. “I can’t do it, Helen. I have to go away.”

Helen stuck her hands on her hips. “Where are you going to, Papa?”

“Well,” Billy said, “I’ve got to go to Urbana, Ohio, and then to Troy and, then to Evansville, and after that to Richmond and then to Indianapolis.”

Helen wrinkled her brow and said, “Papa, you’re the best friend I’ve got, and I don’t want you to go away. Let’s go to bed and tell stories.”

“But I must go away, my dear, and if you will be a nice little girl and not cry, I will get you a present,” Billy said as he tried to turn her attention somewhere else. Hesitantly, Helen agreed to receive a dress and a little ring. While on his trip, Sunday bought a silk dress with a blue stripe. When Helen saw it, she danced around in joy.

Another day, Helen came to her dad and said, “Papa, I don’t want a dress. I just want you. You’re the best friend I’ve got. Stay at home with me, Papa, and I won’t ever want anything but you!”

With sadness, Sunday realized his job took him away from his family. Billy saw how much his daughter cared about his days away from home. But then he reflected about the Christian life, “That’s how we should be as Christians. The greatest desire of our hearts should be to live with Jesus—someone we’ve not seen but love.”

(Excerpted from *Billy Sunday*, by W. Terry Whalin, Published by Barbour Publishing, Inc., Uhrichsville, 1996)

... “AGREE” FROM PAGE 1

miracles take place; God is right there amongst them. It has been said that the Church is where the Holy Spirit works.

When we pray in Jesus Name, it is hardly possible to ask selfish little things from God. Jesus our Lord teaches us to pray for great things—things that build His kingdom.

“If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done...” God rarely likes to deny His children. Unless it is absolutely injurious to you, God does not want to withhold a request which comes from united hearts.

I meet many young couples who have been married several years but don’t pray together. Living together and yet not praying together! You can reduce your marriage to the purely animal level, but be sure, dire consequences will stem from the neglect of praying together.

From the time I was a child I saw my father and mother praying together daily. Their prayer resulted in our home being a lovely place, full of harmony and peace. In that atmosphere there was health and hardly any painful disease. We enjoyed great security as children. Fear had no place in our home. We knew that when our father prayed God did miracles. So nothing worried us unduly. Mother was gentle on the one hand and firm on the other and taught us implicit obedience.

My father and mother made a wonderful team. We children never heard them fighting or arguing about money, but we often heard their voices in prayer. We had many opportunities to see the efficacy of prayer made from clean hearts.

There was a very cultured old lady who lived in our home for a long period. She had held very high positions in the government and as she desired the fellowship of God’s children, my father let her stay with us.

One day, however, she was taken ill with severe pain in the abdomen. It was an emergency case of intestinal obstruction. But doctors would not operate on her as she was very old and frail. She was in her eighties. But the suffering became unbearable. We children who had known our parents’ prayer to fail, were watching the worsening condition, with some concern. Whatever was to be done needed to be done quickly.

That night, father and mother spent nearly the whole night in prayer. And the Lord who said, “Whatsoever you agree on earth and pray for, it shall be done,” heard

their prayer. By the morning the agony ceased and the gentle old lady was healed. Never again did she suffer that way.

Our motives are very important in prayer. If you want your prayer to be answered purely because it will add to your comfort and prosperity, God is in no way obliged to hear you. Nor should you ask for your prayer to be heard, in order that your importance should be enhanced or that you should gain a reputation among your acquaintances as a man of piety. There should be nothing selfish in your asking.

Why do you want your health to be restored? Is it to rise up and glorify God and be His true disciple? Why do you ask for promotion? Is it that in that higher post, you want to wield a stronger influence for Jesus and for righteousness, such that all evil or unrighteousness should be banished from your office? If so, God will grant you your desire. I always rejoice when men whom Jesus has transformed—righteous men—come to positions of great responsibility.

Get yourself a new heart and begin to pray with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart.

—Joshua Daniel

Weekly Meetings —Welcome to All—

Ann Arbor every Sunday Morning
at 10:00 am
Ann Arbor YMCA, Zonta Room, 1st floor
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Chattanooga, TN: 1450 AM (WMOC) Sat. 3:30 pm
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