

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

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By Aaron Merritt Hills

A Series of Lessons Illustrated by Stories and Incidents,
For the Use of Parents and Teachers in Bringing Children to Jesus,
And Preparing Them for Church Membership.

Author of:

Holiness and Power

Pentecostal Light

The Whosoever Gospel

Life of Mary A. Woodbridge

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Mount of Blessings,

Cincinnati, Ohio

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DEDICATION

To the ministers of the gospel who long for the conversion of the children in their congregations, that they may escape the hardness of heart that comes with later years; to the Christian parents who have a deep concern for the spiritual well-being of their loved sons and daughters, and to the Sabbath-school teachers, leaders of "Junior Endeavor Societies" and "Junior Leagues," who earnestly desire to lead those committed to their care and training to an intelligent and saving faith in Jesus, this book is lovingly dedicated by

The Author.

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PREFACE

This book is not designed by the author as a storybook to be put carelessly into the hands of the young. It is intended for the parent or teacher, who is expected to read it to the child or children at stated intervals, one chapter at a time. The reading should be accompanied by comments, questions, songs and prayer. In this way the young can easily be led to an intelligent, conscious acceptance of Jesus as their personal Savior. Most of the hymns we have recommended can be found in "Tears and Triumphs Combined," published by The Revivalist office, Cincinnati, O. Other hymns can be substituted in place of these, but they were selected because of their appropriateness. They precede the chapters with which they are to be sung.

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INTRODUCTION

Three years ago the writer was conducting a series of meetings in the First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland, O. Riding home with, the pastor, Rev. H. C. Haydn, after an evening service, he asked me: "Do you know of a really good text-book for the training of these children?" I did not; neither did he. The Spirit seemed to say to me: "Write one." I was just then finishing the biography of my beloved friend, Mrs. Woodbridge; but I began at once to revolve in my mind the plan of some such a book as is now given to the public. Had not my mind and heart become filled with the subject of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and its blessed consequences, which resulted in my volume, "Holiness and Power for the Church and the Ministry," this book would have been issued a year ago, and less perfectly than now.

While going about the country from church to church as an evangelist, I have been profoundly impressed with the fact that a vast deal of the strength and energy of the churches is spent in misdirected effort. A great deal of attention -- none too much in fact and probably not enough, but relatively too much is given to the conversion of a comparatively few old, hardened sinners, while the great mass of children are passed by and quite neglected on the ground that they are too young to be subjects of saving grace. The most promising, and by far the most fruitful, part of the vineyard of the church is thus neglected. The first command of Jesus is to feed his lambs -the children of his flock. The church that succeeds best is the one that cares most for the training of the children. "Children are the preface to the book of life." "An adult converted is a unit; a child is a multiplication table." Rev. Tyng, of New York, used to say that if he had to choose between one child and two adults, he would choose the child every time; yet long experience teaches me that it is easier to secure the hopeful conversion of ten children than of one adult. Rev. Thomas Guthrie says: "Youth is the critical period of man's life. An infant is a bud unblown. Early childhood corresponds to the next stage -- the bud is now blown out into a lovely, fragrant flower; but whether, as the bud has changed into the flower, the flower will change into fruit, who can tell? I have seen the blast strew the ground with the hopes of the garden, and trees stand barren in autumn that had been white with blossoms as with a shower of snow. However genial the spring, or cloudless and warm the skies of summer, there is a critical period when the two seasons shade into each other. This which holds the fruits of autumn in its hand lies in those few days and nights when the fruit is setting. Such a period is youth in human life. Then impressions are received which remain forever; then the character, like the color made in the cloth by the mordant, is fixed; then the die is struck; then a life of virtue or vice is begun; then the turn is taken either for God or the world; then the road is entered which leads either to heaven or to hell." Dr. Cuyler says: "The most important ten years of life are from five to fifteen years of age. The great majority of those who pass twenty irreligious are never converted at all. I have been permitted, during my ministry, to receive nearly one thousand persons into the church on confession of their faith, and not one dozen of these had outlived their fiftieth year."

Rev. Amos Chesebrough says: "Somewhere between the ages of seven and ten occurs a transition from the impressional period to that of completed conscious personality. The child learns to reflect and to reason out difficulties for himself. Here, then, and now, is the pastor's golden opportunity . . . to mold with the trowel of truth the plastic material of their character into fabrics of beauty and strength. But let him remember that his grandest opportunity is passing by, to be succeeded by a period of less promise. The tongue of time strikes nine, ten, eleven, twelve. Now has come the high moon of hopefulness. The year following the twelfth birthday is the acme of hopefulness in the lives of children who have had a Christian nurture; and even in respect to those whose early training has been defective it holds forth a larger promise of success in labors for their salvation than any subsequent age. The tongue of time is not long silent. It strikes thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen. The sun is on the descending grade; and, while the beautiful light may long linger, the brightest hours have passed. I am not to be understood as handing over the years of young manhood and womanhood to hopelessness, or saying anything to discourage earnest efforts in their behalf. It is the silver age, this from sixteen to twenty-five. having in it much of beauty and promise. But it is plain that the golden hours of the pastor's privilege lie in the preceding period. To have lost them is an irreparable calamity. To have neglected them, is it not a crime?"

Some five years ago, a prominent evangelist, speaking in Chicago, said: "In a very large proportion of the churches in this country that are successful, filled with the Spirit of God and the power to save souls, more than half of the membership have joined the church before they were fifteen years old, many of them before they were twelve years old, some before they were ten, and not a few beautiful members of the church joined at six years of age, who lived as Christians during the remainder of their days. We need to remember Jesus' words about little children. You can hang a boy in one of our States when he is eight years old, and it is an awful thing if there be in any of our homes a child even approaching that age who is not a faithful, consecrated follower of the Lord Jesus Christ."

This may start the question, How early may a child be converted? In the Advance for October 6, 1892, seventy-one corporate members of the American Board Of Foreign Missions gave their testimony as to their religious experience. Of these, nineteen were converted so early in childhood that they could not tell when it was, and thirty-four were converted somewhere between infancy and fourteen years of age. Rev. Hastings, of New York, was converted at the age of eight, and so was Bishop McCabe. But thousands are converted as early as that. The great Jonathan Edwards was converted at seven, and so was the mother of Bishop Fitzgerald. The leading business man in a Massachusetts town, and a deacon in the Congregational church, testified publicly in my presence that he was converted at seven. The wife of a Presbyterian pastor whose church is on Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, O., told me that she was converted at seven, her daughter at four, and her daughter's daughter was converted at six and joined the church. The famous temperance worker, Jennie F. Willing, testifies that she was converted at five. The wife of the evangelist, Rev. H. H. Wells, gave me the account of the conversion of her little daughter (Charlotte Lucena) at the age of four and a half years. From that time until her triumphant death at the age of four years, nine months and twenty-seven days, she gave the clearest evidence of a changed heart. Jonathan Edwards tells of one Phoebe Bartlett, who at four years of age was a suitable candidate for church membership, and from her sprang Rev. Justin Edwards. Hannah Whitall Smith tells us in the beautiful biography of her son Frank, who died at eighteen, that he was clearly converted at four years of age, when his nature met with a most decided change. He certainly after that lived a life of remarkable purity and spiritual earnestness. Two mothers in Oberlin have recently confided the fact that a son of each was converted at three years of age. One of them is today one of the noblest Christian young men in the college.

I can not tell how early a child may be converted. I stand in awe before the inmates of the nursery. I know from experience as a parent and a pastor that children can very early be successfully taught to love Jesus, and exercise saving faith in him. It is said of Voltaire that he became an infidel at five years of age; and he is reported to have said: "Give me the first five years of a child's life, and I will cause that child to disbelieve in the immortality of the soul, to reject Jesus as a Redeemer, and to doubt the very existence of a Creator and God." All this means that God has graciously arranged that the religious faculty has early development and may be easily and early perverted, and that the conditions and saving truths of salvation are few and simple and easily apprehended. Jesus prayed: "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." The old and the learned and the wise get so hardened and conceited and self-sufficient that they miss the way, while the children and the childlike, with their teachable spirit, enter in and find Christ.

Mirabeau, when asked how he would inculcate the principles of national liberty, replied that he would begin with the infant in the cradle, and let its first lisping utterance be the name of Washington. The wise believer will rise higher than this, and say: Would you have a nation free indeed, politically, socially, morally, blessedly free? would you witness the spread of principles that must inevitably, if they have free play, overturn all despotisms, and crush out more than half the sorrows of human nature? Would you have the children become clean and pure and holy? -then begin with the infant in the cradle, and let the first name it lisps be the all-prevailing name of Jesus -- the divine Redeemer of humanity.

"But," some will ask, "is not that giving the child a prejudice in favor of religion?" Very likely it is, and could he have a more helpful or healthful inclination? When some one said to Coleridge that children ought not to be prejudiced in favor of religion, he took him out into a garden full of weeds and pointed to it as a garden not prejudiced in the spring in favor of fruits and flowers. As for himself, he said, he preferred a garden prejudiced in favor of strawberries and roses. The child's mind ought to be prejudiced in favor of God, and all that is good and pure and true and holy. There is no neutrality. It is either that or a prejudice toward sin and the devil. Which shall it be?

The importance of the conversion of children can not be overestimated. Modern life is like a hot-house, producing early moral development, either for good or evil. Most people are converted young or never, as the following facts will show:

A prominent evangelist tested an audience in Portland. * Eleven hundred were converted under twenty. One hundred and eighty were converted between twenty and thirty; thirty-five between thirty and forty; fourteen between forty and fifty; eight between fifty and sixty; over sixty, only two. A year and a half ago the State Sabbath-school Convention met in Detroit, Mich. One of the great audiences was tested. It was found that more than two thousand were converted under twenty years of age; 103 were converted between twenty and twenty-five; forty-one between twenty-five and thirty; twenty-three between thirty and forty; two between forty and fifty, and over fifty only two. Only 171 were over twenty years of age at conversion out of at least twenty-two hundred Christians.

For more than three years I have kept a record of the age of those professing conversion in my meetings. Of 3,108 converts, only 412 were over twenty; a larger proportion than is usual, but still how small! Such facts teach their own solemn lesson to all pastors, parents and Christian workers. The great harvest is to be gained among the young; and with multitudes it is, be converted early or never. Says Rev. Newell: "The incredulity and lethargy of some parents upon the subject of their children's conversion is most appalling. It is the ruin of thousands." Facts that are continually brought to my notice prove the truth of his words. Let me cite a few. A pastor holding a series of meetings turned to a mother and said: "Will you not bring Henry to the meeting?" He was then twelve years old. "No," said the mother; "he is too young." Only five years afterwards he was six feet high and weighed 190 pounds, and a man said of him: "Henry can stand before the bar and drink the biggest drink of raw whisky of any man I ever saw." Five years later this only son died a most horrible death, eaten up by his vices. The same pastor turned to another mother that same night and said: "Will you not let Tom come to the meetings?" He was ten years old. She replied: "Husband and I think we know a thing or two; we don't want Tom to come to the meetings." Six years later that "husband" was dead, and that mother, who thought she knew so much, confided to the pastor that Tom was so ugly she could hardly live with him. Soon after she, too, died, and that boy was left, an "ugly," Christless, ruined son.

Last week a woman and a church-member in the city where I am writing sneered at a child ten years of age who had that day given herself to Christ: "Ridiculous that a girl as young as that knows what she is about!" That very woman, I am told, has three sons who are impure and drunken sots, for whom the father has paid large sums of money repeatedly to keep them out of jail. When they were boys the mother had no faith that they could be converted.

This morning at the breakfast table I was told of a worldly professor of religion who some years ago did not want her son and daughter converted because she wanted them to "have a good time" while they were little. The daughter had it, and soon covered her family with ineffaceable shame. I say it in all solemnity, measuring my words: Such parents are the most efficient agents the devil has in securing the damnation of their children.

Are converted children of an early age fit subjects for church membership? Most certainly. Rev. J. O. Peck, one of the most efficient pastors of Methodism, says that more and more his ministry became pervaded with confidence in and earnest work for the conversion of children. He testifies that the best Christians he has ever seen were converted in early childhood. "One boy of six years was converted, and his Christian life for nearly twenty years since has been as steady as the march of a planet." "Mr. Spurgeon," he says, "was a careful shepherd of children, and toiled to bring them early to Christ. Before his death he made the statement that he had excluded from his church forty-two members, but that he had never expelled one converted in childhood. This is remarkable evidence of the genuineness of the conversion of children.

At four years of age Count Zinzendorf made this covenant with Christ. "Be thou mine, dear Savior, and I will be thine." His famous saying, that which Tholuck adopted as his motto, "I have one passion, and that is He -- He alone," was the keynote of his whole life, he fathered the Moravian Church, which the British Encyclopædia pronounces "the missionary church par excellence."

Adam Clark, one of the great scholars and commentators of Methodism, was converted at four years age, and the world has never had any occasion to doubt the genuineness of his piety. It is said that Bishop Simpson was converted at four years of age. I write these lines in the study of a noble Congregational pastor, born and educated in New England. His oldest daughter has just graduated from Wellesley, and has consecrated her life to missionary work in Africa. Her father tells me that she had a clear, definite conversion at four years of age; that she began to lead others to Christ at six years of age; that at eight years of age she came before the committee of a New England church to pass examination for church membership. She stated her experience, was questioned, and left the room. An old deacon wiped the tears from his eyes, and said: "That is the most remarkable statement of religious experience ever made by any person of any age before the

committee of this church," All her life has proved that her experience was genuine.

This book is given to the public because the writer is firmly convinced that the hope of the kingdom of Christ lies in the conversion of the young; that the pastor who most faithfully leads the lambs to Christ is the greatest and most successful, and that the church that gives the best and most faithful religious training to the children holds in its hands the destiny of the future.

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Chapter 1

WHY GOD CALLS LITTLE CHILDREN EARLY

TEXT: Eccl. xii. 1. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

Dear Children:-- If the President of the United States should address you today, or write you a letter giving you some good advice, you would all assume that there must be some good reason for the counsel that so wise and great a man gave to you. Well, somebody much greater than the President of our country, even the infinitely wise and holy God, tells us to remember him and seek him early in life. It is safe to say that there are very good reasons for such advice. It is our purpose to give the first reason in this chapter. That reason we believe is this: God knows that even very young children are sinful, not a few of them, but all of them. Little children know it, too. They can not forget that sometimes they are very selfish and want everybody to please them. They sometimes get angry because their mother wishes them to have their faces washed, or asks them to leave their play and stay their books, or go on some errand for her. The little girls quarrel with each other for the possession of the nicest doll, and the little boys quarrel to have the prettiest marbles or the best toy-gun or the finest knife. I have known a little boy to get angry and strike his little sister and make her turn pale with pain and fear. It was very wicked and he knew it, for his father and mother had prayed with him daily and taught him better, but still he did it. I have known children to disobey a good mother and fill her heart with grief over their sin. I heard of a little girl the other day who was told not to touch a beautiful vase on the mantel in the parlor. One day when her mother was away from home she took the vase and looked at it; but in putting it back she let it fall and broke it. She then shut her pet kitty in the parlor to make her mother think that the cat had broken the vase. That night the little girl could not sleep, arose from her bed and confessed her sins to her mother. You see she had committed two very grave sins: she had disobeyed her parent, whom God had commanded her to obey, and she had also acted a lie when God commanded her to be truthful.

Other boys and girls commit other sins; they say bad words, and take God's holy name in vain and think evil thoughts and plan evil deeds and act wickedly at home and in the street, and in the school, and sometimes even in Sabbath-school and church. You may ask: Why do all unsaved boys and girls sin? I am sorry to say it is because our race is a wicked race and tendency to sin is born in every little child's heart. Every little boy or girl is sure to sin if they live long enough, unless God changes the heart and takes the love of sill out of it. This tendency to sin makes boys and girls a great deal of trouble and leads them to do a great many wrong things. It is, I may say, not unlike a very bad disease that is born in one and keeps getting worse and worse until it proves fatal.

The Bible is the book God gave us. It tells of a disease called leprosy. When a person became sick with it he grew worse and worse. No doctors and no medicine could cure him. The disease went on and on until it brought the poor victim down to death. The child does not outgrow it or get over it. It gets worse and worse as the years go by until the life is ruined. The heart gets hard and sinful and very wicked. God's blessed book says: "The wages of sin is death." Sin, when it is full-grown, bringeth forth death. In other words, the heart in time gets to be so very wicked that God can not bear its presence, and it is shut out from God and heaven because everything good in the soul has died.

Now when Jesus was upon earth many poor lepers came to him to be healed of the awful disease of leprosy. All the doctors and all the medicine had failed to heal them. As the last hope they came to Jesus, and he healed them all. The same blessed Savior can heal the disease of sin in every child's heart Nobody else but Jesus has ever been able to cure it. There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. This is why God calls on the young to remember him in early life. He sees the children's hearts afflicted with sin, and he knows what trouble it will bring them, He begs them to come to Jesus, just as the lepers came in the olden time, and cry: "O Jesus have mercy on us and

cast the sin out of our hearts." He wishes them to do it in early life to save themselves from all the sad consequences of sin.

Think how hateful sin is, and how evil are its effects in human lives. It was sin in Cain's heart that caused him to kill his beautiful brother Abel, and made himself a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth. It was sin in the hearts of men and women and children that caused their wickedness to be so great that God was compelled to destroy the ancient world with a flood. It was sin in the hearts of the people of Sodom that made them so awfully wicked that God destroyed them all with fire. It was sin that led Jacob to deceive his blind old father Isaac, and cheat his brother Esau, so that he had to flee from home for his life. It was sin in the hearts of Jacob's boys that led them to envy and hate their lovely young brother Joseph, till they talked of killing him, and finally sold him to be a poor slave in Egypt. It was sin that caused the untimely death of Hophni and Phinehas, the two wicked sons of Eli. It was sin that brought sorrow to the old age of David, and led his boys to kill each other and fill their kind father's heart with grief. It was sin that covered the glorious Solomon with shame and divided and ruined his kingdom. Sin led King Jehoram to kill his six brothers, and led his wicked wife to kill her children and grandchildren that she herself might rule. Finally sin destroyed the whole nation, and God had to let enemies come up and punish it and carry off the people into captivity.

In the fullness of time Jesus came to the world on an errand of love to save it. He was pure and holy and gentle and kind. His heart was full of love for every poor sinner; his only purpose was to bless and help men. Yet so wicked were the people that nobody seemed to have any place for Jesus. When he was a lovely little babe the king tried to kill him. When he was grown to be a man his own neighbors tried to cast him over a precipice. Sin in their hearts led men to hate him and plot against him and lie about him. Finally wicked rulers hired false witnesses to testify against the dear Savior. He was arrested and cruelly whipped until he was almost dead. Then they also wove a crown of thorns and pressed it down upon his beautiful brow, and smote him, and spit in his face with malignant contempt. At last, though they could find no fault with Jesus, men were so wicked that they stood around the blessed Savior and yelled: "Crucify him, crucify him," until he was led out of the city followed by a cursing rabble, who looked on with glee while he was nailed to the cross and hung up to die in most awful agony.

That was the darkest crime of all the ages. But there is no depth of infamy to which any one may not descend who allows sin to remain in his heart. Every boy that takes God's name in vain has the beginning of the same spirit that crucified the Son of God. Every little girl that deceives or lies has the same evil spirit that bore false witness against Christ. Every little child that performs a cruel, wanton deed has in him the germ of that same wickedness that clamored for the crucifixion of Jesus, and at last drove the nails into his hands and feet.

Nobody can tell to what a terrible degree of sinfulness any boy or girl may come who allows sin to stay in the heart. History tells us of a Roman emperor named Nero. When he was a little child he was surpassingly beautiful, and so tender-hearted that he could not bear to see anybody or any creature suffer. But, like all other little boys, he had sin in his heart, which he did not ask Jesus to take away; and it kept increasing until he became a very monster of iniquity, one of the wickedest men of all the ages. Cruelty became his joy and murder his pastime. He covered holy men and women with pitch and set fire to them, and by the light of those living, burning torches practiced archery at night in his gardens. He set fire to Rome, then the greatest city in the world, and amused himself by the sight of the rolling, devouring flames, unmindful of all the suffering and loss of property and life he had occasioned. At his command very many thousands of noble Christians were put to death, eaten alive by the wild beasts in the amphitheater or dying by every kind of torture. As a crowning act of wickedness he had the beloved apostle Paul, who wrote so much of the Bible, beheaded. Now this monster of sin was once as gentle and innocent a child as any boy who reads these lines; but the sin in his heart made him all that he became. The writer once saw a woman on trial for murder. She was found guilty. She then confessed that she had at different times poisoned to death seven persons, several of them being innocent little children. She was a nice-looking woman, and it was hard to believe she could have been so wicked. No doubt she was once a beautiful little girl, and as pure and innocent as any little girl who hears this story. But she had the moral disease of sin in her heart, and it kept getting worse and worse until it made her very, very bad. The fact is, nobody can tell how very wicked any boy or girl may yet become unless God takes out of them the love of sin.

I once addressed an audience of four hundred boys in Ohio, and all of them had committed crimes for which they had been taken from homes and shut up in confinement: and yet their average age was only eleven years. I once went through a prison where there were eleven hundred prisoners who had committed awful deeds -- thefts and murders and other

crimes. It was a solemn thing to look at them and think what they had done, and then reflect that once they were no worse than the boys in our Sabbath schools and Christian homes.

Oh, sin is an awful thing in human hearts! It makes all the wasted, blighted lives, and all the darkened, ruined homes in the world. It fills all the saloons with drunkards. It fills all the prisons and jails with criminals. It makes all that vast army of blasphemers, liars, thieves, idolaters, adulterers and covetous people of whom God says in infinite sorrow -- they shall not enter heaven. Is it any wonder that he is concerned about it, and asks all boys and girls to remember him in early life, and seek his help who alone can pardon and cleanse from sin?

Rev. C. L. Goodell was a famous pastor of St. Louis. He loved the children of his flock. One New Year's Day he sent each of them a prayer for them to commit to memory, and repeat each morning on rising from their sleep. You can repeat it as a prayer to Jesus to save you from sin:

CHILD'S MORNING PRAYER

The morning bright with rosy light
Has waked me from my sleep.
Father, I own, thy love alone
Thy little one doth keep.
All through the day, I humbly pray,
Be thou my guard and guide:
My sins forgive, and let me live,
Dear Jesus, near thy side.

" Help me today, in work or play
To do thy blessed will;
In holy ways, with prayer and praise,
My duties to fulfill.
Oh, make thy rest within my breast,
Great Spirit of all grace:
Make me like thee, then shall I be
Prepared to see thy face." Amen.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Why does God tell young children to remember him?
2. In what ways do children sin?
3. What disease that was incurable is sin like?
4. Who alone can save from sin?
5. Did sin make Cain trouble. And the sons of Jacob and Eli?
6. What did it do in David's family, and Jehoram's family?
7. What did sin prompt men to do to Jesus?
8. What did the beautiful boy Nero become and finally do?
9. What did it cause a woman to do?
10. What is it doing in general in human hearts?
11. Is it not plain why God wishes children to seek his help in early life?

Sing the Morning Prayer Song.

Other songs for Chapter 1, "Christ Has for Sin Atonement Made," and "Rock of Ages."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 2

WHY GOD CALLS CHILDREN EARLY -- CONTINUED

The second reason we will give why God calls children to remember him in early life is this: God knows that if children should grow up and live some years in sin, even though they should be converted and forgiven later in life, they still will suffer an irreparable loss. Though they be forgiven and saved, still, in some respects, they will never get over the evil effects of those early sins. This seems very hard to say, but it is none the less true. There are things that we can never get over; things that all the cleansing blood of Christ can not undo. God says to the sinner: "Be sure your sin will find you out." -- that there is a natural retribution which will surely come upon the sinner, which even the grace of God can not prevent, even though the sins are forgiven and the sinner is saved.

I wonder if, by many illustrations, I can make this solemn truth plain even to a child. You have all noticed that when people set out shade trees in the street, in front of their homes, they put a little wire or board fence around them. The reason is that they wish to keep the trees from being gnawed by horses, or bruised by passing wagons. We all know that if the tree is seriously bruised, though the bark may grow over the wound and try to repair the damage, yet the tree has suffered an injury which it will never get over. I said this to a Sabbath-school class, last May, in Alpena, Mich. That afternoon a shade tree broke off in a wind storm within a few rods of the church, proving the truth of my words. There was a bruise on the tree where a horse had injured it; the bark had grown over it as best it could; the tree had leaved out and was green and beautiful. But the weak spot from the injury was there, and in a wind storm the tree went down.

When a student at Yale I heard John B. Gough say in an address that he would give his right arm to be able to forget some of the scenes and experiences of his early life. At the time he made that remark, he was one of the most earnest temperance workers and most honored Christian men in the world. But once it was otherwise. When he was a generous-hearted, noble youth he lost his loved mother, and then was left in a strange land among strangers. Saloons opened their doors to him when kind homes ought to have done it, but didn't, and he took to drink and became a drunkard, he married; but the poor sot was ill prepared to be a husband and father. He lost his wife and child, but drank still. He lost his position where he earned his living because of his drinking, and on a cold Sabbath evening the young, despised drunkard, who had thrown away his manhood and ruined his home and was bound by the chains of the evil habit, walked through a city street in Massachusetts, hungry and homeless and penniless and friendless, thinking he would end his wretched life, It was then that Jesus sent a friend to him to save him. But he never could forget the horrible years of revelry and debauchery. The thought of the home he had ruined, and the wife whose heart he had broken. and the child who had died for the lack of a father's loving care, haunted his memory and troubled his soul. He could not forget. Like the tree, his whole being had received a bruise he could not get over.

I walked through a mill in Michigan last summer with a minister, and he introduced me to the men. I noticed that many of them had mangled hands. Sometimes a thumb and sometimes one or two fingers had been taken off. Their hands had got caught in the machinery, and had been so torn and mangled that they would never again have such hands as God meant they should have. It is just so with the soul, If it gets injured by sin, it will never again be just what God intended it should be. Sin inflicts a natural penalty -- a moral loss from which the heart does not wholly recover. Dr. Talmage says he once heard one of the godliest men he ever knew, an old man of over seventy years, say before a great company of people: I know I am a child of God, and my sins have been forgiven; but I committed a sin when I was twenty years old for which I can not forgive myself, and sometimes the very thought of it almost blots out my hope of heaven." You see, children, there was the awful memory, like a great scar or injury, from which he could never recover. His enjoyment of heaven will be less for ever and ever because of the memory of that sin,

Two young men left the city of London to better their condition in Canada. While crossing the ocean one of them became anxious about his soul's salvation. He unbosomed himself to his brother; but instead of receiving the sympathy and encouragement he expected, he was laughed at for his fears. This was too much for him; he could not stand his brother's jeers, and soon the convictions were stifled and the impressions effaced. Not long after their arrival in Canada the other brother was led to accept Christ. Filled with a new-found joy he told his brother of the mighty change that had taken place, and pleaded with him to become a Christian. "Arthur," was the reply, "you laughed at me when I was anxious about my soul, and now I have no desire to be saved."

How the words cut Arthur to the heart! He could not deny it; it was too true that he had been used by Satan to persuade his brother to reject Christ. Sometime after the unconverted lad returned to England, and, while working on a new building, a heavy stone fell upon his head and crushed him to death. When the sad news reached poor Arthur's ears, he was greatly distressed. He would have given anything to have been able to recall those sneering words, but they could never be recalled. He had found Jesus himself, and his sins were forgiven, but he had driven his brother from Christ and caused him to miss heaven, and the sad thought of it would cast a dark shadow upon his heart for evermore. It was one of the things he could not get over.

We spoke in the last chapter about David's sin. David repented sincerely, and cried: "I have sinned against the Lord." And God heard his prayer and said to him by the mouth of the prophet: "The Lord also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die, howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised me." David was forgiven and saved, but the sword of punishment, as the consequence of his sin, fell upon his family, blow after blow, and darkened with sorrow all his later life, and no doubt will diminish the blessedness of heaven, as he forever remembers the ruin of his sons.

The Apostle Paul when he was a young man did not love Jesus, and did not love his followers, and did not love his cause. On the other hand, he hated the Savior, and persecuted and put to death those that loved him. He was afterward converted and became the grandest man of the Christian ages. But he never could forgive himself for his early sin. The agony of the saints of God whom he dragged to prison and to death would come to his memory. The cries of the little children whose parents he had caused to be killed rang in his ears. The heaven-lit face and dying prayer of Deacon Stephen, whom he had helped stone to death, he could never forget. These were things he never got over. Though God had forgiven him, he could not forgive himself,

In one of my meetings not long ago an old man stood up to accept Christ. He was seventy-eight years old, so deaf that he had to sit within two or three feet of me that I might preach right into his ear; so lame that he could not kneel down. They told me that he had been a very wicked man. Let us suppose that Jesus gave him a new heart and forgave all his sins. Even then notice how many sad things there were that he could never get over. He ought to have come to Christ at least seventy years before, There were the threescore years and ten that might have been spent in the service of Jesus, all worse than wasted in sin and gone forever. He had brought up a large family of children, and by his example had taught them all to be Godless. They were all grown up and gone from home to lead Christless lives, and their children after them following their example. He could never undo the wrong he had done them all. The influence of his life in the community had also been bad. How many, many boys and men he had taught to swear and lie and break the Sabbath and forget God! He never could undo the harm he had done them, How many evil propensities he had indulged, and how many bad habits he had cultivated that now he must spend his time and strength in fighting during his remaining days: On the other hand, how many loving words he might have spoken in the name of Jesus to the sorrowing, and how many loving deeds he might have performed for the needy that now must be forever unspoken and undone! A life had been spent in sin that might have been spent in blessing men and glorifying God. Could he ever forgive himself? Will the time ever come in eternity when he will cease to regret that he did not give his heart to God in early life?

Now, God knows all these things better than we possibly can, he knows the pain and loss and bitter regrets and undying memories that will be occasioned by Sin committed during the early years, from all of which he would lovingly save us by having us Conic to him in early life, before we have walked in the paths of wickedness and sown broadcast the seeds of evil, whose awful harvest we must reap with aching hearts in after years.

God loves us all with an infinite tenderness, and wishes to spare us all possible pain that would come to us in later years

as the result of early sin. He also wishes us to become all that it is possible for us to be. So he tells us to remember Jesus our Savior in early life, and have our hearts cleansed from all sin, that we may rise to goodness and usefulness, like a bird soaring in the sky with an unbroken wing.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the second reason why God wishes children to come to Christ in early life?
2. Why do we put a fence around a young tree?
3. What did John B. Gough wish to forget?
4. What happened to men's hands in a mill?
5. What was it that the Old Man could not forgive?
6. What did Arthur do that gave him a lifelong sorrow?
7. What can you say about David's punishment?
8. What about Paul's?
9. What can you tell about the old man seventy-eight years old?
10. What does God desire concerning us?

Other songs: "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 3

WHY GOD CALLS CHILDREN EARLY -- CONTINUED

A third reason why God calls upon children, to seek him for salvation in early life is, people can come to him more easily in early life than in later years. The time to do anything in this world is when it can be done most easily and with the greatest advantage to the doer. There is a time in the year to plow the garden when it can be done the most easily and with the greatest profit. Every boy and girl knows that people do not wait until the ground is hard and dry in mid-summer, or until autumn when all chance to get a crop is gone. The garden is plowed and planted in the spring of the year, because it is the most favorable time; for precisely the same reason God wishes to begin his work in the heart of a child in the springtime of life, and make it a beautiful garden of the Lord.

1. In early life the feelings respond the most easily and naturally to the touch of divine truth, just as the strings of the harp respond to the touch of the harpist. These responsive feelings help the child to do right, help him to form the holy purpose to love and obey God. By and by, under the influence of sin, the feelings become cold and dead, and help the heart no more.
2. In childhood, also, the habits are not fully formed, and have only the strength of threads; years later they have the strength of ropes and chains that can not be broken. They bind the aged sinner to a course of confirmed sinfulness. Well do I remember a brilliant young man who had kind and good parents. He was a nice, beautiful boy when he was young. But when he was a young man in college he formed some bad habits which he could not break. He would come to me and weep over his sins, and promise to break off; but the very next day he would be a poor, helpless slave to his appetites and habits. I stood by his bedside when he was dying at twenty-six years of age, a victim of his evil habits, moaning out his tale of sorrow and shame over a wasted life. He was slain by the habits which he had deliberately formed, but afterward could not break.
3. Furthermore, in childhood the unfavorable influence of evil companions is not nearly so strong as it will be in later years. It seems incredible that it should be so, but a boy ten years old is twice as independent and brave and fearless in his moral action as the boy of fifteen. Until grace changes the heart, people become more and more cowardly and afraid to take a stand for Christ and duty in the face of the opinions or customs of their companions. Probably moral cowardice is ruining more people and causing the loss of more souls than any popular vice that can be named.
4. Still further, it is easier for a person to exercise faith in God and Christ when young than it can be again until God cleanses the soul. Faith is natural to the child; its whole life is a life of faith. You children trust your parents for food and drink and clothes and shelter without the least fear or doubt. It is but a little step further to trust the heavenly Father for pardoning grace. As a matter of fact, a child accepts Jesus as a personal Savior more readily, more naturally, more easily than the man of mature years, not because it is unreasonable or unmanly to believe in Jesus; but for the simple reason that a life of sin in time destroys the very power to believe.

Well does the writer remember two dear boys, seven and nine years of age, sons of a beloved friend. They had been trained in the home and in the Sabbath-school, and had learned to love Jesus. They were taken sick with malignant diphtheria, and died and were buried in the same coffin. When they were dying, and their father and other doctors were trying to save them, they said: "O papa, don't try to save us; let us die. It is so much better to die, and go home and live with Jesus, than to live in this world of sickness and pain and sin. Don't try to save us. Let us die." Thus the dear little fellows died in the sweetest peace and faith in the Lord. A few days afterward the writer went to comfort the father, Never will it be forgotten how the stricken father walked back and forth in the loom, wringing his hands and saying: "Oh,

I would give anything if I had the faith of my little boys and could believe as they did! " He might have done it once when he, too, was young. But the faith faculty, partially unused for many years, had at last become partially lost, and it made it hard for him to believe, When he needed and wanted the comfort and strength of a blessed faith in God and heaven, he felt to his sorrow that he could not believe.

"Do you know," said a poor boy in a hospital to a lady who daily visited him, "what I've been thinking of all the morning?" "Of how soon you will see Jesus?" "replied the lady. " Yes," he answered; "I've been thinking that I began this Sunday a poor sick boy in the hospital, surrounded with wicked men and sinful talk, and I think I shall be at home before night. I think I have begun a Sabbath that will never end. I don't think I shall ever have another week-day." In the evening she visited him again and found him with his eyes closed, sinking rapidly, but calmly. Stooping over him, she whispered: "'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil.' Willie, is Jesus With you? Have you any fear?" "No, none, and I've been wondering why they call it a dark valley. I have found the light growing brighter and brighter ever since I first believed, and now it is so bright I must shut my eyes." After praying, he said: "'That is my last prayer; now it will be praise for ever and ever.'" And he was soon at home, Wonderful faith!

A pastor writes this beautiful little story about a little girl, which I will give to you: "A girl in my Sunday-school gave her heart to Jesus, and was saved by him. One day by an accident she was dreadfully burned, and was taken to the hospital for better care. Amidst all her pains she was very happy and had no fear of death. One night, as she lay in the ward of the hospital in her bed, the rest all quiet, she was heard singing:

"Jesus the name to sinners dear,
The name to sinners given,
it scatters all their guilty fears,
And turns their hell to heaven.

And then, after a pause and nothing was heard but the ticking of the great clock in the hail, she again sang:

"Happy if with my latest breath
I may but speak His name,
Preach Him to all, and cry in death,

Behold, behold the Lamb!"

The singing ceased. The nurse returned, and, stepping to the bedside of the little sufferer, looked at the child, but she was gone. On the wings of song her pure soul had gone to her Savior."

A young minister who had recently labored in a mission in New York City, told me last week of a little eight-year-old Catholic girl who came to his mission and was converted. She then began to pray that her mother might be led to give up her sins and give her heart to Jesus. The mother was soon converted. Then the two went to the mission and the mother arose and asked prayers for her wicked husband, but added: "I know it will do no good to pray for him." "Yes, it will," said the little girl. "My papa will learn to love Jesus and be a good man," That very night he came into the meeting and was moved by the Holy Spirit to forsake his sins and become a true child of God, The little girl had far more faith in prayer and God than her mother had.

The writer heard a gentleman tell of a little boy in Chicago who was very, very sick. The doctor came and told the mother that her little boy could not live the day out. The poor mother felt so broken-hearted that she could not tell her boy that he must die, She told her husband when he came home what the doctor had said, and told him that he must tell his little son, And so the stricken father with great anguish broke the news to the little boy that he must die that day. The child looked up without the slightest feat and said: "Dear papa, you need not feel so bad; you know I will go to heaven; and, papa, I will go straight to Jesus and tell him that ever since I was old enough to know anything you have taught me to love him." Such perfect faith in prayer and in Jesus and heaven is very common and very natural in children. But after years have been spent in neglect of prayer and God, the very power to believe dies out of the soul, and in time may be wholly lost.

The writer will never forget how he sat day after day in a sick-room by a dying old man, a dear friend, who sat propped

up in his chair and held the Bible in his lap. He was trying to make his peace with God and get a hope of heaven. But the great beads of sweat, caused by the anguish of his soul, stood out on his brow, as he exclaimed again and again: "Oh, if I could only believe!" He prayed with great earnestness, but the time had passed when it was easy to find God.

The ease with which one can believe for salvation does not depend upon many years and much knowledge and learning. A child can love its mother just as truly as a man fifty years old, even though it can not explain what love is, So every child may have faith in its father, even though it can not explain what faith is.

A little child once got lost in the woods, and night came on, and it grew dark and they could not find him for a long time. At last he lay down under a log, cold and afraid, and cried as loud as he dared. At length he heard some one calling. He was afraid at first that it was a wild beast. Then he plainly heard his own name. He stopped crying, and jumped up and went toward the voice. He could not see anything, but he heard his father's voice and ran to him. Thus he could have faith, though he could not tell what faith was. The child Samuel could say in faith, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," though he could not know the voice of the Lord from the voice of Eli. So the little child can believe in Christ and know Christ, though he can not know and explain all the deep things in religion.

There is no time in life when it is so easy to forsake sin and give up wicked habits and wicked companions, and believe in Jesus and love him, as in early life. That is the reason why God calls upon all boys and girls to seek him in early life. The all-important task is so much more easily performed than it can be afterward that youth 'is the time to seek the salvation of the soul. The child may well sing:

"Lead me to Jesus, lead me to Jesus,
Help me to love him, help me to pray;
He is my Savior, I would believe him,
I would be like him to show me the way.

"Lead me to Jesus, he will protect me,
He is so loving, gentle and mild;
Calling the children, bidding them welcome;
Surely he calls me -- I am his child.

"Tell me of Jesus, tell of his mercy;
Is there a fountain, flowing so free?
All who are willing drink of its waters;
Say, is that fountain flowing for me?

"Lord, I am coming! Jesus, my Savior,
Pity my weakness, make me thy child;
I would receive thee, trust and believe thee,
I would be like thee, holy and mild."

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the third reason for seeking God in early
2. Do the feelings respond more easily to truth in childhood?
3. Are evil habits so strong in childhood?
4. What about evil companions in childhood?
5. When is it the easiest to exercise faith?
6. Give some of the instances of faith in childhood?
7. Is it difficult for the old to believe?

Song: What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 4

TWO OTHER REASONS WHY GOD CALLS CHILDREN TO REMEMBER HIM AND SEEK HIM EARLY

First, there is an awful probability that if people do not come to Jesus for salvation in early life they will never come at all. This fact is pressed upon our attention, and comes from so many different sources, that it fills us with a longing that is almost painful to save the children. God says: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near." God is never so near an unconverted life as in childhood. Wordsworth says: "Heaven lies about us in our infancy." Tom Hood sings most pathetically:

"I remember, I remember,
The fir trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky.
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To think I 'm not so near to heaven
As when I was a boy.'

Multitudes can give the same sad testimony that they are consciously farther from heaven and God than they were in childhood. They know they are drifting out into a wide sea of sin; and God teaches that there is a limit beyond which if they go they will never get back. They become hopelessly deaf to all God's pleadings, hopelessly blind to self-interest. They have less and less love for heaven, and less and less relish for holiness, until all desire to be saved is gone, and they are finally abandoned to a life of sin.

It is a mournful fact that most of the people who are drunkards today are going to live as drunkards and die drunkards, and go to a drunkard's hell in spite of us. We build and open churches, but most of these people will not come to the churches; they prefer to go to the saloons. We hold meetings for their salvation; but they will not come to the meetings. With here and there an exception they prefer to meet their fellow-revelers in the saloon, and they will meet them in spite of pleadings and entreaties and prayers until they die in the gutter as the fool dieth.

Occasionally we see a gambler turn from his sin and give his heart to Jesus; but it is very seldom. Most of those who are gamblers today are wedded to their sin, and will not forsake it. In vain do parents entreat and wives plead and brothers warn. In vain are all the alarms and threatened judgments of God sounded in their ears. In vain do comrades sink in irretrievable ruin before their eyes. They are snared in the meshes of a fatal vice. They love the chains that bind them. They fairly run with infatuated zeal unto their eternal doom.

And so it is with other sins. Most of those who are blasphemers today are going to live so and die so in spite of the warnings of Almighty God. And the liars and the knaves and the impure are following hard after them, deaf to every voice of mercy and love that would win them from their sins unto a better life. A few of these sinners now and then are saved, enough to inspire hope and keep us at work for their rescue. But the majority of them, in spite of the Bible and churches and sermons and prayers and every conceivable means of grace, are sweeping on, a laughing, mocking, jeering throng, to a lost eternity. We wish from the depths of our hearts that it were not so; but we can not blind our eyes to the sad, awful fact that it is so. That proves to us that if children would make sure of heaven they must seek God in early life. -- "Call upon him while he may be found."

The writer came to Jesus when a child eleven years old, and to that fact is due everything of worth in his after life. He sat down some years ago in Michigan and thought over some of his boyhood companions, and their end. What a record of ruined life it was, -- all because they had not committed themselves to the loving watch-care of Jesus. F. M____ was shot dead in a saloon. F. B____ became a drunkard and committed suicide. Another F. M____ went to a State's prison for stealing. G. S____ in my Sabbath-school class died a drunkard, frozen to death in a snow-bank. C. D____ was shot for deserting from the army. A. J____ became demented because of vice. N. W____ fled from the State a fugitive because of sin. J. S____ became a gambler. N. C____ became a drunkard, ruined his home, deserted his wife, and was found dead in his hotel room. It was supposed he died a suicide, and his mother died of a broken heart. How different would their lives have been had they all given themselves to Jesus when they were boys! The lesson for the boys and girls from all these sad instances is this, -- seek Jesus and give your hearts to him and become sincere Christians while you are young, before the sad days come when the probability is that you will never come at all.

The fifth and last reason I will mention why you should come to Christ in early life is that by doing so you will have so much more usefulness. I presume if ten old men and women sixty years of age should come to Christ in a religious service people would weep for joy, and think that the cause of Christ had gained a great deal. But if ten boys and girls ten years old should come to Christ in a meeting many would think that it amounted to very little. But it is my opinion that if heaven is ever especially jubilant it is when the children come to Christ. I will make it plain why it is so. Suppose the ten old men and women should all live to be seventy years old. Then they would have ten years apiece for the service of Christ. But they are so old now, and have wasted so much of life, and formed so many bad habits, that they could render only feeble service for the Master. But the ten boys and girls, now only ten years old, if they lived to be seventy, would have sixty years apiece for the service of Jesus -- in all, six hundred years. And they are beginning so young that Jesus would get the strength of their whole life. They could get a Christian education and become authors, editors, teachers, leaders in business, ministers, missionaries. Only Cod can tell how great their influence might be. It might circle the world and bless all mankind.

A minister once related to me the following: "I was brought up in Toronto, Canada. When a boy, I attended revival meetings. One night ten of us boys sat in a row. The preacher asked all of us who would accept Christ to arise. Nine of us arose and accepted Christ. Five of the nine are now ministers; three others are noble Christian workers and Sabbath-school teachers, and the ninth is an honorable and useful Christian man. We all grew to manhood. That tenth one who did not accept Christ was taken fatally sick. I went to see him. He looked at me with sad, dying eyes and said: 'O Harry, I ought to have come to Christ when you and the other boys did, but I didn't, and now I 'ye got to die and I'm lost, I'm lost.' It was so awful that I couldn't endure it, and I put on my hat and coat and left the house; but fainter and fainter, as I went down the street, I could hear the poor fellow's dying wail: 'I'm lost, I'm lost.'" Now, wouldn't it have been better if he had come to Christ with the other boys?

In the early part of this century a faithful Scotch minister, coming early to the kirk (church), met one of his deacons, whose face wore a resolute but distressed look. "I have come early to meet you," said the deacon, "and say to you, pastor, that there must be something radically wrong in your preaching and work. There has been only one person added to the church in a whole year, and he is only a boy." (Just as if it did not amount to anything to have a boy join the church!) The old minister listened. His eyes moistened with tears and his thin hand trembled. "I feel it all," he said, "I feel it all; but God knows that I have tried to do my best, and I can trust him for results."

The old minister stood up to preach that day with a grieved and heavy heart. He closed his discourse with dim and tearful eyes. He wished that his work was done forever, and that he was at rest among the graves in the old kirk-yard. He lingered after service to shed his tears of sorrow alone before the altar where he had prayed over the dead of a by-gone generation. No one noticed the pastor's grief but the boy, Robert. He watched the old man trembling in his sorrow, and then went up to him and said, as he laid his hand on the old man's gown: "Do you think if I were willing to work hard for an education I could ever become a preacher?" "A preacher?" "Yes," said the boy, "and perhaps a missionary." There was a long pause. Tears again filled the eyes of the aged man of God. At length he said: "This heals the ache in my heart, Robert. I see the Divine hand now. May God bless you, my boy. Yes, I think you will become a preacher."

More than half a century afterward there returned to London from Africa an aged missionary. His name was spoken with reverence. When he went into an assembly the audience rose to their feet to greet him, and stood till he was seated; when

he spoke in public there was deep silence. Princes stood with uncovered heads before him; nobles invited him to their homes. He had added a new province to the church of Christ, and to Christian civilization. He had brought' under gospel influences the most savage of African chiefs; had given the translated Bible to strange tribes; had enriched with valuable knowledge the Royal Geographical Society, and had honored the country of his birth, and the universal missionary cause. The old pastor had not labored in vain. The conversion of a thousand old men would not have been such a gain to the kingdom of Christ as the conversion of that boy. His name was Robert Moffat -- a name now immortal among men,

Bishop McCabe came to Christ when he was eight years old, as we have already said. Suppose. he had waited until he was sixty before giving his heart to God! The M. E. Church would have lost one of its great men. Dwight L. Moody gave himself to Christ when he was a raw, untutored boy. At the time it probably did not seem much to many people that such a convert was made; but, no doubt, in the eyes of God it was one of the grandest trophies of grace, and meant more to the world than the conversion of a king. Had he waited until fifty or sixty years of age, he would never have been heard of. As it was, he has become one of the grandest Christian men of the century.

O, boys and girls, God wants you to come to him in early life, because he wants you to become grandly useful. Seek him now, and fill your life with a usefulness that will be your joy and glory in eternity.

QUESTIONS

1. Are people likely to come to Jesus at all if they do not come in early life?
2. When does the poet say heaven is near us?
3. When does another poet say it is far off?
4. Are many drunkards saved?
5. Are gamblers often converted?
6. Are other sinners usually saved in old age?
7. Did the early friends of the writer who rejected Christ have an honorable end?
8. What is the last reason given why we should come to Christ in early life?
9. 9. Which would have the greater usefulness, ten persons converted in childhood or ten converted in old age?
10. What about the nine boys who gave their hearts to Christ one night in Toronto?
11. What was the end of the one who didn't?
12. What can you say of Robert?
13. What can you say of Bishop McCabe?
14. What can you say about D. L. Moody?

Song: "Whiter than Snow."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 5

FIRST CONDITION OF SALVATION -- REPENTANCE

The children have been shown why Jesus wants them to seek salvation in early life. It is necessary for them to learn how to get it. The coming of Christ into the heart in saving power, like every other blessing of man, is received on certain conditions. God is willing, and even glad, to give farmers a crop of corn; but they can get it only on the condition that they plow the ground and plant the corn and hoe it and kill the weeds, and then God uses the air and the sunshine and the dew and rain and the ground to make the corn. So God wants boys and girls to have an education and gain useful knowledge. He gave them their minds for that purpose. But they can learn only on the condition that they go to school and study and apply themselves. God wants men to learn trades; but they can do it only on the condition that they go into the shops and factories and take the tools in their hands and work. So God wants boys and girls to accept Christ and become pure and holy in heart. But they can do it only on certain conditions. The first one I shall name is REPENTANCE. That will be the subject of this chapter.

What is repentance? There is one verse in the Bible that describes it exactly. Is. 55:7, reads, "Let the wicked forsake his ways and the unrighteous man his thoughts." To repent is more than to feel sorry or to regret that you have sinned. It means forsake sin and abhor it, and even to hate the thought of all evil ways. God can not save a person as long as he loves sin and clings to it. God hates sin with an awful hatred, and nobody is saved, or can be, until he feels toward sin as God does.

Now God tells us that this is very important. John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness and saying "REPENT." Jesus came saying "REPENT." Peter told the people in Jerusalem to "repent." Paul said: "God now commandeth all men everywhere to 'repent.'" Jesus once said: "Except ye repent ye shall all perish." In other words, the blessed Savior teaches that all have sinned, even boys and girls, and that unless we forsake our sins in sincere repentance, he can not save any of us.

I repeat that repentance is very much more than sorrow for sin. A person can be sorry that he has an evil habit which makes him trouble, and yet he may love the evil and continue to practice it. He only repents who gives up a wicked way because it is wicked and grieves God, and injures others and his own soul. The boy or girl who has been in the habit of disobeying parents does not repent unless he stops disobeying them, and grieves over past disobedience, and hates it as a great sin against the parents, and also against God.

I want to give you a story about a child's sin and repentance, which I find in one of my books that was written fifty years ago. Twenty-five years ago I met and learned to love the author as a great and good man. A minister told to him the following story: "I had one of the kindest and best of fathers, and when I was a little white-headed boy about six years old he used to carry me to school before him on his horse, to help me in my little plans, and always seemed trying to make me happy. He came home one day very sick. My mother was sick, too; and thus nobody but my two sisters could take care of my father. In a few days he was worse, very sick, and all the physicians in the region were called to see him. The next Sabbath morning he was evidently much worse. As I went into the room he stretched out his hand to me and said: 'My little boy, I am very sick. I wish you to take this paper on the stand and run down to Mr. C.'s and get me the medicine written on that paper.' I took the paper and went to the drugstore as I had often done before. But when I got there I found it shut; and as Mr. C. lived a quarter of a mile further off, I concluded not to go and find him. I then set off for home. On my way back I contrived what to say. I knew how wicked it was to tell a lie, but one sin always leads to another. On going in to my father I saw that he was in great pain, and though pale and weak I could see great drops of sweat standing on his forehead, forced out by the pain. Oh, then I was sorry I had not gone and found the druggist. At length he said to

me: 'My son has got the medicine, I hope, for I am in great pain.' I hung my head and muttered, for my conscience smote me: 'No, sir, Mr. Carter says he has got none!' 'Has got none! Is this possible?' He then cast a keen eye upon me, and seeing my head hang, and probably suspecting my falsehood, said in the mildest, kindest tone: 'My little boy will see his father suffer great pain for the want of that medicine.' I went out of the room and cried alone. I was soon called back. My brothers had come and were standing, -- all the children were standing, -- around his bed, and he was committing my poor mother to their care and giving them his last advice. I was the youngest, and when he laid his hand on my head and told me that in a few hours I should have no father, that in a day or two he would be buried up, that I must now make God my Father, love him, obey him, and always do right and speak the truth, because the eye of God is always upon me, it seemed as if I must sink. And when he laid his hand on my head again, and prayed for the blessing of God, the Redeemer, to rest upon me, soon to be a fatherless orphan, I dared not look at him, I felt so guilty. Sobbing I rushed from his bedside and thought I wished I could die. They soon told me he could not speak. Oh, how much would I have given to go in and tell him I had told a lie, and ask him once more to lay his hand on my head and forgive me! I crept in once more and heard the minister pray for the dying man. Oh, how my heart ached! I snatched my hat and ran to the druggist's house and got the medicine. I ran home with all my might and ran up to my father's bedside to confess my sin, crying out, 'O, here father!' -- but I was hushed; and I then saw that he was pale and still, and that all in the room were weeping. My dear father was dead! And the last thing I ever spoke to him was to tell him a lie. I sobbed as if my heart would break; for his kindness, his tender looks, and my own sin all rushed upon my mind. And as I gazed upon his cold, pale face, and saw his eyes shut and his lips closed, could I help thinking of his last words: 'My little boy will see his father suffer great pain for the want of that medicine?' I could not know but he died for the want of it. In a day or two he was put in the ground and buried up. There were several ministers at the funeral, and each spoke kindly to me, but could not comfort me. Alas! they knew not what a load of sorrow lay on my young heart. They could not comfort me. My father was buried and the children all scattered abroad. for my mother was too feeble to take care of them.

"It was twelve years after this, while in college, that I went alone to the grave of my father. As I stood over it I seemed to be back at his bedside, to see his pale face, and hear his voice. Oh! the thought of that sin and wickedness cut me to the heart. It seemed as if worlds would not be too much to give could I then only have called loud enough to have him hear me ask for forgiveness. But it was too late. He had been in the grave twelve years; and I must live and die weeping over that ungrateful falsehood. May God forgive me."

Now I want to make a few comments on this sad story.

1. It shows that children may commit very wicked sins that end in very serious results at a very early age. This boy was but six years old when he thus sinned, lying to his earthly father and disobeying his Heavenly Father. Possibly it caused the death of his father, and it certainly filled his own heart with a lifelong sorrow.
2. You see that a young child may repent of sin. Young as this boy was, he felt a deep abhorrence of his sin, and the thought of it in after years almost broke his heart. Any child may thus feel the wickedness of sin and abandon it forever.
3. You can see from this story what repentance is. "Repentance begins in the humiliation of the heart and ends in the reformation of the life."

"Real repentance consists in the heart being broken for sin and from sin." You see he turned away not only from this sin of disobedience and lying, but from all sin, and became a good Christian man and a minister of the gospel. To repent of one sin like lying or swearing or disobedience or drunkenness, and cling to other sins, is like stopping one hole in the bottom of a ship when there are two other holes through which the water will pour in and sink the ship. It is like healing one wound in a soldier's body, and leaving two other grievous wounds unhealed which will cause his death. He who truly repents will hate and try to give up all sin.

4. You notice this boy asked God to forgive him. This is what any one who truly repents of sin does, for the reason that all sin is a sin against the holy God. When King David had committed an awful sin against a man that caused his death, and afterward repented, he cried out: " Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, O God." Let every boy and girl remember that when you quarrel or lie or swear or disobey, you have not truly repented until you both turn away from your sins and cry out to God for pardon.

In a certain town in Iowa, a liquor dealer, whose name we will not give, was converted during a revival. He made up his mind to lead a new life at the time that he had a large lot of costly liquors on hand. His first act was to cart his whole stock of liquors down the street to a place in front of the church and there make a bonfire of it all. While the people within the church were praising God, and asking him to help sinners to repent, this wicked saloon-keeper was repenting by giving up his sin and asking the pardon of God. The glare of the burning liquors gave evidence to God and man that a prodigal was repenting of his many sins.

5. You notice that this boy repented the very day he committed the sin. He did not wait until he was grown to manhood or until he was gray with years. While he was yet a boy of six years old, and before the sun of that day which witnessed his dark sin had set he turned from it with a broken and contrite heart to God. "A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "If we put off repentance another day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in." "You can not repent too soon, because you know not how soon it may be too late." Therefore, dear readers, repent now. Turn from every form of sin, and run for forgiveness to a gentle Savior's arms. Confess your sins to the Savior, and ask for his grace and mercy. A sinner's cry for pardon always gains the listening ear of God.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the first condition of salvation?
2. Are not God's most precious gifts usually given on some conditions?
3. What is repentance?
4. Is repentance important?
5. Is it more than sorrow or regret for sin?
6. What sins did the little boy commit?
7. How early in life did he commit the great sins?
8. Did he repent?
9. How did he show his repentance?
10. Did he ask God to forgive him?
11. Did he wait until he was old before he repented?
12. How did the saloon-keeper repent?
13. Is not NOW the very best time to turn from sin and seek God's pardon?

Song: "Turn to the Lord and Seek Salvation. Another title to the hymn is "Come, Ye Sinners."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 6

THE SECOND CONDITION OF SALVATION -- FAITH

If I should ask the children to tell me their favorite verse in the Bible, probably more would repeat John 3:16 than any other verse: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only

begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The last verse of the same wonderful chapter reads: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." To

these verses we will add Rom. 5:1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I want to talk to you today about "believing in Jesus" or having "faith in Jesus." You see God tells us very plainly in these and a multitude of other Bible verses, that FAITH in Jesus is a condition without which we can not be saved. You all no doubt wish me to make it very plain what it is to believe on Jesus with a faith that will save the soul and bring you everlasting life and a home in heaven. But remember when I speak of faith as saving us, I mean that faith unites us to Jesus, and it is Jesus that saves.

Two other words, "confidence" and "trust," help to make plain what faith is. You put confidence in your mother when you believe what she tells you; and you trust her when you depend upon her for food and clothes and all needed things without anxiety or care. That restful confidence and trust is faith in your mother. A similar state of mind toward God would be faith in God.

A few simple stories will make plain what faith is. A house was one day on fire, and all the inmates but one boy had escaped from it. He was in a chamber and the flames cut off all escape by the stairs. He ran to the window and cried out, "O father! how shall I get out?" He could be seen by the fire in the room, but the thick smoke kept him from seeing the people below. He heard their voices, and he cried, "O save me!" "Here I am, my son!" said the father, and he held out his arms for Charles to jump into them. "Here I am; don't fear. Drop down and I will be sure to catch you." Charles crept out of the window, but held fast by it. He knew it was very high from the ground, and he was afraid to let go. "Drop down, my boy," cried the father. "O, I can't see you, dear father." "But I am here. You can trust me. I will save you." "I am afraid, father. I shall fall." "Let go, and don't fear," cried the people; "your father will be sure to catch you." And now Charles felt the flames. He was sure that if he hung there he would be burned. He knew that his father was strong, that he loved him, and was waiting to save him. At last he let go, and fell safely into his father's arms.

Now you see how faith works. Charles was in great peril. He knew his father's love and strength. He knew his own danger and that if he staid he would perish in the flames. So he yielded to his father's persuasion, and in faith dropped into his father's arms. Now each dear boy and girl is surrounded by the flaming, consuming perils of sin -- sin around you and sin within you. You know your peril: "The wages of sin is death." You can not see the face of Jesus; but you hear his words, saying through his Holy Book: "Whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life." "Come unto me, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Now in faith put confidence in these invitations, believe these promises and cast yourself upon Jesus for salvation. Take your Savior at his word, just as Charles believed his father, and you will be saved. Jesus will not disappoint you.

I will now give you a story that will illustrate faith in the CARE of God. "A lady and her husband were on the deck of a

ship during an awful storm. The winds howled, and the ship was tossed like a feather over the great waves. The lady had to hold on with both hands to keep from falling. She was very much frightened and asked her husband if he was not afraid. He said nothing, but in a moment after he held a naked sword with its point close to her breast, and asked her: 'Are not you afraid?' 'No.' 'Why not! Do you not see the sword within an inch of your heart?' 'Yes, but I am not afraid, for it is my husband who holds it!' 'Yes,' said he, 'and it is my Heavenly Father who holds this storm in his hand, the winds and the waves, and why should I be afraid?'" This was faith in the care of God.

Now, just as the husband was pleased by the wife's confidence or faith in him, so God was pleased by the husband's confidence or faith in His care when the storm was raging and the ship seemed likely to be destroyed. And just so will you please Jesus when, troubled by sin, you go to him and commit yourself to his care and love. You are in a world full of stormy temptations that beat upon your souls as the waves dashed upon that ship. Jesus promises that if you trust him he will forgive your past sins, and "keep you from falling" or "stumbling" in the future. Will you believe on him and live?

Another story will illustrate to you faith in the love and goodness of God. A famous man once lived by the name of Richard Cecil. He was trying to teach his little girl how to believe in God. He came into the room one day and found her playing with a few beads which somebody had given her, and with which she was very much delighted. After a time he said to her: "My dear, you have some pretty beads there." "Yes, papa." "And you seem to be vastly pleased with them." "Yes, papa." "Well, now, throw them behind the fire!" The tears started into her eyes. She looked earnestly at him, as though she ought to have a reason for such a cruel sacrifice. "Well, my dear, do as you please, but you know I never told you to do anything which I did not think would be for your good." She looked at him a few moments, and then summoning all her resolution -- her breast heaving with the effort -- she dashed them into the fire.

The father smiled approvingly and said: "Let them lie there, and say no more about them now. You will hear about them some other time."

Some days after he brought her a box full of far more beautiful beads and toys, and said to her: "These, my child, are all yours because you believed me when I told you to cast the other beads into the fire. But, my child, remember as long as you live what faith is. I did this to lead you to trust your Heavenly Father. You threw your beads away when I bade you, because you had faith in my goodness and love. Put the same confidence in God. Many a time in life He will require you to give up and to avoid what you can not see the reason of; but if you trust the Heavenly Father as you have trusted me, you will find it best. Whether you understand or not, believe God's Word, and have faith in his goodness and love."

Now all you children who hear or read this beautiful story, have a kind Heavenly Father and a blessed Savior. "God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." How our Heavenly Father must have loved us! How patient and loving and good Jesus must have been to leave his beautiful home in heaven, and come to earth and die for us! Can you not believe in the goodness and love of such a God and Savior, and put your faith in him just as the little girl trusted her loving father about the beads, only very much more so? God is so much more loving and good than any earthly father can be, that we ought to love him and believe in him. When he offers to forgive us our sins and save us from death, let us believe and trust him with all our hearts.

Perhaps not long ago sickness came to your home, to yourself or your brother or sister, or to father or mother. For some time you did not send for a physician. You neglected the sickness for days, or gave some little remedies yourselves -- pills or poultices or hot applications. But the loved one kept continually getting worse until, in alarm, you sent for a physician and told him what you had done, and you threw away your own medicines and put your case in the doctor's hands for a cure. That was faith in the doctor.

Dear boys and girls, our souls are all sick with the fearful malady of sin. The mistake we are all inclined to make is that we try to doctor ourselves. We take a little pill of shame over our bad behavior, and vainly think that will answer; but we soon learn that shame can not save us. At another time we apply the poultice of a good resolution, and vainly imagine for a time that we feel better; but we soon find that the old sin breaks out as bad as ever. Then we try the plaster of a written pledge to do better, or we put on the hot application of a very solemn confession and promise, and then, in spite of the resolutions and confessions and promises -- we sin worse than ever before. If we keep on in this way our souls will certainly be lost forever, for "The wages of sin is death."

But here stands Jesus the loving Physician of souls, who died "that we might not perish" (John 3:16). He says: "Come unto me" (Matt. 11:28). "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). Now if we treat Jesus as you treated the doctor, and call upon him in the prayer of faith: "O Lord Jesus, Savior of sinners, heal my soul, for I am sick; have mercy on me and forgive my many sins," he will not disappoint us. The blessed Savior will say to your heart: "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace" Luke 7:48, 50).

Suppose you had fallen into a river, with dark, deep, swift and turbulent waters. You have gone down and have come up again, and are almost drowned. A strong man runs to the bank and calls to you and throws you a rope. How quickly you would seize it in the faith that he would pull you out and save your life. Well, that is just like Jesus. We are perishing in the "deep waters of sin." All other hopes and helps are utterly worthless. But Jesus rushes to the rescue, and cries: "Look unto me and be ye saved" (Is. 45:22). Just as in faith you would seize the rope if drowning, so look in faith to Jesus: call upon him with all the earnestness of your heart; pray to him, asking him to pardon and cleanse your soul, and believing that he will do it. He will not be untrue to his promise. He will pull you out of your guilt and sin to the rock of eternal safety.

Now you will notice about such a faith that:

1. It is natural and very easy for a child. The exercise of faith is not something very difficult and unnatural, which only mature people of many years can perform. Very little children exhibit the most wonderful faith that is ever seen in this world. Nothing seems to frighten them or give them any concern if they are in their mother's arms. The roar of the waves or waterfall, the rushing, puffing locomotive, the approach of fierce animals, the crash of the thunder only makes the babe nestle a little closer to the mother's bosom, as if there was absolute safety. Faith in a superior being is natural; for it smiles from the infant's cradle, and lives on through all the rudest storms of life. We can believe in the care and saving love of Jesus, if we will. Even young children can do that.

2. I call you to notice that each of us who would be saved must have a faith of his own. It will not do for one of you boys or girls to think that you can get to heaven on the religion of your father, or the faith and prayers of your mother. In Gideon's camp every soldier had his own pitcher; among Solomon's men of valor every one wore his own sword; the five wise virgins had every one oil in their vessel with their lamp, and only those entered with the bridegroom. You might as well think to have your hunger appeased by the food which your father eats, or your thirst quenched by the water which our mother drinks as to expect to be saved by their religion and their faith in God. No, you children must all have your own personal faith in Jesus. That unites your life to him and brings his salvation into your heart.

Take this child's prayer upon your lips, and offer it with all your heart, and God will hear and answer you: "O God, be merciful to me for Jesus' sake. I have often sinned by disobedience, and unkind acts, and wicked words. I have not loved thy Word, and I have not loved thee, O Heavenly Father, as I should, and I have not loved thy dear Son who suffered for my sins as I ought. O Lord, blot out all my sins and give me a new heart, and help me to love thee and serve thee, for Jesus' sake. Amen!"

QUESTIONS

1. What is the favorite verse in the Bible?
2. What is the second condition of salvation?
3. What other two words explain faith?
4. How did Charles exercise faith when the house was on fire?
5. How did the lady exercise faith in her husband?
6. How did he exercise faith in God during the ocean storm?
7. How did the little girl show faith in her father?
8. Can we put a similar faith in the love and goodness of God?
9. How do you show faith in a doctor?
10. How do we show similar faith in Jesus?
11. How does one drowning in a river show faith?

12. Is faith natural to young children?
13. Must each child believe for himself?

Sing: "Only Trust Him." Also "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 7

THE THIRD CONDITION OF SALVATION -- SURRENDER OF SELF TO GOD'S SERVICE

I will now tell the children about one more condition which must be complied with if they wish to be fully saved. We will call it surrender of self for service. Probably Moses was the greatest man that ever walked the earth and lived the nearest to God. He once said to Israel: "SERVE the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul. . . Him shalt thou serve and to him shalt thou cleave" (Deut. 10:12, 20). Again he said: "Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall SERVE him, and cleave unto him." In the same spirit Joshua said: "Take diligent heed . . . to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul " (Dent. 22:5). Again he said: "Choose ye this day whom ye will SERVE" (Deut. 24:15). Samuel said: "Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart" (1 Sam. 12:24). David said: "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" (1 Chron. 29:5).

All these passages show that God expects us to enter his service, if we choose to be his saved children.

Abraham devoted himself to serve the Lord when he heard God's call to leave his country and kindred, and the service of the idol gods of his fathers, and go out into a strange country wherever God might send him, there to live for God and to serve only Him. Abraham obeyed and went, and that submissive, willing devotion of himself to God was Abraham's service.

Sometimes, before Christ came to the world, people would want to do something for the service of God, and they brought a lamb or a heifer, or an ox to the temple, and gave them to the priests for their support. Thus they helped to keep up the temple service. They sometimes brought their rings and jewels and precious stones to help build or enrich the tabernacle or temples. Sometimes they had nothing to give but their labor. They then came and worked on the buildings that were being erected for the worship of God. In this way people were said to consecrate lambs and oxen and silver and precious stones and their time and toil to the Lord.

After Christ came, people began to know that God wanted them to bring not merely a sheep or an ox to the Lord's temple, but he wanted them to bring their own selves to the Lord himself So St. Paul wrote to the Romans: "I beseech you therefore by the mercies of the Lord that ye present your bodies [selves] to thee Lord, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

I want now to relate to you some stories which will make plain what it is to devote one's self to God's service.

A woman died in this town a few days ago, leaving four children, the oldest twelve years old, and the youngest, a baby boy, two years old. The woman's husband was a low drunkard who cared nothing about his wife and children. He took the money his poor sick wife had earned by washing, and had saved to buy medicine for herself, and spent it for drink. When she knew she was dying, the poor mother left her little baby boy to the care of his sister. The dear young girl accepted the precious trust. After the mother was buried. some kind-hearted people offered to take the oldest child and bring her up as their own. Others offered a home to the baby brother. But to every such offer the brave little girl returned one and the same answer: "Nobody shall ever take my baby brother from me; whoever gets one of us must take both of us; we shall not be separated." At last a lady was found in a far-distant state who takes both. And yesterday that noble young girl went off alone with the baby, to go to the far-distant home a thousand miles from here. What a wonderful example of devotion! The dear girl, with a depth of sister love unmeasured, has given her very life to the care of her little

brother. Now if she has done all that for Jesus' sake, and out of love to Him, it will show that she is not only devoted to her brother but to Jesus also.

Dr. Hillis, of Chicago, tells us of a poor apple woman whose funeral the famous Dr. George MacDonald attended when he was working among the poor in London. "Her history makes the story of kings and queens contemptible. Events had appointed her to poverty, hunger, cold, and two rooms in a tenement. But there were three orphan boys sleeping in an ash box, whose lot was harder than hers. She dedicated her heart and life to the little waifs for Jesus' sake. During forty-two years she mothered and reared some twenty orphans; gave them home, and bed, and food; taught them all she knew; helped some to obtain a scant knowledge of the trades; helped others off to Canada and America. She had misshapen features, but an exquisite smile was on her dead face, for she had a beautiful soul. Poverty disfigured her garret and want made it wretched; nevertheless God's beautiful angels hovered over it. Like a broken vase the perfume of her being will sweeten literature and society a thousand years after we are gone." Now every child can understand what her consecration was. She first gave herself to Jesus. And then, because Jesus loved poor starving little orphans, she loved them, too, and sold apples and saved her pennies, and spent them, not on herself, but to buy food for the poor, hungry, starving boys and girls around her for whom Jesus died.

Another beautiful story will show what a life devoted to serving Jesus means. A God-fearing Scotch couple had a son, their only child living. From early childhood they devoted him to the Lord, seeking to impress his heart with the love of Jesus. To their great delight he yielded in early youth to the call of the Gospel, and at length he offered himself for mission work among the natives of the west coast of Africa. While studying for this purpose his parents labored hard and denied themselves many comforts in order to support him at college, and when he left for the foreign field among savage heathen, his old mother spun harder than ever, so that by the sale of her thread she might help her son in this noble work for Jesus.

By and by her husband was taken home to the Father's house above, and though she well knew where he had gone she shed many tears. But a few weeks passed when another heavy grief had to be endured. Tidings came that her son had been drowned when he was crossing an African river while going to one of his preaching stations. Soon, however, she dried her weeping eyes, and with humble cheerfulness remarked: "My son is nearer to me now in heaven than he was in Africa." For a considerable period she had managed to send him \$50 a year to aid him in his work, and when he died she did not cease her labor for Jesus. "Now my son is gone," said the noble old woman, "my \$50 shall go to some other servant of Jesus." What a beautiful example of consecration! The woman had given herself to Jesus, and then gave her boy to be a missionary, and then gave her earnings -- \$50 a year. And when both her husband and son had been taken home to God, she still toiled and saved for Jesus' dear sake, and for the salvation of those for whom He died.

All these stories I have related about the consecration of people who were humble and poor. Many years ago a lad of sixteen left home to seek his fortune. As he trudged along toward New York he met an old neighbor, the captain of a canal boat, and the following conversation took place, which changed the current of the boy's life: "Well, William, where are you going?" "I don't know," he answered; "father is too poor to keep me at home any longer, and says I must now make a living for myself." "There is no trouble about that," said the captain. "Be sure that you start right, and you will get along finely." William told his friend that the only trade he knew anything about was soap and candle making, at which he had helped his father at home. "Well," said the old man, "let me pray with you once more and give you a little advice, and then I will let you go." They both kneeled down upon the towpath; the dear old man prayed earnestly for William, and then gave this advice: "Some one will soon be the leading soap-maker in New York. It may as well be you as anybody. I hope it may. Be a good man; give your heart to Christ; give the Lord all that belongs to him of every dollar you earn; make an honest soap; give a full pound, and I am certain you will yet be a prosperous and rich man."

When the boy arrived in the city he found it hard to get work. Lonesome and far from home, he remembered his mother's words, and the prayer and charge of the canal-boat captain. He gave his heart to God, and thus "sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and then he joined the church. The first dollar he earned brought up the question of the Lord's part. In the Bible he found that the Jew gave one-tenth, and he gave ten cents of his first dollar, and of every dollar, as sacred to the Lord.

He was industrious, and soon became partner, and then sole proprietor, and instructed his book-keeper to open an account with the Lord, and carry one-tenth of all his income to that account. He prospered; his business grew; his family was

blessed; his soap sold, and he grew rich -- faster than he had ever hoped. He then gave the Lord two-tenths, and prospered more than ever. Then he gave three-tenths, then four-tenths, then five-tenths. He educated his family, settled all his plans for life, and then gave all his income to God, and prospered more than ever." This is the story of William Colgate, who founded Colgate University, gave millions of dollars to the Lord's cause, and left a name that will never die. I never see a piece of Colgate soap but I think of that poor boy praying on the tow-path of the canal, and afterward in his lonely room in the city giving his heart to God, and consecrating his life to the Master's service. What a consecrated and holy life he lived, and how endless will be his influence for good! He lived to serve Christ and bless others for Jesus' sake. That is serving Jesus.

The great Earl of Shaftsbury was another man who served Jesus. When a little child he was cruelly neglected by his parents and deserted to the care of servants. But during the first seven years of his life one of the servants was a kind-hearted woman, and a devout Christian. She taught the child to love Jesus, and developed in him a desire to serve his Savior by being helpful to his fellow creatures. She taught him a prayer which the great Earl never forgot to repeat daily throughout his long and busy life. He was accustomed to say that that prayer had been of much more value to him than all the religious teaching of later years. When this good woman died she left him her little watch, and to his dying day the Earl would wear no other, saying: "It was left to me by the best friend Lever had." When this nobleman became a man, the blessedness of an unselfish life entranced him. He entered Parliament at twenty-five years of age, and devoted his life to the service of the poor, oppressed, abandoned and degraded. He was filled with Christ-like pity for the toiling, cruelly-treated masses, -- children walking twenty-five miles a day in attending the machinery in the factories, and women condemned to fifteen hours of slavish toil daily with no hope for the future. He exposed himself to obloquy and hatred to secure laws for their protection. He organized ragged schools, wept over the hunger and want of the pupils, then fed them from his own house. They were dying of cold and hunger and the imperial waste of London, and he blessed them with his personal help. He organized and cared for the boot-blacks who were called "Shaftsbury's Brigades." All the thieves and fallen and friendless in London loved him and stood ready to protect him. His plans were jeered at as "hobbies" by the selfish aristocrats. Sensitive to ridicule, he once wrote in his diary: "The Lord can not keel) people from calling me a fool; but he can keep me from being a fool." Shaftsbury was one of the saints of the Most High -- a man of faith and prayer and battles. Wherever there was a wrong to be righted, or suffering to be relieved, he was at the front -- a brave, consecrated, Christ-like soul. When he died, Farrar wrote: "For departed kings there are appointed honors, and the wealthy have their gorgeous obsequies. It was Shaftsbury's noble fortune to clothe a nation with spontaneous mourning, and to go down .to the grave followed by the benedictions of the poor. Probably Westminster Abbey never presented an aspect so dear to the angels, and the King of angels, as when the representatives of the sick, the suffering and the destitute, -- the alleviators of every kind of misery, were gathered under its high embowed roof to witness the funeral in Lord Shaftsbury's honor."

We have now seen what serving Jesus means. But some one will ask:

II. Why must one be thus devoted to God in order to be saved? The answer is very plain and simple. When a boy is saved, he is not only saved from something, but he is also saved to something and for something. He is saved from a life of sin and its consequences to a life of holiness. He is saved from the service of Satan to the service of Jesus for the good of humanity. A king could not forgive and pardon a rebel, who was still in rebellion, and determined to continue fighting against his government and throne. .

Now our God is king of the universe, and he can not pardon and save us while we are still hating him and his cause and industriously serving Satan by wicked lives. So every boy or girl or man or woman who wishes to be saved must offer himself to the service of God.

III. You will notice that God has a right to you. He first created you, and gave you all your faculties and powers, everything that makes you what you are. He made you for his glory, and your own highest good; that gives him a right to your service.

But further; he has preserved your life from a thousand ills, and ten thousand perils, given you every breath you ever breathed, and every mouthful you ever ate, and your parents and home and every blessing you ever enjoyed. That gives him a second claim to your service. And then he loved you enough to die for you that he might save your poor soul from sin and death. So you see God has three claims upon you for love and obedience and service. And it becomes utterly

impossible for him to save your soul if you continue to wickedly disregard these claims and refuse to devote your lives to his service.

IV. You will see that to be saved and become genuine Christians you must surrender your all. In ancient history we are told that the people of Collatia surrendered to the authority and protection of Rome. The question was asked them: "Do you deliver up yourselves, the Collatin people, your city, your fields, your water, your bonds, your temples, your homes, all things that are yours into the hands of the people of Rome?" And on their replying, "We deliver up all," they were received. This is a beautiful illustration of the consecration every child should make who would be saved. If you feel the wickedness of your sin, and your guilt and danger; if your soul is burdened, and you want rest, and the loving smile of Jesus, then by repentance turn away from sin, and go in faith to the Savior, and say from the heart:--

"Lord, I make a full surrender,
Every power and thought be thine;
Thine entirely, through eternal ages thine."

Let Frances Ridley's Havergal's hymn be your prayer:

"Take my life and let it be,
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my hands, and let them move,
At the impulse of thy love.

"Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for thee;
Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.

"Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

"Take my will and make it thine,
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is thine own,
It shall be thy royal throne.

"Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for thee."

QUESTIONS

1. What is the third condition of salvation?
2. What is devoting one's self to God's service?
3. What did people bring God in olden times?
4. What does God want now?
5. What kind of a consecration did the girl make?
6. What did the apple-woman in London do?
7. What did the Scotch couple give to God?
8. What did William Colgate do?

9. And the Earl of Shaftsbury?
10. Why must one be thus devoted to God?
11. Why has God a right to us?
12. Must you give everything to God's service?

Sing: "Come, Sinners, Come." Also, "Take My Life and Let It Be."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 8

COMING TO CHRIST

The children have now been told why God wants them to come to him and be saved; They -- no, you -- have also been shown the way, how to come to Christ. The last three chapters have made it plain to you that you must (1) Repent of sin; (2) Take Jesus by faith as your Savior; (3) Surrender yourself to his service.

In this chapter God lovingly invites you to come. The Spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" Rev. 22:17). The Holy Spirit of God, and the church on earth and in heaven invite you to come to Jesus and be saved. They want you to come now, today, this very hour, and have your sins pardoned, and your heart renewed. "Behold now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). "Today if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3:7-8). Jesus wants every boy and girl this very day to forsake every evil way and come to him and be saved. Why should you not love and trust such a Savior? Think what he has done for you and me! Jesus left all the glory of an eternal heaven, and the companionship of the Father and the holy angels, and came down to this world to be a child of suffering and want, to be persecuted and hated and despised, and at last to be arrested, and whipped till his back was gashed and bleeding. They pressed a crown of thorns down upon his beautiful head, and struck him and spit in his face, and mocked him, and at last led him out of the city and nailed him to a cross, and hung him up to die in awful agony. Jesus endured it all for you and me, that he might redeem us from sin and save our poor souls. After all that shall we not love him? Shall we not cease to grieve him by our wicked sins?

One night a father and his little son were being pulled out of a deep coal mine, and, when near the top, the rope began slowly to untwist, and one after another of the strands broke. The father saw that if they both staid in the bucket they would be killed, and so he quickly turned to his little son, and hurriedly said: "I am not afraid to die, for I have Jesus and he will not let me be lost. To save you I will jump out. I may not be killed; but if I am Jesus will take me to heaven; but you, I fear, would be lost, for you have not given your heart to Jesus. Jesus has given himself a ransom to save me from a more dreadful pit than this. Trust in Jesus and he will save you, too. Meet me in heaven." With these words upon his lips he sprang out of the bucket and was dashed in pieces. His boy was soon safely landed above. How do you think he felt? Could he soon forget and cease to love a father who had died for him? And if he had been ashamed of that father, and had ceased to love him and be grateful, would you not all say that he was a very wicked and mean boy? That is the way we all ought to feel if we do not love and trust and obey Jesus. A boy was listening to a minister as he told what Jesus had suffered for us that he might save us from sin and death, and he said to the minister: "O I felt I was so mean not to love Jesus." We may all say so, too, of our own selves, if we have no grateful love for the Son of God. Can you not all say from the heart:

"'Twas for me that Jesus bled
On the cruel tree;
There he bowed his thorn-crowned head:
Oh, what agony!

"'Twas my sins that nailed him there,
Mine that shed his blood,
Mine that pierced the bleeding side
Of the Son of God."

Rev. E. P. Hammond, the children's evangelist, tells of a little girl who had lived on a mountain in Switzerland, near a deep chasm, across which was a narrow bridge formed by a rock that had fallen from the high mountain above and lodged across the chasm. Her mother had often told her about the Savior who pitied us and poured out his life's blood that he might wash away the black stains of sin on our souls, and she had given her heart to Jesus. But her father was not a Christian. He never gathered his loved ones around the family altar. He was kind to provide for the good of his children in this world, but he seemed to care nothing about their laying up "treasures in heaven." One day when about to cross over the deep ravine by means of the rock, the mother saw that it was just ready to fall. The frost had loosened it. She told her little girl that if she ever crossed it again it would fall, and she would be dashed in pieces. The next day the father told his child that he was going over to the other side across the bridge. She said to him that it was not safe, but he only laughed at her. He said he had been across it before she was born, and that he was not afraid. When the dear child saw that he was determined to go, she asked if she could not go with him. While they were walking along together, she looked up full in her father's face, and said: "Father, if I should die will you promise to love Jesus, and meet me in heaven?" "Pshaw!" said he, "what put such a wild thought into your head You are not going to die, I hope. You are only a wee thing, and will live many years." "Yes, but if I should die, will you promise to love Jesus just as I do, and meet me in heaven?" "But you are not going to die. Don't speak of it," he said. "But if I should die, do promise, father, you will be a good Christian and come up and live with Jesus and me in heaven." "Yes, yes," he said at last. When they came near the crossing place she said: "Father, please stand here a minute." She knew that her father was not prepared to die. She loved him dearly, and was willing to run the risk of her dying for him. Strange as it may seem, she walked quickly over the loosened rock, and down it went with the little girl! She fell and was crushed to death in the bottom of the deep chasm. The trembling parent crept to the edge, and with eyes dim with tears, gazed wildly upon the wreck. Then he thought of all his little child had told him about how Jesus had died to save us. He thought he never loved his child so much. But he began to see that he had far more reason to love Jesus who had suffered much more to save him from the "bottomless pit." And then he thought of the promise he so carelessly made to his child. What could he do but kneel down and cry to God for mercy on him? How precious now to the father's heart was the memory of the dear little daughter who deliberately accepted death that she might save her father's life, and save his soul forever. O, how wicked he would have been if he had not felt a tender, grateful love for such a child. But we all have a thousand times more reason to praise and adore Jesus with all the tender love of grateful and obedient hearts. And it is a thousand times more wicked not to love and trust the blessed Son of God, who left heaven and came down to die for us, that a way might be made whereby we could be saved. The way is all made. We are only asked to repent of sin and abandon it as a hateful, deadly, destructive thing, accept Jesus in faith as our Savior, and consecrate our future lives to his service. It is only three steps -- repentance, faith and consecration -- from the wickedest sinner to the loving arms of a sin-pardoning God. And this simple, easy, honorable way of salvation was made not merely for some other people, but for you, dear child, for you. as truly as if you were the only sinner in all the world. You may sing from your heart:

"Jesus from his throne on high,
Came into this world to die;
That I might from sin be free,
Bled and died upon the tree.

"I can see him even now
With his pierced thorn-crowned brow,
Agonizing on the tree;
An! what love! and all for me!

"Now I feel this heart of stone
Drawn to love God's only Son,
Lifted up on Calvary,
Suffering shame and death for me!

"Jesus! take this heart of mine,
Make it pure and wholly thine,
Thou hast bled and died for me:
I will henceforth live for thee."

I can not wait longer, Jesus calls you today. and I want you before you close this chapter to bow your head and your heart and accept Jesus. I have seen hundreds, yea thousands, of children and older people come to Christ, and you can do it as well as they could. A year ago last February I was holding a meeting in the city of Calumet, Mich. Nearly all the children and young people in Dr. Hunter's Sabbath-school gave themselves to Christ. He received ninety-three into the church. Brother Morris' church received fifty more. Moore than a year afterward Dr. Hunter told me that all but three had stood as firm as a tree in their allegiance to Christ. Last February I labored in Sparta, Wis. One hundred and fourteen joined Dr. William Crawford's church, besides many joined other churches. Dr. Crawford's entire Sabbath-school seemed to crowd into the kingdom, and when they stood up -- a hundred of them at one time to join the church -- what rejoicing there was on earth and in heaven. And just three weeks afterward little Marguerite Streeter, of most remarkable and attractive loveliness, passed away to her eternal home. A paper has been sent me containing Dr. Crawford's remarks at the funeral: "In the case of the dear child who has now been taken away, there are many consolations. She was a pretty child, as she appeared with her bright, happy face, and her soft, long ringlets -- a child to attract notice, and win affection and make friends. It was on the first Sabbath of this month that Ethel became a member of this church and testified to her faith in Christ by receiving the sacrament of baptism and the Lord's Supper. It was with gladness that she took her place among open Christians, Her decision seems to have been made February 21st, that memorable Sabbath on which Brother Hills addressed the Sunday-school, and asked the members to accept of Jesus as their Savior, amid consecrate themselves to his service. In her Bible is a blank form which she had found somewhere with lines for her name and address; and she filled it out thus: 'Ethel Streeter, Sparta, Wis., learned to give her heart to God February 21, 1897.' She had learned many other lessons in the school, but that was the best lesson of all."

Little did I think when I stood before that large Sabbath-school and pleaded with the children to give themselves to Jesus that that beautiful girl, ten years old, then in the fullness of health, would so soon pass over into her eternal home where "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them nor any heat; for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life; and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." Below I give you what was on the card which dear Ethel signed, along with hundreds of others. I want you to offer yourself to God in this prayer, and then sign it, too.

"Dear Jesus, I thank thee that thou dost invite me to come to thee for pardon. Help me to come now. I am a poor lost sinner, but thou hast died to save guilty children like me. My heart is wicked, but thou hast said, 'A new heart will I give thee.' O forgive me all my sins, and help me to repent of them and forsake them. Help me now to believe in Jesus, and trust him as my Savior. Help me now to give myself away to be thine forever. I give my body to thee to be kept free from evil habits; my lips to talk for thee; my hands to toil for thee; my feet to walk in paths of righteousness. I give my mind to thee to think for thee, my heart to love thee; my will to choose thee, and to obey thee, and all my time and influence and powers to be used in thy service, Accept me now, according to thy promise, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

CARD

I do dedicate my all to Jesus. Having been led by the Holy Spirit to see myself a sinner in need of a Savior, I repent of sin, accept Jesus as my Savior, and now gladly enter into his service.

As you have now given yourself to Jesus to be his forever. remember that he has promised that he will in no wise case you out (John 6:37). Now just believe that Jesus keeps his promise with you, and rejoice in him as your Savior, and that you are his redeemed and pardoned child. Let this be your glad song and prayer:

"I'LL LIVE FOR HIM."

"My life, my love, I give to thee,
Thou Lamb of God who died for me;
Oh may I ever faithful be,
My Savior and my God.

CHORUS

"I'll live for him who died for me,

How happy then my life shall be.
I'll live for him who died for me,
My Savior and my God!

2

"I now believe thou dost receive
For thou hast died that I might live.
And now henceforth I'll trust in thee
My Savior and my God.

3

Oh, thou who died on Calvary,
To save my soul and make it free,
I consecrate my life to thee,
My Saviour and my God!

Song: "I'll Live for Him," Also, "What Hast thou Done for Me?"

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 9

TEN EVIDENCES OF CONVERSION

Every boy or girl who begins a Christian life, or sincerely tries to do it, will want to know whether he has really found the Savior. Nobody can wish to be mistaken about a matter so important. A person traveling to a distant city, which he greatly desires to reach and make his future home, will desire to know that he is certainly on the right road. I often see poor and humble people get on the wrong train of cars, and they are carried out of the city and put off at the first station. They must make their way back as best they can, and start again. Such uncertainty is hard to bear, and in the concerns of the soul is very unsafe. I am trying to point boys and girls to the eternal city of God. It would be very wicked and cruel in me to purposely give you any wrong directions; and it would at last be a fatal thing for you to be mistaken in the matter. When Jesus was upon earth, he told the people that many would be mistaken. "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:21-23). May God spare all that hear or read these lines from such a fate!

In this chapter I propose to point out ten evidences of a converted heart. By these you can determine whether you are a forgiven child of God. If you find you are not, then plead with God to save you, until he sends the witness of the Spirit into your heart, that you are God's child.

1. I will mention A FULL SURRENDER OF THE WILL to GOD. Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." That means that God's will is to be done by us in our hearts, -- that is that we obey God. It means that our wills are to be so surrendered to God that we shall not knowingly choose to displease or disobey him. When we find out what our Father's wish is concerning us, our will should at once respond, "Blessed Father, I will obey; thy will be done." Now, this is not the state of a sinner's heart. He wishes always to do as he likes and have his own way without any regard to the will of God. But the child who has really accepted Jesus as his Savior can say with him, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. 10:7). You will be quick to hear and to obey his holy command and will say with Samuel, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth" (I Sam. 3:9).

2. The removal of the burden of sin gradually or suddenly. When the blessed Savior was on earth, he often said to poor sinners who sought his help, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Luke 5:20). O what joy those words must have brought to the troubled heart! Now we need to have the same words spoken to us, but Jesus has gone to heaven and does not speak to us with the audible voice any more. But he says, "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Somehow, when a boy gives himself away to Jesus and consecrates himself to the Lord, the blessed Holy Spirit will speak to his heart and cause him to know that God has accepted him and forgiven all his sins. He will find a blessed peace in his soul, a sweet rest of heart, because God is reconciled and is smiling upon him. Such was my experience when, as a little boy, I gave myself to Jesus.

3. There will be in the heart a love for Christians and for Jesus. You will find that, after you have accepted him, a love will spring up in your heart for your Savior. Because he has loved you and forgiven you and accepted you, you will love him more tenderly than ever before. And because you love him, you will also love all his friends, -- everybody else that loves him. John, the beloved disciple, wrote: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." His love went out toward anybody that was converted, of any city or nation or race or color. All such were friends of his Savior, and for that reason he loved them. It will be just so with converted boys and girls. They will have a kindly interest in and a kindling affection for all who love their Lord. You will always be glad to hear that some other boy or girl has learned to love Jesus, and at once you will have a friendly feeling for them as your brother or sister in Christ

Jesus.

4. You will have a new relish for the Word of God. The Psalmist said, "I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy Word" (Ps. 119:16). If you were absent from home in a far-away foreign country, and should there receive a letter from your father, how eagerly you would open it and read it! Well, the Bible is a book of letters from your Heavenly Father to your heart. You will love the book for your Father's sake. Your heart will rejoice in all his promises. The story of his judgments will be "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb" (Ps. 19:10). You will drink in the wisdom of his counsel and delight in his commandments, because they are pure, enlightening the eyes" (Ps. 19:8). You will wish to know the story of his dealings with others and what are his gracious plans and wishes concerning you.

5. You will have pleasure in prayer. Prayer is talking with God. You always like to talk with those whom you love; and when you begin to really love your Heavenly Father and Jesus, your Savior, you will rejoice in the privilege of talking to him. The Psalmist said, "Seven times a day do I praise thee" (Ps. 119:164). It was certainly not too many times a day to thank and praise God for all his mercy and goodness and love. When we remember that Jesus died for us and saves us, and that God constantly takes care of us and gives us every blessing, and is willing to hear about all our sorrows and failures and longings and wants, we surely should delight to talk with our blessed God in prayer.

6.. Sin and sinful thoughts will cause pain. The Psalmist said, "Ye that love the Lord hate evil" (Ps. 97:10). It was sin that made it necessary for Jesus to come down from his throne in heaven to die for us. Sin still so hurts and grieves his heart that when we commit willful sin, it is like "crucifying the Son of God afresh." Who that loves Jesus can bear to do that? Who will willingly, purposely grieve any friend whom he sincerely loves? Much less should we wound the heart of one so kind and good and holy as God. A true child of God will more and more hate sin because it grieves his Heavenly Father and destroys those for whom he died. He will seem to hear the voice of God ringing in his ears: "O do not this abominable thing that I hate" (Jer. 44:4).

7. A true Christian will work for the salvation of others. The beloved apostle John tells us that, when Andrew found Jesus, the first thing he did was to hunt up Peter and tell him: "We have found the Christ, and he brought him to Jesus" (John 1:40-42). How natural it was! Of course he loved his brother Peter, and when he himself had found anything so precious as salvation, he would naturally want some one else to have the great blessing. Who should that person be, if not his own brother? So the boy or girl who really finds Jesus will at once think of some brother or sister or friend to whom he will wish to impart the glad news and whom he will try to bring to Jesus.

8. A true Christian will obey all the commandments of God. The night before he died, Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," as if that was an invariable and infallible test of love. And is it not true? How easy and natural, and how delightful it is to try to please those whom we love! And when that being is our King and our God, nothing is more appropriate or natural in a forgiven heart than the wish to obey. Any parent is deeply grieved by the disobedience of a child, and the child knows it. But God is our Heavenly Father, and disobedience grieves him, and we know it. If we sincerely love him, we will not lightly disobey.

9.If Christ comes into our hearts, we will feel humble in his sight. The great apostle Paul said that he dwelt among the Ephesians, "serving the Lord with all humility of mind" (Acts 20:19). St. Paul was the greatest man on earth, yet he had a humble mind, simply because he had Jesus in his heart. The Savior himself, though he made all the shining worlds and suns that glitter in the nightly sky and was enthroned above all angels and powers of the heavenly world, yet "he humbled himself" to become a babe in a manger and a toiling carpenter and a man of sorrows for our sakes, and at last suffered himself to be nailed upon the cross (Phil. 2:5-8). Whoever is really touched with the Christ-life will crucify that haughty pride that wounds and grieves others, and will begin to be humble and meek and lowly in heart (Mat. 11:29).

10. The converted boy or girl will have a growing desire to be like Christ. We all like to imitate those whom we admire and love. The little boy imitates his big brother or his father. The girl imitates her mother or schoolteacher or some lady whom she greatly admires. This is a natural prompting of the mind. Now, when the boy or girl comes to Christ for salvation and gets in touch with his Savior, he will naturally wish to imitate Jesus. That will be the law of his life. And the more we think about it, the more we will discover that Jesus is holy, and to be like him we must be holy, too. And so the struggle and the longing and the hunger for holiness will begin, and we shall feel with Paul that "We should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

I have given you now ten evidences of conversion by which you may test your lives. A little girl living in Montreal wrote to a minister the following letter:

"DEAR MR. H.: You asked me to tell you how I felt after I became a Christian. I have many proofs that I love Jesus. In the first place, something tells me that Christ has washed all my sins away, and I feel so happy! But I don't think that I am a Christian merely because I am happy, for I know that I am to work for Christ and not expect to live for myself; that I must be self-denying, for Christ has said, 'He that loveth me, let him take up his cross and follow me.' Now that I have become a Christian, I have always had a desire that all my little friends should love the Savior. I always try to find out those who do not love Jesus and direct them to the Lamb of God. I am now thinking of joining the Church, and hope, not only to be a member of Christ's Church on earth, but in heaven. I would ask you to remember

"Your little friend,

"LILY."

Another child wrote:

"DEAR FRIEND: I went to your first children's meeting and came home and asked Jesus for a new heart. I think now, I have found Jesus. I wish you knew how happy I feel. I hope that a good many children will find the Savior who died on the cross to save us sinners. It is real easy to find the Savior. When I am alone sometimes, I will pray to the dear Savior. I pray night and morning, and I like to pray to my dear Savior. How can anybody help loving him who was so kind to us? What a happy thing it is to be one of Christ's children! I hope I shall always lead a Christian life. Good-bye. From MARGIE."

You can see from these letters just such evidence as I have pointed out, that the girls had given themselves to Christ.. I felt all these when a child myself. I felt and knew that my sins were forgiven. I loved my Bible and prayer and Christians, and I tried to lead others to Jesus, and I hated sin and tried to follow Jesus in a life of holiness. By such evidence you can know that you are forgiven and have become a renewed child of. God.

QUESTIONS

1. Are there ways by which we may know we are converted?
2. Is it dangerous to be mistaken about it?
3. Is a true Christian's will surrendered to God?
4. Does Christ take away the burden of sin?
5. Does the convert have a new love for Jesus and others?
6. Does he pray more than before?
7. Does sin cause pain? Does he hate it?
8. Will a convert seek the salvation of others?
9. Does a true convert neglect God's commands?
10. Is a true convert as proud as ever?
11. Will he strive to be like Jesus?
12. Have you these evidences that you are converted?

Sing, "There is sunshine in my soul today;" also, "Love found me."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 10

PRAYER

I now assume that my young readers and their parents or teachers have followed me through the previous chapters, and have found for themselves the Lamb of God. I trust you now know that you are Christians, the sons and daughters of God by a living faith in Jesus Christ. The leading duty of your soul is piety -- love for God. This duty is taught in the words of Jesus: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart" (Mat. 22:37). Foremost among all the obligations of piety is PRAYER -- the duty of worshipping God. Jesus taught his disciples that "men ought always to pray" (Luke 18:1). "When thou prayest, enter thy closet" (Mat. 6:6). "And pray for them that despitefully use you" (Mat. 5:44). "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any" (Mark 11:25). Jesus was the man of prayer of the ages. He said a great deal about prayer, and told us how to pray, and what to pray for. He gave us plainly to understand that the Christian life was a life of prayer. For this reason I want to talk to the boys and girls in this chapter about PRAYER.

I. I want you to think of prayer not only as a sweet privilege, but also as a necessary duty. God has commanded us to pray as truly as he has commanded us to obey our parents or to keep the Sabbath. He can not bless us with spiritual blessings unless we pray.

A kind and loving father was about to leave home for a foreign land. He was to be absent all winter. On the evening before he started he said to his four children: "I want you each to write down on a slip of paper your wishes as to what I shall bring you. Ask for just what you want and all you want." Three of them did as he bade them. They wrote down the names of the things they wanted, and gave the lists to him. But the fourth one said, "I am not going to ask for anything. I will leave papa, who loves me, to choose for me." The others said to her, "Papa bade us ask; and if we do not ask, it will look as if we did not believe him, and will be clearly disobeying him." But she would not be persuaded. And so their father carried away with him only three slips of paper as he went away on his long absence from home. When at last he came back and the presents were all displayed before the eager children, it was found that all their petitions had been more than fulfilled, and their joy knew no bounds. But there was one for whom there was not a single gift, -an abundance for others, but nothing for her. It seemed very hard. There was no joy for her, but only bitter, passionate tears.

Her father took her aside and told her that it was because she did not ask when he had bidden her to do so, that she received nothing. And then with great tenderness he explained to her that he had dealt with her in this manner, not to punish her for refusing to ask of him what she desired, but to impress upon her mind that Jesus must be obeyed when he says, "Ask, and it shall be given you" (Luke 11:9).

Let us learn from this simple story that it is the duty even of a child Christian to pray.

II. Notice that there is a difference between secret closet prayer and public prayer in the prayer-meeting or in the Endeavor Society or the Epworth League. In secret prayer you are talking about private matters between you and God, and you use the words "I" and "my" and "me." "I pray thee, bless me." In public prayer you are supposed to be leading others in prayer and voicing the wants and needs of the whole company, and so you use the words "we" and "our" and "us." "We pray thee to bless us." In secret prayer we speak of personal sins and weaknesses and needs, of which it might not be proper to speak before the public; but in public each one is supposed to speak the petitions and longings of all hearts in common.

III. Notice the different elements in prayer. They are adoration, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, intercession. We will explain what these long words mean.

1. Adoration. When we pray, we must remember that we are poor, little, helpless sinners, coming into the presence of an infinite, holy and terrible God. How becoming, therefore, when we come into his presence, to adore and praise him with our lips and in our hearts. Daniel began his wonderful prayer by saying, "O Lord, the great and dreadful God" (Dan. 9:4). David came into God's presence, saying, "I will extol thee, my God, O King, and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty and of thy wondrous works. And I will declare thy greatness and shall sing of thy righteousness" (Ps. 145:1-7). All that is the spirit of adoration and homage and reverent praise which makes one's prayer pleasing to God.

2. After adoring God, the next most appropriate element in prayer is thanksgiving. All children know what that means. It is thanking God for his past mercies and blessings. How many they are! more than we can number or remember. This is the way David prayed: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies" (Ps. 103:1-4). Again he said: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night" (Ps. 92:1-2). (See also Ps. 30, 1-4.) This is thanksgiving in prayer. If we expect God to continue to bless us with his good gifts, let us gratefully thank him for gifts already received.

3. The next most proper element in prayer is confession. David said in prayer: "I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight" (Ps. 51:3-4). Daniel prayed: "We have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments" (Dan. 9:5). How often we have all done these things that were displeasing to God! And how can we come before him acceptably in prayer without confessing our faults in deep repentance?

4. The next proper element in prayer is supplication. After we have adored and thanked and confessed, we may supplicate, or ask for blessings upon ourselves, -- ask for pardon and mercy and grace. After confessing sin, David prayed: "Purge me, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:8-10). Daniel, after long confession, prayed: "O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy, fury be turned away" (Dan. 9:16). God is ready to hear reasonable requests from praising, confessing lips and grateful, penitent hearts.

"No, not despairingly,
Come I to Thee;
No, not distrustingly,
Bend I the knee;
Sin hath gone over me,
Yet is this still my plea,
Jesus hath died.

"Ah, mine iniquity
Crimson hath been;
Infinite, infinite
Sin upon sin;
Sin of not loving Thee,
Sin of not trusting Thee
Infinite sin.d, I confess to Thee,
Sadly my sin;
All I am tell I Thee,
All I have been;
Purge Thou my sin away
Wash Thou my soul this day;
Lord, make me clean."

-- Dr. H. Ronar

5. After adoring and thanking God for his goodness, confessing sin, and getting God's pardon, you are now ready to pray for others. That is intercession. Moses was making intercession when he fell on his face before God and prayed: "O, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Ex. 32:31-32). Samuel interceded for Israel when the people cried, "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord that we die not." And Samuel answered, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Sam. 12:19-23). It is the person who is pardoned and right with God that can thus pray for others.

We have now seen what are the five elements in prayer. It still remains to consider

IV. The spirit in which prayer should be offered.

1. To avoid the sin of hypocrisy, we should pray with sincerity and earnestness. A coming before the great God in a careless and indifferent manner or with words which we do not mean, requesting things that we do not desire, would be little less than insulting and mocking God. Some one has said: "As a painted fire is no fire, and a dead man is no man, so a cold prayer is no prayer. In a painted fire there is no heat, in a dead man there is no life -- so in a cold prayer there is no power, no devotion, no blessing. Cold prayers are as arrows without heads, as swords without edges, as birds without wings; they pierce not, they cut not, they fly not up to heaven." Let every boy or girl who prays to God say to the Infinite One what he really feels in language that he really means. Do not mock God. It is not the number, nor the length, nor the eloquence, nor the sweetness of our prayers, but their honesty that counts with God.

2. Pray with a submissive spirit. Even Jesus, when praying in great agony, said: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mat. 26:39). We ought to learn to bring a great many requests to God, relating to our daily pursuits, our family and private affairs. Children should bring all their little interests and concerns and lay them before their Friend above. But we are all so ignorant that we do not always know what is best for us nor for those for whom we pray. We should, therefore, pray to our Heavenly Father with a submissive spirit, willing that he should give or withhold as seemeth to him good. David fasted and prayed for the life of his sick child, but God saw that it was not best that the child should live. When it died, David arose and worshipped. Present all your requests to God, and then accept cheerfully the decision of his wisdom and love.

3. Pray with the spirit of faith. God says, "Without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb. 10:6). "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Let every boy or girl when he prays believe that God hears and answers prayer. God will hear you, and if the things you ask are in harmony with his will, and you ask in faith and with the right spirit, he will answer your prayer.

"Have faith in God, for he who reigns on high
Hath borne thy grief, and hears the suppliant's sigh;
Still to his arms, thine only refuge, fly!
Have faith in God."

4. Pray with a forgiving spirit. Jesus said, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Mat. 6:15). Put away all ill-will and enmity and hatred and grudges out of the heart, and then pray.

5. Ask everything for Jesus' sake, for his honor and glory. Jesus said: "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John 16:23-24). A bank-draft without a name at the bottom is nothing but a worthless bit of paper. The signature gives it all its value. So the prayer of a poor mortal is a feeble thing in itself, but if offered for Jesus' sake and is signed by him, it will be acceptable to God.

Let us now write a simple prayer appropriate for a child, having the elements of prayer in it which we have described. It would be well to commit it to memory.

A CHILD'S PRAYER

ADORATION. -- Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thou art an infinite and holy God, and as such we, thy feeble, unworthy children, reverently approach thee in prayer.

THANKSGIVING. -- We thank thee for all the blessings thou hast given us, for our life and daily mercies, for parents and teachers, for our homes and our Church, for our Sabbath-school and prayer-meeting, and the Bible and all the means of grace. Above all we thank thee for the gift of thy Son to die for us, and the Holy Spirit to lead us and teach us.

CONFESSION. -- We confess, we have not deserved all these blessings.-- We have not loved thee, the giver of them, as we ought. We have not been careful to obey thee and do thy holy will.

SUPPLICATION. -- O forgive us our many sins, and give us clean hearts, and help us to obey thee and love thee, and serve thee. May thy Spirit enable us to do thy will at all times!

INTERCESSION. -- And bless, with us, our friends and those who are dear to us.-Perhaps some of them do not love Jesus. O be merciful unto them, and incline their hearts to forsake their sins and accept Jesus as their Savior and Lord! And this we ask in the name of Jesus and for his sake. Amen.

QUESTIONS

1. Is the Christian life a life of prayer?
2. Is it our duty to pray?
3. What difference is there between public and secret prayer?
4. What are the different elements of prayer?
5. What is it to adore God?
6. What is thanksgiving?
7. What is confession?
8. What is supplication?
9. What is intercession?
10. Are sincerity and submission necessary?
11. Must you have faith and a forgiving spirit?
12. Must everything be asked for Jesus' sake?

Sing with this lesson: 1. "Sweet hour of prayer;" 2. "More about Jesus."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 11

THE BIBLE

In the last chapter we learned that the first obligation of religion was to pray, or worship God. The second obligation and duty of the young Christian is to lovingly read and study THE BIBLE. I want to say some things to you about the Bible in this chapter, which I trust will help you to appreciate and love it.

I. Let me speak of its names. It is called "The Bible," "The Scriptures," "The Word of God," "The Sacred Writings," "The Law and the Prophets," and "The Old and New Testaments."

1 "The Bible" means "the Book." As if, of all the millions of books in the world, this was the most important and the best.

2. "The Scriptures" means the writings that are most important and that excel all others. Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me" (John 5:39).

3. It is called "The Word of God," because he gave the Book to men as a revelation of his will. 'Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21). "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." Thus these writings are really the Word of God.

4. It is called "THE SACRED WRITINGS" because they declare the truth, and convince of sin, and reveal God, and confute errors, and give us the way of salvation, and reform the life, and teach us the way to heaven as no other writings do in all the world.

5. It is called "The Law and the Prophets" because the Old Testament contains the moral laws of God and the various prophecies and teachings concerning the people and kingdom of God. "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and prophets did write" (John 1:45).

6. It is called the Old and New Testaments because the Bible is divided into these two parts. Testament means a will or covenant. The Old Testament contains the story of God's dealing with men concerning salvation before Christ came. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus

Christ and the way of salvation through faith in a resurrected and living Savior. Such are the reasons for the various names of the Bible.

II. Let me say a word about how the Bible was given to us. We should know that the Bible did not come directly from the hands of God as we have it now, -- all in one large volume. Neither was it written by the hand of God and then put into the hands of men. But it was a growth through a long period of time, -- some fifteen hundred years or more.

We may illustrate it by the story of a castle in England, called "Warwick Castle." It was not built at one time, by one architect, and in one uniform style of architecture. It is the disjointed work of some five centuries with every variety of architecture. The outside of the building is an immense pile of great diversity of form and style. But within, the apartments, though each is finished in the style appropriate to its own period, are nicely adjusted to each other, so as to form clusters of rooms perfectly harmonious, and make the whole edifice a convenient and delightful residence. The very names of some of the architects have been forgotten and lost, but the beauty and perfection of their work remains to bless the dwellers under its roof.

That is the way with the Bible, It contains history, laws, prayers, songs of praise, glowing prophecies, tender encouragements, and solemn warnings. It is prose and poetry in every form and style of composition. Moses began the Book, using material which he found at hand, and after him some thirty or more writers -- we know not just how many nor who they all were -- wrote through more than a thousand years, and then the Old Testament was completed as we now have it. Then there was a space of some centuries, at the end of which Jesus came. During the first century after the birth of Christ the New Testament was written by at least eight different writers, and our Bible was complete. You see, "The Scriptures were given to men gradually, throughout many ages, as God saw the right opportunities, at sundry times and in divers manners" (Heb. 1:1).

Yet the Bible is one book, as Warwick Castle is one, only its unity is not external; "but it is internal, a spiritual unity, the unity of one grand idea running through the whole, the idea of reuniting the human soul to God," of bringing back this lost race to the Heavenly Father, from whom it has been so sadly separated by sin.

God so put his Spirit into the minds of the various writers that they were inspired to convey religious truth to men, such as men needed to know and God wished to teach. So the Bible, though written by many men, gives the mind and will of God. The Divine Mind so illuminated and inspired and exalted the minds of the writers that they made the wise choice of facts to report, and their utterances for the time became the expression of the thought and will of God -- his message of religious truth to men.

The historians and poets and prophets wrote from time to time through the centuries, as God needed to use them and occasion demanded. But inasmuch as God used the writers as accountable men and not as passive creatures, there is a moral and religious progress in the Bible, which reaches perfection only in the New Testament after Christ came, and the revelation of God to man was made complete.

The first book of the Bible is called Genesis, which means the beginnings. It gives the history of the creation of the world and of men, and the destruction of the race by the flood because of its incurable sin. Then we have the beautiful story of Abraham, called by God, through whose descendants God was to give the Bible and the Savior to the world. Exodus means the journey out, and tells us of the journey of the children of Israel out of Egypt. Leviticus gives the directions to the tribe of Levi about the worship of God. Numbers tells about the numbering of the tribes, and so on. It has been generally believed for ages that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, and after him wrote Joshua, and Samuel, and Nehemiah, and Ezra, and others, completing the Bible history. Then we have the poets -- David, and Solomon, and others; and after them the prophets, who, one after another along the centuries, received messages of warning and encouragement and hope from God, which they wrote out and gave to men. These together make up the Old Testament, which Jesus studied and quoted from, and held as sacred, and commended to the world.

After Jesus had died and risen and ascended, the early Christians went everywhere, telling the story of Jesus' life and death, what he said, and what he did. This was their kind of preaching. God finally put it into the hearts of four men to write out the story of Christ's life and death, to meet four great needs of the world.

1. Matthew. -- This was written by Matthew, the publican, one of the twelve disciples, to the Jews of Palestine, to convince them that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, the fulfillment of all prophecies, and that his crucifixion was the great sacrifice of which all the sacrifices in the Jewish ceremonies were only a type. It is the Gospel of the Kingdom, and shows the spiritual relation of Christianity to the Old Testament system of religion by arguments which at that time only Jews could appreciate. He keeps saying, "That it might be fulfilled, which was written." He wrote his epistle first in the Hebrew language from seven to ten years after Christ's death; and then, as the Jews began to use the Greek language more entirely, Matthew translated his Gospel into the Greek language about 'twenty-five years later.

2. Mark. -- This Gospel was written by Mark; not one of the apostles, but the son of a pious woman in Jerusalem and the intimate friend of the apostle Peter. He was Peter's amanuensis, or clerk, and this is Peter's story of Jesus. This Gospel was written for the Roman converts from Paganism and their companions. They were a people of power -- the rulers of the world. This epistle was written to show these Romans that Jesus was a being of power, worthy of their respect and reverence, and even worship. Mark scarcely refers to the Old Testament, for he was writing to those who had not read it. He describes the miracles and deeds of Jesus as the Wonder-worker, the Mighty One, greater than all the Cæsars -- the

Son of God. He wrote, some years after Matthew, a shorter story, greatly condensing the sermons and conversations of Jesus.

3. Luke -- The third Gospel was written by Luke, who also was not one of the twelve. He was a Greek physician, and, according to ancient testimony, was born in Antioch. He became a zealous Christian, and made himself familiarly acquainted, by personal investigation, with all the facts about the Gospel story. Luke was the companion of Paul. Irenæus says, "Luke, the companion of Paul, committed to writing the Gospel as preached by him." As Matthew wrote to the Jews and Mark to the Romans, so Luke wrote to the Greeks, to hold up to them Jesus as the perfect man, the friend of sinners, the sympathizing Savior, the great Physician who can heal the bodies and souls of a sin-sick humanity. He dwelt especially upon the parables. He wrote about the same time as Mark.

4. John. -- This Gospel was written by John, the beloved apostle. It was written to all, of every age and clime, to hold up Jesus as the Divine 'Savior, the glorious, only begotten Son of God, "manifest in the flesh," who came "that we might have life." "I give unto them eternal life." He dwells upon the Divine nature of Jesus, and presents the Divine side of the gospel as it deals with eternal destiny. It is the most spiritual of all the Gospels or of the entire Bible, and was written toward the close of the first century when the apostle was nearly one hundred years old. It was "written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). Then Luke wrote also the hook of Acts. Paul wrote thirteen or fourteen epistles. James and Jude, the Lord's brothers, and Peter and John, the disciples, wrote the rest of the Bible. And so the Bible, as we now have it, was completed.

III. Let me tell you why you should both read the Bible, and study it, and love it. I might first urge you to read it because God gave it to you, and you ought to read it out of respect and reverence for him. You should also read it because it reveals God and the only way of salvation. And, further, you should read it with the greatest care because it has been the one book that has overturned idolatry and savagery and heathenism, and given to the world Christian civilization. And still more, this book purifies communities, blesses families, and saves the individual from the curse of sin, and gives the joys of religion and the hopes of heaven. It is the one book whose influence takes sin out of our hearts and prepares us for eternity. Such a book ought to be prized above all others and read daily.

I now want to tell you what other and very great men have thought of the Bible.

MARTIN LUTHER, the great reformer, said, "It is the only book to which all the books in the world are but waste paper.."

LORD BACON, the greatest universal philosopher of the world, wrote: "O God, thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more."

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, the sixth President of the United States, said: "For many years it has been my custom to read four or five chapters every morning. In what light soever we regard the Bible, whether with reference to revelation, to history, or to morality, it is an invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue."

When ANDREW JACKSON lay dying, he pointed to the Bible, and said, "That book, sir, is the rock on which our Republic rests."

GENERAL GRANT, when President of the United States, wrote to the Sabbath-schools of America: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of your liberties, write its precepts in your hearts, and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book are we indebted for all the progress made in true civilization, and to it we must look for our guide in the future."

DANIEL WEBSTER, probably our greatest American statesman, wrote to the Earl of Shaftesbury, who had given him a Bible: "You could have given me nothing more acceptable. The older I grow, and the more I read the Holy Scriptures, the more reverence I have for them, and the more convinced I am that they are not only the best guide for the conduct of this life, but the foundation of all our hope respecting a future state of existence."

SIR WILLIAM JONES, the great scholar who spoke twenty-eight languages, wrote: "I am of the opinion that the Bible contains more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may be written."

EWALD, the foremost of modern critics, said to Dean Stanley of the New Testament, as he stooped to pick it up: "In this book is all the wisdom of the world."

SIR ISAAC NEWTON, the great philosopher, said, "We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy."

JOHN MILTON, the great poet and statesman, wrote: "There are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets, and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach."

C. A. FARRAR writes: "Its words speak to the ear and heart as no other music will, even after wild and sinful lives; for in the Holy Scriptures you find the secrets of eternal life, and they are they that testify of Jesus Christ."

CHARLES DICKENS, the great novelist, gave a New Testament to his son Edward as he was starting for Australia, and wrote: "I put a New Testament among your books because it is the best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world, and because it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature can be guided."

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW, the great lawyer and railroad president, said in a speech before the Nineteenth Century Club, of New York: "There is no liberty that lasts in the world, and there is no government which has liberty in it that lasts, that does not recognize the Bible. I say now that the Christian faith of my mother is good enough for me."

An African prince visited QUEEN VICTORIA, and asked her to tell him briefly the source of England's greatness. She pointed to a Bible, and said, "That is the source of England's greatness."

GLADSTONE calls the Book "the impregnable Rock of Scripture." .

"Bring me the Book, sir," said SIR WALTER SCOTT, the great author, to Lockhart, as he lay on his deathbed. "What book?" asked Lockhart. "The Book, the Bible," said Sir Walter. "There is only one Book."

Dear children, read the Bible, and love it. It is lighted all through with the glory of God, its Divine Author. It is so superior to all other books, that it may well be called "The Only Book." May it guide you to Jesus and make you wise unto salvation.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the second duty of the Christian?
2. What are some of the different names of the Bible?
3. Was the Bible written all at once?
4. Whose book is it?
5. Do the greatest of men esteem the Bible above all other books?
6. Why should you read and study it daily?

Sing: "Hallelujah! What a Savior!" and "O Happy Day!"

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 12

OBEDIENCE

In the last chapter we saw that it was the duty of the Christian to read and study the Bible as the Word of God and the teacher of the soul. As we read the great Book, we learn at once that we are in a universe of law, under the government of an infinite Lawgiver, whose name is God. We learn that all his laws are sacred, and must be obeyed if we would be blessed and happy. We learn, further, that disobedience means misery and ruin and death. So I want to talk to you in this chapter about OBEDIENCE.

I. Let us notice what God himself says about OBEYING. "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you" (Jer. 7:23). "Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day; and a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God" (Deut. 11:26-28). "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice" (I Sam. 15:22). "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother" (Eph. 6:1-2). "Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh" (Col. 3:22). "Put them in mind to obey magistrates" (Titus 3:1). "Obey them that have the rule over you" (Heb. 13:17). "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:22). Now, we learn from all these passages of Scripture that we must obey God; and, further, that we must obey our parents and our masters, and those who rule over us, and the laws of our country, unless those who govern us should tell us to do wrong. In that case we should obey God rather than men.

II. Notice the supreme importance of this duty. Eternal life, the salvation of every boy and girl depends upon it. As God says, it is life or death, a blessing or a curse, according as we obey or disobey. God's moral laws can not be trifled with any more than his natural laws. Fire will burn, and if a child plays with the fire, he will have to take the consequences. A child in the city where I lived three years ago, disobeyed his parents and the law of the city and the law of nature.

He had been told not to play with fire, but he built a bonfire and put kerosene oil on it to make it burn better. The result was, he burned his father's house to ashes, and burned his baby brother to death, and burned himself to death, and came near destroying many other homes in the city. Water will drown; cold will freeze; fire will burn; poison will kill; sin will destroy. We must obey God's laws, or perish.

I assume that you have all given your hearts to Christ before you get as far as this chapter in this book. I write to you now as Christians, and I wish to say plainly that it is impossible for you to live a Christian life at all without the spirit of obedience. You must first obey God, and then you must obey all rightful authority of men. Even Jesus did that. He was subject to his mother when a child (Luke 2:51). And Jesus said of his Father in heaven, "I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29). To be Christians is to be Christ-like, and you can not be Christ-like while you are disobedient. Jesus said: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. If a man love me, he will keep my words" (John 14:21-23). So we need not pretend that we are Christians or that we love Jesus, unless we OBEY him. A disobedient boy or girl is not a Christian. Therefore, if you are trying to lead a Christian life, you must bow your will to God, and cultivate the spirit of submission and obedience. When Saul, afterward called Paul, was converted, he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6.) That is always the spirit of one whose heart has been changed by the grace of God. He recognizes at once that God is his Father and Savior and his best friend, and he sincerely desires to OBEY him. He will say of God's commandments as David did: "More to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward" (Ps. 19:10, 11). Moreover, if we are thus obedient, we will seek to find out what God's will is, We shall find his commands written in the Bible, and we will read it lovingly to learn how God wishes us to live.

We shall find other laws of God written in our own bodies and in nature around us. We call them the "laws of nature" and the "laws of health." But God made our bodies and the laws of nature around us, and their laws are, therefore, the laws of God. We have no more right to abuse our bodies by injurious and wicked habits than we have to lie or steal. A person sincerely obedient will not pick and choose what commands to obey and what to reject. He will lay such a charge upon his whole man as Mary, the mother of Christ, did upon all the servants at the feast, -"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." Eyes, ears, hands, hearts, lips, body, and soul, -- do you all seriously and affectionately observe whatever Jesus Christ says unto you, and do it?

III. I wish you to remember that you must not only obey God, but you must also obey God's representatives. Who are they?

1. They are YOUR PARENTS. That is why God commands you to obey them. So far as parents are right, their will is an expression of the will of God. So he says, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. 6:1). A child, therefore, can not keep his religion who has the SPIRIT OF DISOBEDIENCE TO HIS PARENTS, because in disobeying them, he also disobeys God. God attaches peculiar rewards and honors to the obedience of parents, and visits most severe penalties on those who disobey them. At a meeting of the National Prison Association, one of the wardens of Sing Sing Prison said that disobedience to parents was "one of the most prolific sources of crime -- the highway to the penitentiary." And why? It is because a child that is lawless and disobedient in the home is disobedient and lawless everywhere. I was once laboring in a large city in a revival. There was a beautiful girl in my audience, fourteen years old, who was a leader of the young people. She would not give her heart to Christ. I asked a lady why it was, and this was her reply: "That girl was an only child. Her parents did not make her mind. Her mother died recently. The girl has acquired the habit of disobedience, and she will not bow her will to anybody, not even to God." I have observed that this is usually the case with disobedient children. A curse seems to be upon them for their disobedience.

Mr. Moody tells of a little nephew whom he watched one day, while he and his mother were passing through one of those crucial moments which decide a child's character as obedient or disobedient. The little fellow had taken a Bible from the table and thrown it on the floor. His mother said, "Go and pick up uncle's Bible." He said, he didn't want to. The mother said, "I didn't ask you whether you wanted to, or not. Go, and pick it up." "I won't," said the child. "Why, Charlie," said the mother; "I never heard you speak so before. If you don't go and pick up uncle's Bible I shall punish you." The struggle went on for a long time, until at last she broke the boy's will, and the minute that was done, he promptly picked up the Bible. "I felt very much interested," was Mr. Moody's comment, "for I knew that if she did not break his will, he would break her heart."

A man once visited a great philosopher, and met his little daughter before he saw her father. He thought such a father would teach his child something very great and important, and he asked her, "What is your father teaching you?" The little maid looked at him with her clear, blue eyes, and just said, "OBEDIENCE." That is what the great and wise man taught his little girl, and it was the most important of all lessons for a child to learn. It is a lesson necessary for its happiness, its safety, and its eternal salvation.

A young man, chained to another convict, was about to leave his native country and heartbroken mother, probably forever. How came he to be a criminal? When a child he was allowed to have his own way. When the mother ought to have kindly and firmly enforced obedience, she yielded to his whims. When sent to school, he was disobedient, and would not learn. The mother took the part of the headstrong boy against the master. With bad companions, he was soon found in petty stealing. Going on from bad to worse, he at last committed highway robbery, and was sentenced for fourteen years of punishment. He was ruined because he had not been taught obedience.

Gladstone says of George Washington: "If, among all the pedestals supplied by history for public characters of extraordinary nobility and purity, I saw one higher than all the rest, and if I were required at a moment's notice to name the fittest occupant for it, I think my choice at any time during the last forty-five years would have lighted, and would now light, upon Washington." How came Washington to have such a noble character? When he was quite young, he was about to go to sea as a sailor, and his trunk was on board the ship. He went to bid his mother farewell, and found her in tears. He turned to a servant, and said: "Go, and fetch my trunk back. I will not go away to break my mother's heart." His mother, struck with his decision, said to him, "George, God has promised to bless the children that honor their parents, and I believe he will bless you." Many years afterward, when he was returning to his home after the war of the

Revolution, covered with honor and glory, and people were congratulating his mother on having such a son, she quietly said, "I am not surprised that he has served faithfully and deserves well of his country, for he was always an OBEDIENT SON."

2. You will notice that God tells us to be obedient to masters, and to magistrates, and to those who are over us. That means, when you go to school, to obey your teachers; for they are appointed over you for the time being. And when you serve an employer, do your work as you are asked to do it. And wherever you are, obey the laws of your country, unless they are contrary to the laws of God.

O, this matter of obedience touches us hourly, everywhere, and as long as we live, -obedience to men who are over us; obedience to human laws; obedience to the Bible-instructed and Spirit-enlightened conscience within us, and to God above us. Loving obedience is the life-breath of religion. Luther said, "I would rather obey than work miracles." You can not be a Christian without the spirit of obedience to all just laws -- human and divine.

IV. Sometimes, though very rarely, it may happen that one is commanded to do something that is clearly and certainly wrong. In such a case, as the apostle Peter said, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Once, at Stockholm, that wonderful Christian singer, Jenny Lind, was requested to sing on the Sabbath at the king's palace on the occasion of a great festival. She refused; and the king called personally upon her, and, as her sovereign, commanded her attendance. Her reply was, "There is a higher King, sire, to whom I owe my first allegiance." And she peremptorily refused to be present. She did right thus to honor God before her king.

The writer has visited a town and a city, recently, where the parents of both places sent out their children daily to steal coal from the cars on the railroads. It was cruel and wicked in those parents. They were simply teaching their children to be thieves; and the children would have been right in disobeying their parents when they commanded them to steal coal. Always obey God.

V. Remember that obedience, to be perfect and acceptable to God, must have three qualities. It must be prompt, entire, and cheerful. A lazy, indolent compliance with a command, that takes its own time to obey, is not true obedience. A great general, after a Certain battle, asked his officers who of his soldiers had done the best. Some spake of one brave deed, and others of another. "No," he said; "you are all mistaken. The best man in the field today was a soldier who was just lifting up his arm to strike an enemy, but, when he heard the trumpet sound a retreat, checked himself, and dropped his arm without striking the blow. That perfect and ready obedience to the will of the general is the noblest thing that has been done today."

Further, obedience must be ENTIRE. King Saul lost his crown and kingdom by an imperfect obedience. He only half obeyed what God commanded him to do, and God rejected him (I Sam. 15:23-26).

Lastly, God wants obedience to be cheerful, joyful, willing, -- that is, obedience from the heart. Such obedience wins the eternal approval of God. BLESSED ARE THE CHILDREN WHO LEARN TO OBEY.

QUESTIONS

1. Does God command us to obey him?
2. Is this an important duty?
3. Who else, besides God, bear rule over children?
4. What did the great philosopher teach his little girl?
5. Was Washington an obedient boy?
6. Must we sometimes choose between obeying God and men?
7. Do dishonest children usually prosper?
8. What three qualities must obedience have, to be perfect?

Sing: "Trust and Obey."



Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 13

A LIFE OF LOVE

We have told you that the Christian life is a life of prayer, -- a life, guided by the Bible, and a life of OBEDIENCE. In this chapter we wish to teach you that a Christian life is most emphatically A LIFE OF LOVE.

Jesus so felt the importance of this truth that, just before he died for us, he said to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). John, the beloved disciple, thought over this great lesson of his Master, and it so impressed him that he wrote to the world: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another! If we love one another, God dwelleth in us" (I John 4:7, 8, II, 12). The dear apostle Paul thought about it until his mind was so full of the importance of love that he exclaimed, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

Every boy and girl can see from these passages of Scripture that one can not lead a Christian life without having a heart so full of love that it controls the whole life. Now, some child may ask:

I. What is love? We will answer: It is a state of heart created by the grace of God, that delights in God, and delights to do good to all for whom he died. The apostle Paul gave us the best description of love in the entire Word of God, "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not its own; is not provoked; taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things; believeth all things; endureth all things. Love never faileth" (1 Cor. 13:4-8).

Let us go over these beautiful words step by step.

1. "Love suffereth long." That means patience, especially in trial and under the ill-treatment of others. It is not hasty, and does not burst out in a fit of passion and resentment when wronged. It is meek and forbearing. I know a Christian boy who was one day struck in the face by another boy, and he did not strike back, but endured it meekly for Christ's sake. That is the way Jesus did. When wicked men were mocking his dying agonies, he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). When wicked men were stoning Deacon Stephen to death, he prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Only love, born of the grace of God, could have enabled him to thus "suffer long."

2. "Love is kind." In all its dealings with the worthy or the unworthy, the unfortunate or the poor, love will be kind. Love will not make fun of a black boy because he is black, nor of a Chinese because he is yellow, nor of the little girl who has a scar on her face or an impediment in her speech, or who is lame, or deformed, or poor. Such behavior is cruel; but love is kind and full of sympathy.

3. "Love envieth not." If some other girl has a better voice to sing than you have -- if you love as you ought, you will not envy her. Love is not grieved at the prosperity of others; does not envy them their success; does not grieve because some one else lives in a better home, or has better clothes, or has some other superior gifts or blessings. Envy repines and gnaws away at its own happiness, and feeds upon its own bitterness, while love rejoices in the gifts and blessings of others. This is generosity -- love in competition with others who may excel. Envy is a mean, unworthy mood, always ready to cloud the heart that is not full of love.

4. "Love vaunteth not itself." Love begets humility. It performs its beautiful deeds, but leaves others to talk about them, without self-praise or boasting. "Love hides even from itself." The stalks of wheat that contain the greatest number of beautiful grains hang their heads the lowest. The wisest of all the philosophers made this profession: "This I know, that I know nothing." Moses lived in such intimate communion with God that the Divine glory shone out through his face till men could not look upon it; but in his humility "he wist not that the skin of his face shone." Paul was the greatest man of the Christian ages; but he declared himself to be unworthy to be called an apostle. Five years later he cried out, "I am less than the least of all the saints." And just before his martyrdom, when he was ripe for glory, because he had once persecuted Christians he exclaimed, "I am the chief of sinners." It was love that made these holy souls so humble.

5. "Love doth not behave itself unseemly." This is courtesy or love in society. Love in the heart gives the only true politeness, which can not be learned from books of etiquette. The politeness of the world is simply a thing of form and outward behavior, that bows according to rule, and wears a deceitful smile when there is inward heartlessness and perhaps hatred. True politeness is gentleness of heart toward all. Love prompts to due respect for the aged and those in authority, and a kind regard for the rights of all. Love behaves becomingly in all the relations of life. It is love in little things.

6. "Seeketh not its own." This is unselfishness in association with others, which yields its own rights and sacrifices itself for the good of others. It does not try to get the best end of every bargain. Love in the heart of a boy will not lead him to claim the most comfortable chair at the fireside or the nicest delicacy at the table. Love in the girl's heart will lead her to seek her mother's ease and comfort instead of her own. It puts the sister or the schoolmate before self in all the plans and calculations. Drummond observes: "The most obvious lesson in Christ's teaching is that there is no happiness in having and getting anything, but only in giving."

"It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). No one is a Christian who has not that self-denying love that is willing to sacrifice for the good of others. That is the only spirit that can save the world. A poor little girl in the Fourth Ward, New York, as she was dying, said: "I am glad I am going to die, because now my brothers and sisters will have more to eat." "Love seeketh not her own."

7. "Love is not provoked." This means that love preserves a good temper. O, the wrong we do and the grief we make by bad temper, by the heat of sudden passion, that sends out hot words like lightning-bolts to fall upon quivering, smitten hearts! "No form of vice, not worldliness, not greed of gold, not drunkenness itself, does more to unChristianize society than evil temper." Dear boys and girls, only the sanctifying grace of God can take the evil temper and touchy disposition out of you, and fill you with such Divine love that you will have a calm and gentle spirit. Nothing else would glorify your Savior more.

8. "Love thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth." In other words, love is unsuspecting, is very slow to believe anything bad of others, and much slower still to tell it with a zest, and so tear down another's good name. "It refuses to make capital out of others' faults, and rejoiceth even when an enemy turns out better than he was reported to be. O, how beautiful is this love that

9. "Believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth." It puts the best construction upon the action of others, tries to think others are innocent until proved guilty, hopes suspicious appearances will turn out to be all right, bears all that must be borne without complaint, and never fails. This is love, the spirit and mind of Christ. "And every one that loveth is born of God" (I John 4:7). The boys and girls who have this spirit have within their own breasts a constant proof that they are the children of God and the followers of Jesus. And, also, those who do not admire this spirit, and try to cultivate it, may know certainly that they are not yet converted and have not become the followers of Christ.

II. Some thoughtful boy asks: "How may we cultivate this spirit of love so that it may be a greater power in our lives?" I will mention three ways: The poet Southey tells a tender story of a lady engaged to be married to a man who usually traveled by the coach to visit her. Going one day to meet him, she found, instead of him, an old friend, dispatched to tell her of her lover's sudden death. She screamed out, "He is not dead!" then her reason fled, and she lost all consciousness of her affliction. But from that fatal day, for fifty years, in all seasons and in all weathers, she daily traversed the distance to the place where she expected to meet her lover from the passing coach, and every day she said, in a plaintive tone, "He is not come yet. I will return tomorrow." And every tomorrow found her there. What kept the poor creature steady against

all the disappointments of fifty years? What could keep her but a mighty love? A steady love will make a steady Christian. But you ask, "I do not have such a love, and how can I get it?"

Well, then, remember first, that real love is careful about little things. Here is a close question: Are you not indulging yourself in little sins that a real love for Jesus ought to consume out of your life? Remember the least thing that God forbids hurts the heart of Christ. Yet you, perhaps, are clinging to such things. You do not abandon them and make a perfect consecration to the Lord to surrender even the doubtful things. O, do it, and put out everything evil, and ask Jesus to come in and fill you with himself! You will be surprised to find how wondrously the Lord will take up his abode in you; how strongly and steadily he will cause your love to glow; how easy, unhindered, quietly constant your life will be. Second. Make Christ your ideal and example. Drummond was converted when young, and became one of the most lovable of Christian men. He told us how he developed such a character: "My hidden ideals .of what is beautiful I have drawn from Christ. My thoughts of. what is manly and noble and pure have almost all of them arisen from the Lord Jesus Christ. Many men have educated themselves by reading Plutarch's Lives of the Ancient Worthies, and they have felt the great power of these men on themselves. Now, I do not perceive that poet, or philosopher, or reformer, or general, or. any other great man ever has dwelt in my imagination and in my thought as the simple Jesus has. For more than twenty-five years I instinctively have gone to Christ to draw a measure and a rule for everything. Whenever there has been a necessity for it I have sought -- and, at last, almost spontaneously -- to throw myself into the companionship of Christ; and early, by my imagination, I could see him standing and looking quietly and lovingly upon me. There seemed almost to drop from his face an influence that suggested what was the right thing in the controlling of passion, in the subduing of pride, in the overcoming of selfishness. It is from Christ, manifested to my inward eye, that I have consciously derived more ideals, more models, more influences, than from any human character whatever."

Dear boys and girls, study the life of Jesus in this way: fill your thought and imagination with him, and then do as you think Jesus would do in your place, and as you think he would like to have you do.

Lastly, love will grow by use. All life is a schoolroom, and a thousand times daily you have an Opportunity to practice love. You boys know that you get skill in playing ball by practice, and get strength to lift by practice in lifting, and get skill as a penman or a mechanic by practice. The girls well know that they acquire skill in housework, or sewing, or music, or drawing, by constant practice. In precisely the same way you develop your power to love by asking God to give you the spirit of love, and then by putting the love he gives you into practice.

This, then, is the way to have love. Give up all the little faults that grieve God, and ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with love. Then look upon Christ in meditation and study and prayer till he fills your imagination and mind and heart with himself. Then practice the Christ spirit of love: "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Contemplate the love of Christ and you will love. And practice, or the exercise of love, will make you love more and more.

III. Some boy or girl may ask, "What benefit will come to us from this spirit of love? Much, every way: First, it will fit you for the society of God and heaven. God is love, and heaven is a realm of love, and only loving souls can ever enter heaven and dwell with God.

Furthermore, love will be a key to unlock the hearts of others, and make them open to your influence. The great Dr. Doddridge one day asked his little daughter: "Mary, what makes everybody love you?" "I know not," said she, "unless it be that I love everybody." That was exactly the reason. Love creates and wins love. Millions today would die for Jesus because Jesus loved the millions as no other ever did, and died for them. Moody says: "In Chicago, a few years ago, there was a little boy who went to one of the mission Sabbath-schools. His father moved to another part of the city, five miles away, but every Sabbath that boy came past thirty Sabbath-schools to the one he attended. One day a lady, who was out collecting scholars for a Sabbath-school, asked him why he went so far. She said: "There are plenty of other schools just as good." "They may be as good," he said, "but not so good for me." "Why not?" she asked. "Because they love a fellow over there," he answered. Ah, love won him! How easy it is to reach people through love!

When everything else fails, the most lost 'and abandoned sinners are reached by love. A poor drunkard had an only daughter whom he abused shamefully; but she clung to him with undying affection. One day, awaking from a drunken debauch, he said: "Millie, what makes you stay with me?" "Because you are my father, and I love you." "You love me," repeated the wretched man; "you love me." He looked at his bloated limbs and his ragged clothes. "Love me," he still

murmured. "Millie, what makes you love me? I am a poor drunkard; everybody else despises me; why don't you?" "Dear father," said the girl, with tearful eyes, "my mother taught me to love you, and every night she comes from heaven and stands by my little bed, and says: 'Millie, don't leave your father; he will get away from that rum-fiend some of these days, and then how happy you will be!'" He did get away from the rum-fiend. Millie's love won him back to manhood again. A young English sailor committed a theft in a drunken frolic, and was sentenced to transportation to Australia. He became utterly embittered against society, and resolved to avenge himself by giving his keepers all the trouble he could. He achieved the reputation of being the worst convict ever known in the colonies, and received more lashes, in a given time, than any previous prisoner.. He was at last chained on a rock, off the harbor of Sydney, for two years. So savage had he become that his keepers dared not go within his reach, even when bringing him food, but handed it to 'him at the end of a long pole. He became one of the sights of Sydney, and people would go in boats to stare at this human monster, and would throw him cakes and fruits as to beasts in a menagerie. This man was sent to Maconochie. On his arrival at Norfolk Island, he was placed at the task of subduing some untamed cattle. The new sense of useful power awakened in him the consciousness of manhood. This task achieved, other works were found for him, and it became difficult to keep him in occupation. A signal station was established, and he was put in charge of it. He had a neat cottage for his home, with a garden attached. He sent the first of everything his garden yielded to his friend and savior. When the Governor-General of Australia visited the settlement, he noticed this bright, active fellow, and asked who he was. Maconochie inquired if he remembered the convict chained to the rock in Sydney Harbor? "Perfectly well," he answered. "That 's the man," said Maconochie. "Bless my soul," said the astonished Governor-General, "what have you done to him?" "Nothing," was the quiet reply, "except to treat him with love as a human being, a brother man." Love had conquered the monster, and made him again a man. Dear children, love, LOVE, LOVE, as Christ did, This wicked world is lost till love redeems it. Hearts are sighing and breaking and dying for love. Love others, all others, and you will be like your Savior.

QUESTIONS

1. What was Jesus' 'new commandment?
2. What is love?
3. Is it essential to a Christian life?
4. Is love patient and kind?
5. Is love envious and proud and boastful?
6. Does love behave rudely?
7. Is love selfish?
8. Does love like to get angry and say cruel words?
9. How may we cultivate love? In what three ways?
10. Of what use is love?

Sing: "Perfect Assurance," and "O how I love Jesus."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 14

A LIFE OF SERVICE

We have seen that the Christian life is a life of prayer, guided by the Holy Word, an obedient life, and a life of love. In this chapter we wish to teach you that it is also a LIFE or SERVICE.

Jesus was the first great teacher who ever taught the greatness and dignity of SERVICE. He was on the way to Jerusalem to die for the world -- he, the Son of God and the Creator of the universe. His disciples were as yet so little like him that they were quarreling about who should have the first place and be the greatest in his kingdom. Jesus called his disciples unto him and said: "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you; but whosoever would become great among you shall be your servant, and whosoever would be first among you shall be your bondservant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life .a ransom for many" (Mat. 20:25-28).

Nobody had ever heard of such an idea before. You boys and girls will notice that it is contrary to the common opinion of the world today. Men are generally trying to become great by getting some great office, by becoming Governor, or United States Senator, or President. Or they wish to command the army, and have soldiers obey them; or they wish to be a great manufacturer or railroad officer, and have thousands of men in their employ; or they wish to have millions of money and no end of power and fame, and the ability to make multitudes bow down and serve them. This is what men call greatness. But it is not so with God. He thinks greatness consists in being useful; not in being served by multitudes, but in serving others; and he is the greatest who serves the most.

Famous as President McKinley is, and valuable as his life may be, it is not at all certain that he is our greatest man in the sight of God. Some other man, unknown to the public, may be serving the world more efficiently. Before John the Baptist was born the angel said of him: "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord" Luke I:15). And Jesus said of him that there was no greater man than he (Mat. 11:11). Yet he was not tall, like Goliath, nor stout, like Samson. He commanded no great armies like Alexander or Cæsar. He never lived in a palace, nor governed a province, nor wore a crown, nor sat upon a throne. He never had riches, nor chariots, nor servants to do his bidding. He was only the son of a poor priest who lived in the desert in utter poverty, and ate and dressed like a wild man of the woods. So great was his obscurity, he was never heard of till he was thirty years old. Then he preached a year or two, and, for preaching a plain sermon, and rebuking a titled sinner for his sins, he was shut up in prison, and, at the request of a lewd dancing-girl, he was beheaded. That was all. Yet God pronounced him the greatest of men. You see, God does not estimate men as the world does.

This leads me to say:-

1. In God's sight greatness consists in greatness of moral character and efficiency of service. God's greatness is Infinite; but his power is matched by his service. He serves the whole universe. He comes at everybody's call. "He sendeth the springs into the valley that give drink to every beast of the field. He watereth the hills from his chambers. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, and bread, which strengtheneth his heart. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. O Lord, how manifold are thy works: the earth is full of thy riches; so is the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season" (Ps. 104:10-27).

O, what a servant God is! He ministers to every living thing, from the microscopic insect to the mighty archangel before the throne. He gives to the sinner every breath which he profanely uses to curse his Maker. No one serves like God; and

he is greatest and most like God who most efficiently serves his fellows and the cause of Christ.

Now we see how John the Baptist was great. He was great in the greatness of his service, in bearing witness to Christ, and introducing him and his kingdom to a needy world.

II. Some boy may ask: "Why should we serve?" I answer, we must serve, first, because our own love will die without it. "During the dark days of slavery in this country, a Negro woman was one day put up for sale in the slave-market. She was young and handsome, and her master expected a good bargain in selling her. But she was, on this very account, in great agony of mind. She did not know what evil-minded man might purchase her, and she trembled with fear and shame as she was talked about and examined by the coarse men around her. A wealthy Christian gentleman was so touched by her terror that he bought her, and told her that she was free. But she followed him home, and, though he told her that he did not need a servant, and had bought her only to make her free, she refused to leave him. She remained in his family all her life, a most devoted servant; and, whenever she was urged by her friends to leave him and enjoy her liberty, she declared that no lot in life was so pleasant to her as that of a servant to the man who had redeemed her. The only favor she craved in life was to be near him and serve him."

So it will be with us. If we love our Redeemer as we ought, our love will blossom into spontaneous and joyous service. God does not so much need our service or praise or honor.

Millions of angels can give him that in abundance. But God does long for our LOVE, and love must serve or die. The voice of love service is the music of heaven.

Furthermore, the world needs service, and that is reason enough why we should serve. It was the world's need that brought Jesus from the skies. The world's sorrow filled him with grief, and the world's sin broke his heart. He permitted himself to be lifted upon the cross that he might lift the world from the depths of its shame and woe. Any noble, Christ-like heart will throb with pity at the sight of the world's wretchedness and sin, and will want to serve it and help save it. And thus, in serving, we shall lift our own selves up into the glorious company of the God-like. We shall join hands with Christ as co-workers in the blessed enterprise of saving a lost world, and, doing so, we shall find our own highest greatness and glory.

III. Some thoughtful child asks: "How must we serve? What can we do?" This is a very practical and important question, and demands a careful answer:

1. Set a Christian example before everybody. That is the best kind of service. "Ye are the light of the world," said Jesus (Mat. 5:14). Light scatters the darkness by simply shining. Boys and girls, have enough of Christ in you to shine. There are a great many sermons preached by human lips; but the world needs some living sermons, sermons in boots and shoes, Christian boys and girls setting a good example before wicked boys and girls. Finney said: "The Christian is the world's Bible, and the only Bible most people ever read." O children, let your beautiful Christian life be to them a pure gospel of a revised version. St. Paul said of Jesus: "Whose I am, and whom I serve" (Acts 27:23). That is the two parts of religion -- salvation and service. First, thoroughly belong to Christ, body and soul; then live for him before men.

A person once said to a much-troubled English bishop of remarkable serenity of mind and wide Christian influence: "I should like to know your secret of always being happy." He replied: "It is plain enough. I look up to heaven, hoping to get there. I look around and see, everywhere, people suffering more than I, which makes me content with my lot. I look to the graveyard, and see how little space I shall soon occupy, and grow thankful for life and the little I have." Everybody can thus serve God by grateful contentment, if in no other way. St. Paul did that amidst trials and hatred, and persecution and want. "I have learned," said he, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

I will now tell the story of the remarkable way in which God used the fidelity of a little Welsh girl to serve him. In the beginning of this century, this Welsh girl was in a Sunday-school. Her parents were very poor, and had no Bible of their own, nor had any of their neighbors. The nearest Bible was at a house some miles away, over the hills, and this faithful little girl was in the habit of walking there and back to learn her Sunday-school text. One Sunday she could not repeat her text, and, when questioned by the minister, she said: "Please, sir, the weather was very bad." "Very true," said the minister, "but what had that to do with your learning your verse?" Then he found out how scarce the Bibles were. He was

deeply moved, and he went up to London, and proposed to some friends that a society be formed to print Bibles in Welsh for the poor. One of his hearers said: "Why not start a Bible Society for the world?" The grand idea was carried out, and the London Bible Society sends out its Bibles by the millions to all the world. Yet it all began by a little girl at Bala walking miles each week to learn her Sabbath-school lesson. God honored her fidelity, and used it; and he will use yours, if you are faithful, in ways that you do not dream of.

While we are about it, we will tell of another little girl whose influence will be felt as long as time shall last. Less than half a century ago, a Sunday-school superintendent in Jacksonville, Illinois, asked each one to bring a new scholar to the school the next Sunday. Little Mary Paxton went home, and asked her father to come to Sabbath-school. He was nearly forty years old, and so ignorant that he could not read. He was rough in appearance, and rude in speech. He hated the Church, and despised Sunday-schools and religion and everything good. But he loved his little Mary, and when she took him by the hand he did not resist. He went to Sabbath-school, and was led to Christ. He then learned to read for Christ's sake, and he finally came to be a Sunday-school evangelist. He founded fifteen hundred Sunday-schools, into which seventy thousand children were gathered, and out of which sprang one hundred churches. When little Mary was leading her father to Sunday-school, she was leading a train of thousands up the shining way that leads to God.

This leads us to say:

2. When you are working for the Sabbath-school and the Church and the prayer-meeting, you are working for God's greatest institution on earth, and you are serving God. It may seem a small thing for a Christian boy or girl to be always in the pew to cheer the pastor while he preaches, and to be always in the Sabbath-school with a knowledge of the lesson, and to be helpfully present in at least one prayer-meeting every week. But just such simple, faithful service as that is keeping alive the Christian Church, which is the "Bride of Christ" and the most precious thing in all this world.

3. Faithful labor put forth in any honorable, necessary employment in a Christian spirit and for Jesus' sake is serving God and serving the world. Jesus once was a boy and a young man, and lived a very plain, practical, hardworking, everyday life, and he says to all young Christians, "Follow me." No doubt he helped his mother daily in the home, and labored with his father, Joseph, in the carpenter-shop, like any dutiful young man might. And he says to us all, "Follow me."

Rev. W. F. Crafts has the following on "Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus:" "A Sunday-school teacher asked her class, 'What have you done this week to follow Jesus?' One said, 'I have prayed.' That was a right answer, for Jesus used to pray daily, and, sometimes, all night. Another said, 'I have read the Bible.' That was a true answer, for Jesus read the Bible so much that he could repeat a great deal from memory. Another said, 'I have washed the dishes;' and another said, 'I have been good in school;' and another said, 'I have kept my ears clean.' All these were right answers also, for Jesus, in his home, helped Joseph, the carpenter, about his work, and he did no wrong or mean thing in the school at Nazareth; and we feel sure that he remembered that cleanliness is next to godliness. Another little girl answered by saying, 'I scrubs.' And I read of an old woman, who, after a hard day's washing clothes, sang, as she climbed the stairs at night, 'One more day's work for Jesus.'

A little bootblack blacked a gentleman's boots very nicely, and the gentleman said, "Do you think that will please me?" The boy said, "I don't know; but I think it will please my Father in heaven." "Poor fellow!" said the gentleman, "then your father is dead, is he?" "O no," said the boy, "I don't mean that. My Father up in heaven is God." "Then you think that blacking my boots so nicely will please God, do you?" "Yes," said the boy; "I think God is pleased to have me do the best I can."

Let us remember that in scrubbing, washing, blacking boots -- any kind of work that is necessary and honorable -- we can be following Jesus if we do the best we can for his sake. We want to be Christians, not only in the night and morning when we pray, and on Sunday when we sing and worship, but in our daily studies and errands and work.

4. Prayer is one of the most effective ways of serving God. God has taught us to pray, and ordained that prayer shall be a mighty power in the universe. There was a young man, named Ames, who, with other thoughtless young men, was walking up and down a grove where people were holding a camp-meeting. There was a prayer-meeting around the preaching stand, and, among those kneeling, the young man saw a mother, and, by her side, a little daughter, who knelt with closed eyes, and clasped hands and prayed, "O, Lord, bless my dear mother." Those six words entered into the heart

of the young man Ames. Tears came to his eyes, and he was not satisfied until he had prayed for himself, "O, Lord, bless me!" That child's prayer gave to the world a great bishop, for that young man became Bishop Ames, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by whom multitudes were brought to the Savior. A poor, sick boy, about twelve years old, in England, felt that he wanted to do something for the cause of Christ. He went to his minister and asked what he could do. The minister told him he was too feeble to carry around tracts or aid the cause in any way. Very soon after, the little fellow was unable to leave the house. About that time a revival commenced in the neighborhood. When his father returned nightly from the meetings, the son would ask him if such and such a boy was converted, The father's answer was, "Yes, my son." Thus he continued to question his father for thirty-seven nights, about some particular boy. And the last night, when his father returned home, he asked: "Wasn't Johnny Hatch led to Jesus tonight?" "Yes, my son," was the reply. That night that praying boy's work was done, and the Lord took him home to the mansions above. A few days after, his mother, in looking over his papers, found a list of names, which were the very ones the boy had asked about. The first one on the list had been first awakened, and one after another had been awakened in the order their names stood upon the list. The last name was "John Hatch." Thus a sick boy, who was told he couldn't do anything for the Lord, brought thirty-seven of his friends to Christ by his prayers.

5. He serves Christ and his fellow-men who has a heart full of sympathy and pity for those who are in trouble, and who, in Jesus' name and for his sake, expresses it in loving words and deeds. The following pathetic lines of matchless tenderness, by an unknown author, have been going the rounds of the papers. The poem touches the very source and spring of human sorrow, and reveals the way in which we can all help a suffering humanity.

If I should die tonight--
My friends would look upon my quiet face
Before they laid it in its resting place,
And deem that death had left it almost fair;
And laying snow-white flowers 'gainst my hair,
Would smooth it down with tearful tenderness,
And fold my hands with lingering caress--
Poor hands! so empty --and so cold tonight.

If I should die tonight--
My friends would call to mind with lingering thought
Some kindly deed the icy hand had wrought:
Some gentle word the frozen lips had said;
Errands on which the lingering feet had sped;
The memory of my selfishness and pride,
My hasty words, would all be laid aside--
And so I should be mourned and loved to-night

If I should die tonight--
Even hearts estranged would turn once more to me,
Recalling other days remorsefully;
The eyes that chill me with averted glance
Would look upon me as of yore, perchance,
And soften in the old familiar way;
For who could war with dumb, unconscious clay?
So I might rest, forgiven of all to-night.

O friends, I pray tonight,--
Keep not your kisses for my dead, cold brow;
The way is lonely, let me feel them now!
My soul is longing for a hand-clasp warm;
My faltering feet are pierced with many a thorn;
Forgive, then, hearts estranged, forgive I plead;
When dreamless rest is mine, I shall not need

The tenderness for which I long tonight.

O boys and girls, there are sad hearts, aching hearts, hungering for appreciation, longing for sympathy, even dying for the touch and tone of love. It may be your own mother or sister or brother or friend. Don't wait till they are dead before you show your tenderness and affection. In the name of that Jesus whose touch was a benediction and whose speech was love, give your caresses and comfort, your words of affection and sympathy and kindness now to all around you; and, inasmuch as ye do it unto these, ye do it unto Him.

QUESTIONS

1. Is not God the greatest servant in the universe?
2. Is not useful service the best sign of greatness?
3. Do you not wish to be godlike in service?
4. Are you setting a good example?
5. Are you working for the Church and Sabbath-school?
6. Are you praying for the Church and Sabbath-school?
7. Are you praying for your pastor and for missionaries?
8. Are you kind to the sick and the sorrowing and the poor?
9. Do you pray for the unconverted?
10. Do you try to do good everywhere to everybody?
11. Do you ask others to come to Sunday-school and prayer-meeting?
12. Do you consecrate yourself to the service of Christ and humanity?

Sing: "Bring them in;" also, "The best Friend to have is Jesus."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 15

JOINING THE CHURCH

You have now been told very plainly that the Christian life is a life of prayer, a life of obedience, a life of love, a life of service, and a life whose aim is to be guided and inspired by the Word of God. Now, you boys and girls know whether it is the great ruling purpose of your heart to live such a life, and whether you are now, by the grace of God, endeavoring to live it. If you can, honestly, before God, say, "I am trying to live such a life by Divine help," then I have a message for you: He who is living such a life, by faith in Jesus, ought to become a member of his Church without delay.

Moses said unto Hobab: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. . . And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee" (Num. 10:29-32). In the spirit of Moses we say unto you, join yourselves to the people of God, and we will do you good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning his Church.

I. Let me give some reasons why you should join the Church:

1. In doing so, you enter an institution that has the highest standard of living of any institution in the world. All clubs and lodges have some kind of standard of attainment; but the Christian Church has God's own, and the standard is perfection. Holiness is the aim of the Church and of every true member of it. It will do you good to be a member of an organization with such an exalted ideal ever before it.

2. There you will find the helpful influence of the best example and noblest companionship. We are always influenced, more or less, by our associations. It is often an unconscious influence, but it is very real. How important, then, that we should have good companions! And we will find them in the Church if anywhere in the world. Joshua was head and shoulders above his contemporaries in his moral character. Why? Because he associated with Moses, the mightiest man of God that ever walked the earth, the one man with whom God talked face to face as man talketh with his friend, and whose very face so shone with Divine glory that men could not look upon it (Ex. 33: II, and 34:29-35). Is it any wonder that Joshua, associating intimately with such a man, became, himself, great.

Just before Garfield became President of the United States, he lectured on the importance of association and personal influence, before a body of schoolteachers. In his address he said: "I would rather sit on one end of a hewed log to study, if my old college president, Mark Hopkins, sat on the other end, than to study in the best building in the United States with an ordinary teacher." Now, all Christian boys and girls should come into the Church, and find their companionship there.

3. You will find the covenants and obligations of the Church a blessed means of grace to you. They are a wholesome stimulus and restraint for the young. When you join the Church, the world expects you to set it a wholesome example. That very expectation is a whip to constantly urge us Church members on to noble living, and is a blessing to us all.

Moreover, those who join the Church take a solemn vow to labor for its prosperity and for the glory of God, They obligate themselves to help make the audience on Sunday, and to help the Sunday-school and prayer-meeting, and to labor for the peace and prosperity and success of the Church in all its Christian efforts. This obligation is very wholesome to young converts. It gives them something to do, something definite and easily understood, and also something to be for God and the Church. The writer has been a member of the Church since childhood, and has been laboring for it ever

since, first as leader of prayer-meetings and an officer in the Sabbath-school, then in the choir, then teacher, then preacher. That early service in the Church was of unspeakable value, helping, in no small degree, to hold me for Christ, and make me efficient in his Church. It will prove a blessed help to all.

4. When you join the Church, others take a covenant with God that they will watch over you, and pray for you, and help you to live the Christian life. Some Church members, I am sorry to say, forget these vows; but others do not forget them. They lovingly keep the young Church members in their eye, and pray for them, and watch over them with the tenderness of parents.

The famous temperance worker, Mary A. Woodbridge, was a member of my Church. At a time when she was fairly deluged with work, and Joseph Cook said she was doing enough work to tax the mental and physical resources of any three men in Ohio, she asked me for a list of the Church members, between three hundred and four hundred. I asked her what she wanted of them. She replied: "I want to call their names, individually, before God in prayer." In my pastorate in Allegheny, Pa., there was a deacon's wife and his sister that made more calls than I could, and watched over and prayed with, and prayed for, the Church members with a sleepless watchfulness and tender solicitude which was wondrously helpful. Dear young Christians, you can not afford to miss such helpful influences. Without them you may fall to rise no more.

5. God himself hath spoken good concerning his cause and his Church. He calls her his "Bride" and his "Body." He has said that, "as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people." He says that he will guard them "as the apple of his eye;" and no power shall be able to pluck them out of his hand, and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Church." Wonderful promises to his Church! Join it, and then you will share these covenanted blessings. Did it ever occur to you that God cares for little else in this world but the interests of his Church and kingdom? Everything else perishes. Cities and empires, and languages and arts perish, and are lost from the sight and the thought of men. But the one thing that rides triumphant over the waves of time, forever increasing in glory, is the Church of God. "Come with us, and we will do thee good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

6. I think that even obedience to Christ demands that we join the Church. Jesus has given to us the sacraments -- baptism and the Lord's Supper. He says of the latter: "This do in remembrance of me." It is the Church member only who regards this command, which is as obligatory as the command to keep the Sabbath or to revere God's name. This request was made on the night before Jesus died for us; it comes with all the pathos of Gethsemane and the agony of Calvary. Who can willingly ignore it by refusing to become numbered with the people of God?

7. Loyalty and gratitude to Jesus and the Church demand that all who have given their hearts to Jesus should join his people in the most open and formal way. Jesus says: "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess, also, before my Father who is in heaven." "But whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and of his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Mat. 12:31, and Luke 9:26).

How could any one show more their ingratitude to the Savior, and be more manifestly ashamed of him, than when skulking about among sinners, the enemies of Jesus, and refusing to stand up and be counted as one of the covenant and avowed followers of Christ?

Still further, gratitude to the Church should lead us to join it. It is the live Church of Jesus that builds houses of worship, and supports ministers and missionaries and evangelists, and keeps in operation the means of grace. And when these means have brought saving grace to us, shall we not gratefully and gladly join the Church and pass on the blessing to others? Surely nothing could be more noble and appropriate!

8. Our own safety demands that we confess Christ in this most public way by joining the Church. It always helps people to take a bold position, to commit themselves irrevocably. When Caesar and his soldiers landed on the inhospitable shores of Britain, they burned their ships. There was now nothing but the sea behind them and the wild forests and wilder men before them. They now were sternly committed to their task. They had to conquer or perish. So should a young Christian commit himself irrevocably to the service of Jesus Christ. When Cæsar was conquering Gaul, he noticed great clouds of smoke rolling over the land from Helvetia (now called Switzerland). This was the cause of it: The Helvetians (Swiss) had

learned about the rich plains of Gaul (France), and they had resolved, as a nation, to move down, out of their mountainous country, into the richer plains of Gaul; to take what they could carry with them, and to burn all the rest. So they set fire to cities and villages and homes and barns and fences and harvests, that there might be no temptation to return. That is the way the Christian pilgrim should set out for heaven. He should abandon forever the leeks and the garlic of the old life of Egyptian bondage of the world (Num. I 1:5), and enter the Church of Christ, and be committed as a child of God.

This is the only path of safety. Anything else is simply playing with religion, trying it a few days to see how it works. Religion never works when undertaken in that spirit. Come out from the world of sin, and commit yourself to Jesus and his Church, and keep as close to Jesus as you can, and be as efficient in his service as possible. Any other course simply invites failure, and makes it an ultimate certainty. On that awful night of Peter's failure and denial of Jesus, "Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in and sat with the servants to see the end" (Mat. 26:58). He was out skulking among the enemies of Jesus. If Peter had kept close to the side of Jesus, close enough to have asked Jesus to lean upon him when he was faint from the cruel scourging, close enough to take his handkerchief and wipe the accursed spittle from Jesus' face, and the blood drops that trickled down from the crown of thorns, he would not have been guilty of cursing and swearing and denying his Lord, the dark sins that almost cost him his soul's salvation. O children, if you expect to follow Jesus at all, get into his Church, and keep as close to his side as possible. There is no other place of safety.

I have given reasons enough why you should all join the Church. Let us now ask:

II. When you should join the Church. I must say plainly, offer yourself to the Church at once, as soon as you have the witness of the Spirit and Scriptural evidence that you are a child of God. On the day of Pentecost, three thousand were converted in the morning, men, women, and children, and they joined the Church before night. I am persuaded we shall never improve on this Scriptural method of promptness in receiving converts into the bosom of the Church.

"But," some one says, "you would not receive children into the Church, would you?" Certainly I would, and nobody more gladly. Who has a better right to the privileges of the Church, or more need of them, than the child convert? I think the officers of the Church and Christian parents make no blunder so cruel and detrimental, and so fatal, as when they keep young children out of the Church, "to see if they will hold out."

If a farmer saw a lamb born in the bleak March weather, out on the hillside, would he leave it there until June "to see if it would hold out?" No farmer, who was not a fool, would do that with a lamb worth ten cents. Yet precisely that is what is done with many child Christians. Instead of being taken into the fold of Christ, and nursed and nourished, they are left out on the devil's common, among the wolves of sin, to see if they will hold out. The very time when they need the most care, they are the most neglected. O, cruel mistake! often, how fatal! During a series of meetings, a Christian mother came often to the writer and begged him to pray for her son, a young man twenty years old. It was her sad, anxious, parting request. Yet that son was converted when he was ten years old, and begged the privilege of joining the Church; but his mother refused. She wanted to see if he would hold out. And he didn't. Another earnest, prayerful mother made the same mistake with her boy. She wept and prayed over her mistake for thirty years, and died, at last, with her son still outside. The writer heard her say, one day, as the great tears rolled down her face: "I would give my right arm in a minute, to have it cut off, if I could have my boy back again where he was, and have the chance over again." O mothers, your child is a young convert only once; the wheels of time will never roll backward to bring you back your wasted opportunity.

Within a month, a pastor, formerly from Boston, told the writer that he was once summoned to the bedside of a dying Boston merchant, who told him the following: "When I was a boy ten years old, I was converted, and had a clear, unmistakable religious experience. But nobody thought of asking me or any other child, in those days, to join the Church. I was utterly neglected, and my light went out. My whole life has been wasted and wrecked. Now pray for me. I want to get back to that boyhood faith before I die." May God keep the pastors and Church officers and Christian parents and teachers from making this blunder, which is, oftentimes, little less than a crime against souls! And may God enable you, dear children, who have given your hearts to Jesus, or any other young converts, to humbly go to the Church and offer yourselves as candidates for membership!

III. What Church should you join? That is a question to be decided by your location and surroundings, and the providence of God and the Bible, and the promptings of the Spirit in answer to prayer. Study the Word, and pray and seek to know

God's will, and then find your Church home, and enter it, and go to work for Jesus with all your heart.

The Church is a school. Who are in school? Postgraduate students in the university, college students, academy students, students in the high school, grammar school, primary school. And there is the little boy with his primer under his arm, just starting for school. To him, also, the school opens its door, and nobody has a better right to it than he. So nobody has a better right to the school of Christ than the convert just beginning to learn about Jesus.

The Church is a home. Who are in the home? There are the aged grandparents, white-haired and ready for heaven; there, too, are father and mother, and young men and maidens, and boys and girls; and there, too, is the little babe just born. And the whole household circles around the cradle, and nobody gets so much loving care as the little babe; for no one needs so much. So should it be in our Churches, and fortunate are the converted children who find such a Church home.

There is something defective in a piety that does not want to enter the Church school and learn about Jesus, or that does not want to enter the Church home, and become one of the family of Christ.

O, Church of the living God, Church of the prophets and apostles, and martyrs, and saints, Church of my sainted dead, "if I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not thee above my chief joy!"

QUESTIONS

1. What reasons can you give why converts should join the Church?
2. When should you join?
3. In what respect is the Church like a school?
4. How is it like a home?

Sing: "I love thy Kingdom, Lord."

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 16

RELIGION MADE EASY BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Dear children, in this closing chapter I want to teach YOU the blessed secret of living easily the Christian life. I cut these words out of a paper some years ago, and pasted them on the front leaf of my Bible: "Nothing is easier than to live a Christian life, if we make it the first business of life. Nothing is harder if we make it the second." I think it a very beautiful thought; and, surely, religion ought to be the first concern of us all, for it has to do with our well-being for all eternity. Nothing else can possibly be so all-important. But, after all, this motto does not give us the real secret of living easily the Christian life. For many a man puts his whole heart, and all the forces of his soul, into his religion, and still finds it hard to measure up to duty and please God. Many of these self-originated efforts end in very sorry failures. The heart is left to ache over pledges broken and vows unkept.

Many of us can recall how we resolved to live a life of love as Jesus did, but a feeling of dislike and ill-will would creep into our hearts. We tried to be meek and humble, but, before we knew it, a wicked pride was ruling us and making our conduct unlovely. We tried to forgive our enemies; but, somehow, we had feelings sadly like revenge, and, to say the least, we could not pray for them as Jesus did. We had evil habits that we tried hard to overcome; but, with all our resolves and struggles, they bound us with fetters of iron strength, which we could not break. We did not do what we ought, and what we had promised ourselves we would do, while the evil things that we hated, we still performed. There was some strange, bad thing or force within us impelling us toward evil, and leading us into conduct displeasing to God. "When we would do good, evil was present with us."

Now, living a Christian life never can be easy under such circumstances. Nobody has ever found it easy, of ever will. But, glory to God, Jesus promised to give the Holy Spirit to his followers, on purpose to change these conditions, and give us power to do his will. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

I can make this plain by some illustrations: Take Jesus' own disciples. They had forsaken all to follow Jesus, and had been preaching and working miracles in his name for more than three years. Jesus said that their names were written in heaven, and that they were not of the world. They were Christians; but it was not easy for them to act like Christ. One time, when the people in a village did not receive Jesus, James and John were impatient and resentful, and wanted to call down fire from heaven, and burn up the whole village.

When Jesus was going to Jerusalem to be crucified, James and John were so selfishly worldly and ambitious that they wanted the first places at the right and left hand of Jesus in a temporal kingdom. The other ten disciples heard of it, and were jealous, and quarreled. When Jesus was arrested, they all forsook him, and fled in cowardly fear. The taunt of the servant girl so frightened Peter that he cursed and swore, and denied that he knew Jesus. The blessed Savior was patient with them, and forgave them all these sins. He knew how weak they were. But, just before he ascended, he said: "Tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high" Luke 24:49). "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

They stayed together, and prayed for the great blessing, until, at Pentecost, the Spirit was poured out upon them; Peter, who had been so false and cowardly, became at once as bold as a lion. James and John lost instantly their temper and revengefulness. Thomas quit doubting. Undoubtedly, Martha quit fretting and scolding. All of them became unselfish heroes, willing to live and die for Jesus. The reason of this wonderful change was, as Peter declared years afterward, the Holy Spirit cleansed their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8-9). Their religion was now made easy. Instead of having to try hard to keep their religion, the Holy Spirit and their religion now kept them.

"But," asks some boy or girl, "does Jesus send the Holy Spirit in like manner now?" Certainly he does. John the Baptist said of Jesus: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Mat. 3:11). Peter said at Pentecost: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him" (Acts 2:38-39). If you have heard Jesus call, and have come unto him to be his disciple, then this promise is as much for you as it was for the apostle Peter, and you have as good right to expect the "promise of the Father," It was made to all the children.

And the best of it all is, many men and women, and boys and girls, are actually receiving this blessing now.

I. You may be curious to know what effect it has upon them? I am happy to tell you of the blessed results that follow this great gift. it cleanses the whole nature now, just as it cleansed the apostles.

1. I have heard hundreds, who had used tobacco and drink in the days of their sinfulness, and who had the appetite for these things after conversion, testify that the Holy Spirit took away, entirely, all the appetite for such things. Before this coming of the Holy Spirit they had tried, time and again, to give up their evil ways, but their appetites conquered them; but when the Spirit came, he conquered the appetites for them, and made them clean.

2. This baptism with the Spirit removes the bad tempers of the mind and heart. Boys and girls know, only too well, what it is to be tormented with jealousy and afflicted by an evil temper, and goaded by envy and fretfulness and repining. We all know what it is to have a hundred and one things about us that seem to be a part of our very make-up, but which make us unlovely and unlike the Master. But this blessing that I am talking about corrects all these evils, and makes us gentle and sweet and patient and beautiful for Jesus.

For example, I know a young girl so violent in her temper that she was not permitted to live with her brothers and sisters. She got converted, but still had her temper; she afterwards sought the "filling with the Spirit," when, lo! her evil temper was gone!

I have, probably, heard similar testimony from a hundred people within a few months. I hear it from men and women in all walks of life, from learned ministers, from doctors of divinity, and scholars and authors and teachers, and I have no reason to doubt that. God is doing just this wonderful thing by his Holy Spirit.

Abbie C. Morrow, in "Morning Glories," one of her charming books for children, says:

"One day, a lady, who had a dreadful temper, and used to scold her household and children, prayed for the Holy Spirit to come into her heart and take the temper away, and he did. About two weeks afterward she heard her two little children talking together as they played on the floor. One said to the other: 'Don't do that; if you do, mamma will scold.' 'No, she won't,' was the reply; 'the Lord has taken the scold all out of her.'

"A little boy was saved in a revival meeting, and was very happy for days. But one evening he came to the evangelist, with such a sad face, and said: 'Can't the Lord save me so I won't get mad?' He was told that he could. Then he knelt down and received the Holy Spirit into his heart to keep him, and he did not get angry any more."

We all, by nature, need to have the "scold" and the "mad" and the gun-powdery disposition taken out of us; and the Holy Ghost can do it..

Then, there is pride that makes children so unlovely, and that so torments and mars the spiritual beauty of so many older people. It is a most troublesome guest to have in the heart, and the worst of it is, it comes to stay. There is no place in your whole nature so sacred that this nuisance will not be on hand to defile. You may get disgusted, and peremptorily order it out; but it will smile in your face, and refuse to go. Only the Holy Spirit can put this unwelcome guest out, bag and baggage, and take the vaunting self-importance and the peacock strut all out of you, and make you humble and modest like Jesus.

A first cousin to this is envy, that makes you feel so uncomfortable and bitter when any one excels you in any desirable

gift or grace or faculty or possession.

Another of this brood of heart-evils is fear -- moral cowardice! Not only boys and girls, but even grown men and women who are professors of religion, are often so cowardly. Like Peter, they are afraid to stand up for Jesus; afraid to confess him before his enemies; afraid to rebuke wicked fashions, and defy sinful customs, and denounce popular wickedness, and . oppose sinful doers. Cowards! cowards! But there is a remedy. The Holy Ghost can so shed abroad the love of God in the heart, and so awaken the heart's own love for Jesus, that "perfect love will cast out all fear, because fear hath punishment, and he that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I John 4:18).

Multitudes of people, young and old, are losing their religion and losing their souls from cowardice; but the Holy Spirit can put such a holy courage into us that, like Daniel, we shall fear neither men nor devils, fear nought but God. In the early Christian Church the Spirit so filled even children with divine heroism that they would face martyrdom rather than deny Jesus, and they would be torn asunder or be thrown to the lions without a cry of fear.

A lady, who had once been very high-tempered and proud and vain, received the baptism with the Spirit. Thirty-one years afterward she wrote: "I have no recollection of ever feeling the stirrings of anger, jealousy, pride, self-will, or bitterness since the day God cleansed my heart from all sin, and the Holy Ghost came in and filled me. He has been the doorkeeper of my heart ever since." O, this is what Christians need who find it hard work to live the Christian life! They need the evil appetites and propensities taken out of them, and all the roots of bitterness. God calls it "cleansing the heart." It is a blessed, divine "SUBTRACTION."

But this is not all the Holy Spirit does. For-

3. He then gives us a blessed case of divine "ADDITION." He fills us with himself, and starts us to bearing the "fruits of the Spirit." "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance," and everything else that is beautiful and Christ-like in behavior and life. We have peace and rest and joy in the Lord.

A lady in Europe, Madame Guyon, received this blessing. She was surpassingly beautiful, and she had three beautiful children. Smallpox came into the family, and killed her youngest boy, and horribly disfigured her and the other children. Yet God's sweet grace sustained her, and she wrote: "My whole body looked like that of a leper. All that saw me said they had never seen such a shocking spectacle. But my soul was kept in a contentment not to be expressed. I would not have changed my condition for that of the most happy prince in the world. Every one thought I would . be inconsolable, and several expressed their sympathy in my sad condition, while I lay still, in the secret fruition of a joy unspeakable, in this total deprivation of the beauty that had been a snare to my pride. A voice in my heart said: 'If I would have had thee fair, I would have left thee as thou wert.' My youngest boy died for want of care. This blow indeed struck me to the heart, yet the spirit of sacrifice possessed me so strongly that, though I loved this child tenderly, I never shed a tear at hearing of his death."

This precious Christian woman was afterward imprisoned fourteen years for Jesus' sake; but she rejoiced in her afflictions, and composed blessed hymns of praise, and sang them to the listening ear of her God.

I met a Christian woman last summer who had the grace and strength of body and soul given her to speak at her own husband's funeral. And I know a preacher, baptized with the Holy Ghost and mighty in the Lord, who, while the body of his blessed wife lay in his home waiting for burial, went to a pastorless Church near by and preached, The Holy Spirit came mightily upon the preacher and the hearers, and people crowded to the altar to be saved.

O, the blessed Spirit of God can take all bad tendencies out of the heart, and put all good impulses in, and fill the soul with comfort and rest and strength and peace and joy, blessed foretastes of heaven; and thus he makes religion easy, even for a child.

II. Some earnest Christian boy or girl will say:, "Tell us how we may receive this blessing." This I will now do: This blessing is received on certain conditions, just like every other blessing God gives us. He promises the blessing, he urges us to have it, he even commands us, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18); but we can only have this gift on God's terms.

1. You need to feel a great need and longing for the blessing. Jesus said: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Mat. 5:6). "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, . . . I will pour my Spirit" (Is. 44:3). This is a blessing so precious that God gives it only to those who desire it with a longing that can only be likened to hunger and thirst. The sainted Friend, David B. Updegraff, wrote: "There came to my heart a great hunger and thirst to be 'filled with all the fullness of God.' I longed for a clean heart and a constant spirit." Hannah Whitall Smith writes: "I began to long after holiness. My whole heart panted after entire conformity to the will of God and unhindered communion with him." This is the state of heart all people come into before they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. God says he gives "the Holy Spirit to them that obey him" (Acts. 5:32). Whatever act of submission you have ever made to God before, you want to go to him for this special blessing, and tell him that, from hence.. forth, you purpose to be absolutely submissive to him, and you decide that his will shall be done in you and by you for evermore.

3. These heavenly longings of the heart must be expressed to God in prayer. This especial gift of God must be prayed for with great earnestness of heart. Jesus said: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find. . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke 11:9-13.)

4. Another condition is, that we consecrate all our being and possessions to God. God's word is: "Present yourselves unto God as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. 6:13). This was said to people who were already Christians. CONSECRATION means the turning over of our whole self, all we have and are, or ever shall have or shall be, to the Lord, to be his, and his alone, and his forever.

The act of consecration is to recognize Christ's ownership of us, and to accept it. Notice, it is not an act of feeling, but of will. Do not try to feel good and deserving of God's great gift. It is a gift of grace that we never can deserve. Let your feelings alone. Let your will decide the matter that you are to be now and forever the Lord's. President Mahan wrote: "The revealed condition of the indwelling of the Spirit is a full and complete surrender, on our part, of all the powers of our being to the Divine occupancy and control."

5. This blessing is received by FAITH. We are taught, in Gal. 3:14, "That we receive the promise of the Spirit through FAITH." And in Acts 15:8-9, "Giving them the Holy Ghost, . . . cleansing their hearts by FAITH." "Sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:18). It is still, as in the day of Pentecost, the privilege and duty of the children of God to receive the Holy Spirit by a conscious, definite act of appropriating faith, just as they received Jesus Christ. As sinners, we accept Christ by faith for our pardon; but as forgiven sons and daughters, we accept the Spirit for our SANCTIFICATION. After you have utterly yielded your will to God for this blessing, and prayed for it, and consecrated your all to be the Lord's forever, then it is your part to believe that Jesus will keep his promise with you; believe that the altar sanctifieth the gift; believe that the Holy Spirit will come in to fill the heart that invites him, and gives him all. The Spirit will not disappoint you. He will come, as Jesus promised, to abide with you forever. You may safely trust him to cleanse you and keep you from all sin.

I can not write more here on this blessed theme. In my larger book, "Holiness and Power," I give ninety-seven pages of careful instruction on how to receive this blessing. If you wish to hear more about it, consult that book. But O, now, now, bow down before God; surrender your will to obey only God; consecrate your time, talents, hands, feet, lips, mind, and heart, your reputation and influence and possessions, to be all the Lord's forever! Then believe for the filling of the Spirit, for the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Believe and receive, "that your joy may be full."

QUESTIONS

1. What is the subject of this chapter?
2. Can our own resolutions make religion easy?
3. What did the disciples receive at Pentecost?
4. Can boys and girls now have the same blessing?
5. Can the Spirit take away bad appetites?
6. Can he take away bad dispositions and tempers?

7. Does he give to us the "fruits of the Spirit?"
8. What five things must one do to receive this blessing? .
9. Will you receive the Spirit now?

Food For Lambs

Leading Children To Christ

By Aaron Merritt Hills

Chapter 17

THE RIVER OF DEATH

Dear Children, -- After the previous sixteen chapters of this book were in the hands of the publishers, and the printers had them ready for the press, I was searching the art collections of Cincinnati for illustrations. Among other pictures, my attention was called to the "River of Death" picture in connection with this chapter. It is reduced in size from a large colored lithograph, nearly two feet by three, which ought to hang in every Sabbath-school room in the land. God put it into the heart of Brother M. W. Knapp to have the picture made. He has written a little book about it. The picture has already led to many conversions, and in some instances has started revivals of religion. This picture so well illustrates the teaching of this book that I wanted it put in, and I now call your attention to a few points of interest.

You know all rivers have their rise in the natural springs and pools of the upland country. As they flow down away from their source, other tributary rivers flow in, and therefore the main river gets broader and deeper as it flows on, ever increasing in volume, till the might of its current is irresistible as it sweeps on to the sea.

Now, that is precisely the way with a life of sin, which is here not inaptly likened to a river. It begins in the springs of natural disposition in early childhood -- love of self, love of ease, love of the creature, pride, etc.; soon cruelty to animals, which many boys and girls are guilty of; and selfishness and hate and greed form a large stream to flow into the river. On the other side of the picture, love of pleasure, and reading and selling Sunday papers, and ignorance and indolence, pour into the river of an evil life the copious stream of "Sabbath-breaking." Just below that, there flows from the vile pool of irreverence the horrid "River of Profanity." Nearly opposite, on the right side of the picture from the big, full ponds of bad early training and filthiness and wicked thoughts and gluttony, there flows the evil stream of "Disobedience to Parents."

Lower down on the left side of the picture are the low swamps of cheating at marbles and all other games, and the marshes and pools of debt and fear and greed and cunning, that drain off into "Lying River." And not far away are the lakes of C/lurch lotteries and saloon gambling and horse-racing and cards and bowling alleys, which all drain off into the "River of Stealing." And just beyond are the dismal swamps of tobacco and drink habits and fiery passion and vile books and vile companions, that soon swell the banks of "Murder River."

Meantime, on the other side, there is an immense dismal swamp region where lie a great chain of pools and ponds and lakes -- Drinker Pool, Saloon Pond, Corrupt Ballot Reservoir, Divorce Lake, theater, circus, dancing school, and ball-room cesspools, which all empty into "Adultery River," and swell the turbid currents of the "River of Death."

In the lower part of this river the current is very swift, and over it hangs a malarious, death-laden mist, which would make the lower course absolutely hopeless but for one fact. The blessed God, in infinite pity, has erected at the mouth of every inflowing stream a salvation light-house, whose gospel search-light pierces the gloom, and flashes out an invitation to look unto Jesus and be saved. Besides, the Great King, our Heavenly Father, has fitted up a blessed life-boat that continually plies the river along its whole length, visiting, in spite of scoff and jeers, the crazy, demented, sin-drugged people crowding the down-stream boats. Its loving Captain pleads with all to betake themselves to the Gospel life-boat and be carried back, free of all expense, to the land of Salvation.

Now across the middle of the picture you see the impenetrable hedge of sinful nature, through which no one ever escapes save by Christ -- the Door and the Way. The conditions of passing through into the table-land Plains of Regeneration are repentance and faith. There stands the cross where Jesus died and opened the gates of mercy for all mankind. On the Plains of Regeneration you have turned your back on the dark "River of Death," and you are looking upward, and facing

heavenward.

The light that streams from the coming glory, if you walk in it, will bring you to Pentecostal gate, through which, 'on condition of utter abandonment to God to be his alone and his forever, and simple faith in Jesus to "baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire" (Matt. 3:11) you pass through and mount up onto Holiness Heights. There you dwell on the Beulah Summits and feast on milk and honey, and the Eshcol clusters of exceeding joy, and often breathe the fragrant atmosphere and hear the ravishing music of the glory-world. There, "abiding and confiding" and rejoicing and going on "from glory to glory," you hear at last the summons that ushers you into the presence of Jesus your King, "whom not having seen you have loved."

May all my readers seek earnestly, and by faith obtain, all that God's redeeming love has in store for them, both regenerating grace and the sanctifying baptism with the Holy Ghost; may all the remainder of life be lived on "Holiness Heights" until they enter into their heavenly reward!