

Article	Page
Boaz.. In the book of Ruth	1
"Power" in Ephesians	3
Paul's Metaphors: Ambassador	7
Preaching of the Gospel	9
The Supreme Requisite	10

BOAZ – IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

A Relative, A Redeemer

In the portrait of Boaz given in the book of Ruth, we have beautiful foreshadowings of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. This short book is packed full of intimations of the coming Redeemer, who became a man – the only sinless Man – that He might pay the price of our redemption and take us to Himself to be His bride.

Some things are evident immediately:

The Mystery of His Name

There are differences of thought as to the meaning of the name "Boaz." Perhaps it is most commonly understood to mean "In him is strength" or a similar rendering. But Keil and Delitzsch's Commentary on the Old Testament states that the word comes from a different root. They state that "the name Boaz is not formed from bō'az [transliteration], "in whom is strength," but from a root, bā'az [transliteration], which does not occur in Hebrew."

The Pulpit Commentary agrees, stating: "And his name was Boaz. The root of this name is not found, apparently, in Hebrew, as was supposed by the older philologists, and hence its essential idea is as yet undetermined."

Perhaps it is best to say that we are not sure of the meaning of his name. This would turn our thoughts to the Lord Jesus who had "a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself" (Revelation 19:12). The Lord Jesus had earlier stated that "no man knoweth the Son, but the

Father" (Matthew 11:27). Yet at the present time, through the enabling of the Holy Spirit, we may explore the greatness of the One who has a Name "above every name" (Philippians 2:9). And forever, we will explore that great mystery of godliness (1 Timothy 3:16).

Neither natural inquisitiveness or human intellect are sufficient for the revelation of truth concerning the person of the Lord Jesus. But we have been given the Spirit of Truth who can enlighten us: "...as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). With the coming of the Spirit of Truth, the Lord Jesus promised: "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John 16:14).

The greatest privilege and ultimate joy of a believer is the revelation of the Lord Jesus to his heart. Conversely, there can be no greater loss than being blinded to the beauty of the Lord through the deceptive, dazzling effect of the fleeting attractions of the world. It ought to break our hearts to think the Lord would ever have to ask us: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me..." (John 14:9)?

In His high priestly prayer, the Lord Jesus stated that "...this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). On some occasions, the world will exclaim: "This is really living!" But only a Christian has the potential to experience real living – real life, eternal life.

Elimelech and his family had once enjoyed the blessing of Boaz. They had lived under his gracious provision. But they died at a distance from him among the Moabites, the enemies of God's people. May we never leave this world at a distance from the Lord. Yet it has been the tragic experience of some!

"Truths for our Day"

is a monthly publication that is freely available on the Internet and is intended to be a help to believers who appreciate the timeless truths of God's Word and who recognize the unchanging principles of God's will for His people. It is primarily intended to strengthen those who enjoy fellowship in local assemblies of believers who are gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Editor and Publisher: Joel Portman
1200 Forest Glen Ct. SE,
Cedar Rapids, IA, 52403
Write to: mail@truthsforourday.com

All issues of "Truths for our Day" are available by clicking on the link below. This will take you to the index:

[Truths For Our Day](#)

Please read this notice:

We permit and encourage you to reprint any issue of "Truths for our Day" that you desire, either for yourself, or to share with other believers. However, if you wish to copy an individual article, we will forward your request to the copyright owner of the article to request his permission. For this reason, the format of the publication is locked to prevent unauthorized publication of articles that the author would prefer to reserve. Please do not copy them in any other way. We want to respect the ownership of all those who have written articles.

We also hope you will let others know about "Truths for our Day" and encourage them to subscribe as well. They can do so by simply sending an e-mail to this email address:

mail@truthsforourday.com

Thank you

His Presence Before the Departure

While there is no mention of Boaz in Ruth ch. 1, he was present, however, and had been involved in the life of the family of Elimelech before they took their journey to Moab. Naomi reveals this when she says to Ruth: "*Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead*" (ch. 2:20). He had not "left off" his kindness and it was both "to the living and the dead." Boaz had blessed Elimelech's family before they left for Moab. Similarly, before our journey began, the Lord was there. He is the Eternal One: "*...from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God*" (Psalm 90:2).

Whether it be our personal journey when we "*walked according to the course of this world*" (Ephesians 2:2) or the fall that took place in the Garden of Eden that brought the whole human race into enmity against God, the Eternal Son has always been there. He was "before all things" (Colossians 1:17). While we were in the far country taking our own way, He was fully aware of all that had been happening in our lives. As Boaz told Ruth: "*It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore*" (Ruth 2:11). Nothing was hidden from Boaz. It was "fully shown." The Hebrew construction of the words "fully shown" in ch. 2:11 is an intensified Hebrew form (Emphatic Infinitive Absolute) indicating that Boaz had taken a profound interest in Naomi and Ruth and had the complete picture. Likewise the Lord in our lives! As the Psalmist said: "*Thou ...art acquainted with all my ways*" (Ps. 139:3). And in the midnight hours of our lives (ch. 3:8), we can depend on the Lord to take care of us. Like Boaz, the Lord would say: "*...fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest*" (3:11).

His Response to Failure

It is a tribute to the character of Boaz that in spite of the failures noted in the book of Ruth, his whole demeanor is marked by grace without a single hint of disapproval of any person in the book. Neither Elimelech, nor his sons, nor Naomi, nor the nearer kinsman receive a

single word of censure. Boaz is marked by grace. Clearly it was not that he failed to see the failure, but this was not the time to lay accusations. And our gracious Lord knows when to comfort and when to deal with us in discipline. When we are down, He will encourage us and seek to restore us to a former joy.

It is also notable that it is "the stranger" (ch. 2:10) who appreciates the grace of Boaz. Sometimes it takes a while for those of us lived under the sanctifying influence of a Christian home to appreciate the grace of God. Consequently, it is refreshing to have "strangers" come among us and experience Divine grace. Seeing this grace through the eyes of those who have come from the far country is a gift we should greatly value. It is another reason why we must reach out to the communities in which we live and evangelize those who have not heard the Gospel. When we become parochial, introverted, and stagnant, we can easily lose the marvel of the grace of God.

Three times the word "grace" is mention in the book: In ch. 2:2 Ruth went out from Naomi to seek for grace wherever she might find it; in ch. 2:10 she finds it in the field at the feet of Boaz; and in ch. 2:13 she prays for continued grace from him (translated "favour" in KJV). Likewise, there came a moment in our hunger and thirst after righteousness, when we sought for grace. And we found it at the feet of the Savior. And day by day we need His continuing grace to keep us until we are finally at home with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8).

Hence, we see in Boaz a foreshadowing of the coming Redeemer and, thinking of the Lord Jesus, we sing:

My Redeemer, O what beauties
 In that lovely Name appear;
 None but Jesus, in His Glories,
 Shall the honored title wear .
 My Redeemer!
 Thou has my salvation wrought.

"Power" in Ephesians

Joel Portman

Believers in Christ don't progress very far in their Christian life before they realize that they need more than natural ability. If we illustrate a Christian life, as some have, as a voyage across a wide ocean, we can think of salvation as being like the port of embarkation. At the beginning of the voyage, it may seem that all will be smooth sailing across a tranquil sea until the other shore is reached, but very soon after beginning the voyage, they learn that there are opposing forces that are always against them along with stressful experiences and trials of their faith. Sometimes the waves may be minimal and cause little trouble, but in a Christian's life, as on an ocean, they can become very violent.

Three Powerful Enemies

Perhaps the first enemy that they encounter, and one that never leaves them, is ***the flesh*** within. This is like a mutiny of the seaman who are in rebellion against their captain. The flesh is the mixture of strong and alluring influences that reside within and arise from one's own thoughts and desires. It could be seen as the residue of those elements that controlled a believer before salvation and would yet control if allowed to. They are the continual patterns of life and thinking that need to be subdued and brought into conformity to God's will. We read in Romans 12:1-2 that, having yielded our bodies (including the mind and will) to God, a process begins that will only be accomplished by the unhindered action of the Holy Spirit working in the life. His work will enable one to refuse the efforts of this world (the prevailing system of thought, action, and purpose that is dominated by the god of this world, Satan, to control the mind and form our lives and actions). Instead, one needs to place a deliberate emphasis on allowing that same Spirit to work in us to transform our minds so that we might prove the goodness and perfection of the will of God. Anything less than this will result in believers who live weakly with one foot virtually in the world, and without strength to overcome this powerful force.

The children of God in the furnace without a good store of Scripture in their hearts are always impatient, struggling in self-will for deliverance, and thereby they do but add fuel to the fire.

Robert C. Chapman

Another enemy that stands in opposition has already been mentioned, and this is **the world**. The world has a multitude of facets to attract and distract believers so as to hinder their life and progress. It attracts the emotions, so that the normal sympathies are affected. It impresses the mind with its accomplishments and influences the thoughts with its philosophies. The world is a system that is controlled by the devil and so designed in every aspect to captivate and dominate the person. The world may express itself religiously, it may present itself as political power, it may have a highly educated appeal and attract the intellect, or an aspect that emphasizes the arts and beauty. All these may have their proper place, but the world presents them in such a way that they dominate and produce wrong desires that hinder a believer in Christ.

The last enemy is obviously the agent behind all the others, and that is the devil, or **Satan**. He has many names, and though he has great power, he is only a fallen, sinful, angel and can only be in one location at once. However, he is the head of an entire kingdom, that of darkness, but while being that, he can transform himself to resemble an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). So, his powers of deception are great, and he has many agents under him, including demons and fallen angels. He is a great enemy with much power and long experience. Though we have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col. 1:13), we should never sneer, or speak carelessly about the devil. Even Michael (Jude 9) used respectful language when contending with the devil over the body of Moses. He is a "roaring lion" enemy of the believer (1 Pet. 5:8) who is unceasing in his efforts to trip up or destroy God's people. We are to resist the devil (Jam. 4:7), but only as we are "strong in the Lord," (Eph. 6:10).

Paul's 1st Prayer for the Saints

With enemies such as these, we have a great need for power that only can come from God. When we venture out on our own, thinking that our strength is sufficient, then we should remember Paul's words at the end of an instructive portion (2 Cor. 12:9-10), "*when I am weak, then am I strong.*" We remember his

words in Romans 7:24, "*O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" Other passages could be cited (1 Cor. 10:12, Proverbs 3:5, etc.) that show that there is no believer exempt from the need for spiritual power that can only be received from God. One has said, that the weakest Christian is one who thinks that he is strong; the strongest one is that one who recognizes his weakness and depends on God to give strength and ability. Anyone who thinks that he is sufficient in himself to be or do whatever is required is one who is completely unaware of his own personal condition. Self-confidence or overconfidence is a sure cause of spiritual and moral failure in one's life as a believer in Christ. We sing hymns such as: "Saviour, through the desert lead us, without Thee we cannot go". Or "Jesus Lord, I need Thy presence, as I journey on my way, For without Thee I am lonely, and my feet are apt to stray," but then we go out as if we can handle every situation on our own. How foolish we are at times! But when pressures come and trials assail, we learn our own weakness and the need for divine power and strength. Such times are experiences of refining and development of a Christian, with the result being that we are stronger because we are nearer and more dependent on our blessed Lord, the Great Shepherd and High Priest of His people.

It isn't surprising that in Ephesians, especially in the first half that emphasizes God's work for us entirely, we have a passage that is rich with references to God's power toward us (Eph. 1:17-23) and then the epistle follows with the demonstration of that power in our salvation and subsequent blessings (Eph. 2:1-10 esp.). Let us look at the variety of words that are used to speak about that divine power that is available for us and is working in us. We notice that there are a number of words in the Greek that are available to describe power in its various aspects and implications.

Looking at the words used in Eph. 1:19 individually, we will try to learn what they mean. The first word is "power" and this is simply the word "dunamis" that signifies a form of power that is inherent in a person or object. Many English words are derived from this word, such as dynamite, dynamo, dynamic, potential,

capacity, resident ability, and possibility. So that this word indicates the degree of power that is resident and available to be used.

Then Paul uses "energeia" or our word "working" that means the operative energy of a device, or the idea of "energy at work", that is, it is not static or simply available, but it is being actively expressed in work accomplished. This word is found three times in Ephesians, here and in 3:7, 4:16.

Following those words, we find another word for power, which is "ischus" or a power that is endowed because of who or what one is, more often signifying dominion. It is the word used in Eph. 6:10, "the power of His might" so that it is the power that pertains to God because of who He is in His person. Similarly, in Rev. 7:12, in the ascription of praise to God, it is one of the attributes that pertain to His person.

One more word remains here, and that is "kratos", which means power that is endowed, or located in an object that has the potential to use it. It seems that the majority of times we read it this word is a descriptive term that is linked with sovereign authority and right to control, a term that is appropriate to use for God's authority.

Reverting to our illustration of a ship launching out on the ocean, we think of the ship moored to the pier. It is replete with power, fully provisioned and with all the machinery able to function as it is supposed to. It is dynamic! But it's not moving or doing anything. But then we notice the water stirring after the lines are cast off, and the ship begins to move away and out into the deep. That would be an expression of energy. The control of the ship by the captain might envelope the other two expressions that involve his ability because of who he is and also because of what he is able to do. A ship moving out in this way on a journey to a distant shore is functioning as it was designed and is fulfilling that design and purpose, with a full display of its power and ability to do so.

The writer recalls our deceased and appreciated brother, Mr. Norman Crawford, using these words as follows: Kratos signifies power lodged in the arm, ischus speaks of the same arm uplifted in a conscious aim, and energeia is the idea of that arm at work to accomplish its intended result. There are various means to try

to illustrate what is being conveyed in this verse.

All these are brought together in these verses in Eph. 1 to emphasize the greatness of power that is available to a believer as a result of Christ being risen from the dead. Kenneth Wuest translates the expression as, "And what is the super-abounding greatness of His inherent power to us who are believing ones, as measured by the operative energy of the manifested strength of His might." He uses many words to seek to catch the full expression of this collection of power words. The most impressive thing to us is that this is something that God wants a believer to know (v. 18), and not to simply know it in a light or shallow manner, even as theory, but to truly KNOW it in its exceeding greatness. It is to be a present spiritual reality in one's life. It would seem that it is intended to give the impression that there is so much potential spiritual power available to a Christian through Christ who is now ascended and seated in glory, that we can never exhaust it in any manner. It is the power that God displayed when He raised Christ up from among the dead and set Him in that glorified place, no longer only as the eternal Son of God, but now as a Man, who has accomplished a work such as no other could ever do. He is now placed above all as Head over all things to the church. The full expanse of all that is included in these verses is more than we can sufficiently grasp. But the first verse following in 2:1 introduces us to the first personal experience of that power.

For us personally, that power was first seen when He made us alive, completely changing our state from death to life and accomplishing a great work within that has changed the nature and direction of our lives. That work of power will continue until we are seated in 9 (the) heavenlies in the ages to come, wondering at the unending display of the riches of His grace, experiencing His kindness toward us, and exhibiting the results of His workmanship that He has wrought in us. Indeed, it is a very great and expansive transformation that He has and is accomplishing, all by the gracious working of His unlimited power and might toward us who are the objects of His kindness and love. It is most marvelous to consider, and it should cause our hearts to bow

in unending worship and praise.

Paul's 2nd Prayer for Believers

At the end of chapter 3, Paul breaks forth into prayer once again in a slightly different way, yet expressing a desire for them that they might be spiritually developed and strengthened so that they, as children of God, may be firmly established on the truth of God and a close relationship with Christ. He expresses some distinct purposes in his prayer. They are introduced by the main "thats" of the portion: He begins with the desire that they might be "strengthened", but it's by His Spirit inwardly. That leads into the second one, "that Christ may be at home (lit) in their hearts, so "that" they will be rooted and grounded (established firmly) in love. Then farther ahead, he desires "that" in knowing the love of Christ in its surpassing greatness, they may be filled to the full in all the exceeding supply of God. Then in v. 20, we learn that it is only by means of His power that far exceeds all that we ask or think. This work is so great that we can't comprehend it well enough to ask for it intelligently. God is the only one who can accomplish it, and it is for His glory even as it is for our spiritual well-being. Going back to v. 16, we emphasize that it is only accomplished by the inward working of His Spirit. The word used for strengthening in this case is one that means it is power displayed and seen in its results. Any change inwardly in a believer will be expressed outwardly. All those qualities that are included in, and are the aim of the work of the Spirit in a Christian, are intended to be displayed and expressive of Christ in our testimony. We need this power at work to accomplish His purpose to make us what we should be for His glory.

Paul begins in v. 16 by emphasizing this power at work in us, and then he ends this prayer in v. 20 by again emphasizing that it is the power of God that alone can bring this into reality. Man's best efforts cannot attain this desired goal, only God.

Power for Warfare

After expounding the riches of the grace of God that we have been given through His abundant supply, Paul nears the end of the epistle to again remind us that we need the power of God

to resist an evil foe that we encounter in this world. The tense of this expression gives the thought of "being constantly strengthened" as we face the evil foe. There never will be a time when we can say that God has not supplied us with needed power and ability. Three words for power are used in this expression. They are "endunamoo", "kratos", and "ischus", and we remember that these last two words are linked with the kind of power that comes from God Himself. The first word is a verb form of "dunamis" that means "to put power or strength into" in order to cause it, or one, to be able to function or do something. We read in Rom. 4:20 with regard to Abraham's faith in God's promise, that he didn't vacillate between two opinions (faith or unbelief), but grew strong (endunamoo) in faith, giving glory to God. He was endued, or empowered, in faith. We believe the purpose in this verse is to remind us that our source for strength in our conflict is "in the Lord" and it is He who alone can empower us to overcome, since it is He who provides the power of His might, or as Wuest's translation puts it, "Finally, be constantly strengthened in the Lord and in the active efficacy of the might that is inherent in Him". So in this we learn that there are infinite resources to enable a believer to resist and have victory over the enemy in the evil day, to stand firm and not yield at all.

Looking at these three passages, we see that in Eph. 1:19, we have God's power toward us to accomplish His work, in 3:16, we receive God's power working in us through the Holy Spirit, and in 6:10, we read of God's power for us through the Lord Himself. How wonderful to realize that God not only intends a believer to grow and live triumphantly in a world of sin and counteracting forces, but He also provides them with every supply of power and every resource so that we might accomplish that goal. One can hardly make the excuse that God hasn't given me what I need to do this; He has already given us far more than we need! It is our responsibility to take it up and use it.

Why is it that our confidence in God is so hesitating, our views of His power so dwarfish, our love so defective, our requests and expectations so limited?

PAUL'S METAPHORS

J.A. Davidson

THE AMBASSADOR: AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

"We preach Christ crucified" 1 Cor 1:23.

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the (as) Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake" 2 Cor 4:5.

Those who carry the glorious message of Christ crucified (1 Cor) and Christ glorified (2 Cor) are defined by the apostle Paul as ambassadors. *"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" 2 Cor 5:20.*

An Ambassador is a representative living abroad promoting the interests of his or her homeland. While absent from home it is the responsibility of the Ambassador to bear the dignity and honour of representing his or her country in a foreign land. The reception of the Ambassador will depend on whether that land is friendly or hostile toward his or her fatherland. The Ambassador will be granted diplomatic immunity but must not while in a foreign land, interfere in its internal politics, marry one of its subjects or practice its religion.

The dignity of the Ministry of Reconciliation to which we are called (2 Cor 4:6 – 5:21) is seen in the radiance which comes from God Himself. *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" 2 Cor 4:6.* The seals of office are bestowed upon the Ambassador by the highest authority of his sovereign state. God alone, is the Originator of this illumination, this penetrating light, the revelation of the Father in the Son, the full revelation of true knowledge in the Person and Presence of Jesus Christ. The apostle uses this investiture as the clinching reason why there is no room for pride or self esteem. *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" 2 Cor 4:7.* We have considered the Body and its activities in Paper 5 of this series. Here

we have the great mystery of the Gospel, the greatest message in the weakest vessel, the body likened unto an earthenware vase. Human weakness presents no barrier to the purposes of God. It is more important that this vessel be *clean* then *clever*.

1) The Merits of the Ambassador: Found "in" Christ. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" 2 Cor 5:17.* The first credentials are what we obtain in Christ at conversion which is manifest in a new nature, new love and new desires as we now represent a new Master and a new Homeland. We rejoice that Heaven is our Fatherland but it has pleased Him to leave us down here, strangers away from home, pilgrims going home, we no longer have citizenship down here. It is sad if we live our lives as earth dwellers.

2) The Manners of the Ambassador *"Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord" 2 Cor 5:6.* We are absent from the Lord but as representing His interests down here we will discover that as He was hated so we shall bear reproach. If an Ambassador of the Indian Government is sent to the USA or China, he does not become a citizen of the USA or China. The Ambassador's language, customs, food and way of living will be in keeping with his standing, status and state. At any formal or civic function it will be obvious by his dress what country he represents. The following chapter, 2 Cor 6:14-16, shows that the believer should be separate from the world: the 'unrighteousness' of its commercial corruption; the 'darkness' of its political crisis; the 'Belial' of its material conflicts; the 'infidel' (unbeliever) and his moral chaos; the 'idols' of the world's religious confusion.

*"We're not of the world that fadeth away,
We're not of the night but children of day,
The chains that once bound us by Jesus are
riven,
We're strangers on earth and our home is
in Heaven".*

3) The Motive of the Ambassador: Accepted "of" Christ

"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him" 2 Cor 5:9. The Ambassador representing his country among a foreign people, will share the esteem or hatred of his homeland. We are in a very hostile environment, governed by the god of this world, controlled by the powers of darkness. Its principles are evil, its practices are sinful and its propaganda is vehemently opposed to the Kingdom we represent. It is not for us to accommodate, compromise or try to fit in with such an environment but set our sights with singleness of eye to please Him Who hath called us out of such darkness into His marvellous light.

4) The Mission of the Ambassador: Live "unto" Christ.

"The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for the, and rose again" 2 Cor 5:14-15. The Ambassador and his embassy is part of his own country located in a foreign country. His sole function is to represent the interests of his sovereign state and fellow citizens for the entire duration of stay in that country until recalled home. Our service is with single eye to the Glory of our risen Lord.

5) The Ministry of the Ambassador: Conveyed "through" Christ.

"All things are of God who hath reconciled unto himself by (through) Jesus Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation" 2 Cor 5:18. If the Ambassador is to convey messages he must know the mind of his sovereign state. He must keep in constant contact with home, the lines of communication must always be kept open so that there is no confusion or uncertainty as the position of the government he represents on any given matter. We serve through Christ to convey His Wishes, His Will and His Word. The misconceptions, prejudices and enslavements of our former unregenerate life are not to be brought over into the dignified ministry committed unto us. The work we do is to please Him, not others. The words we express have

the authority of His commands. The will which we express has the authority of His Throne behind it.

6) The Message of the Ambassador: Carried "for" Christ

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" 2 Cor 5:20. The Ambassador may be sent to a friendly country and the execution of the diplomatic office will be a formality. On the contrary, we have to convey the message of reconciliation to a hostile world. We confront the powers of darkness, we face the enmity of the wicked, we represent God in a scene of rebellion. We carry the message of reconciliation, that there is an offer of the removal of God's anger against sin through Jesus Christ. As representatives commissioned and sent by God, the urgent Gospel message to sinners is to accept the reconciliation offered as an answer to man's mutiny, enmity and rebellion so that conditions of peace can be enjoyed.

7) The Manifestation of the Ambassador: Appear "Before" Christ.

"For we must all appear (be made manifest) before the judgement seat of Christ" 2 Cor 5:10. When diplomacy between nations fail and open hostilities are about to break out, the first move by the sovereign government will be the recall of the Ambassador, the withdrawal of the Embassy Staff and the evacuation of nationals. Soon the Day of Grace will close but before the Great Day of His wrath is come, the servants will be called home at the Rapture and the mission of gathering from the Nations a people for His Name, will close. When the service is done, the Ambassadors will be recalled. As identified with Him down here, so faithfulness will be rewarded at the Judgement Seat to reflect His Glory up there.

8) The Mortality of the Ambassador: Present "with" the Lord

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" 2 Cor 5:1. *"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"* 2 Cor 5:8. When our temporary mortal service is complete we are assured of a

mansion in keeping with the Service of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, eternal in nature, heavenly in sphere and present with the Lord. In the meantime as Ambassadors for Christ, we should keep in touch with Home.

The Preaching of the Gospel

W. B. C. Beggs

When Peter preached the first Gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost three thousand souls were saved (Acts 2: 41). The fact is to be bewailed today that it may take three thousand addresses to lead to the conversion of one sinner! The unfruitfulness of present-day Gospel preaching is evident to every one, in fact it is so much in evidence, that it is essential for us to question why it is so. Only by taking stock and seeing how we stand in regard to this matter will we be able to find a remedy. It used to be that people flocked to a Gospel meeting, and that very seldom was the message preached but souls were saved. Nowadays, sad to relate, very few unsaved people attend meetings convened for them, and following upon this very few conversions are witnessed. In days not so very far distant Christians went to a Gospel meeting fully expecting results, and they were really surprised if there was not at least one trusted the Savior. Is it not the case, however, that the reverse is now true, and that we are apt to be surprised if there is a conversion follows the preaching of the message? The Gospel is God's message to men, and in no other way does He speak to unsaved souls today. Unless we really apprehend this nothing much will be achieved for Him, for it is this fact which gives authority to the Gospel.

And being in itself a divine message, it follows that he who preaches it must be a divinely gifted preacher who is *"a vessel meet for the Master's use"* (2 Timothy 2:21). While God does in many instances make use of natural abilities, yet we must never mistake these natural gifts for spiritual ability. There is a marked tendency in these days to teach the Gospel instead of preach it at meetings convened for the unsaved. This is a gross error,

and must be well guarded against. When sinners do come to a meeting expecting to hear the Gospel preached by a servant of the Lord, they are often given a discourse without any direct appeal, which can only be understood by "those whose souls are lighted." While the Gospel must be taught to believers, yet when addressing the unsaved it must be preached! The command of the Lord Jesus was: *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature"* (Mark 16:15), and thereby He laid a responsibility upon all His servants to make the Gospel known. The Apostle Paul realized the truth of this when he said: *"Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!"* (1 Corinthians 9:16). We would that every servant of God was burdened with this responsibility, and that they were really conscious that for the preaching of the message we have the authority of God. What an honor it surely is to declare a message from the eternal God to sinful men! Because it is God's Gospel concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 1: 1-3), we note that it is a very weighty message, and must in no way be treated lightly by any one who seeks to serve God.

In addition, surely the solemnity of the preaching of the Gospel calls for our notice. If all that was in question only applied to this present life, then the preaching of the Gospel would not be so serious, but this is not so, for men's attitude to the Christ presented in the message determines their eternal destiny. O that we might have the truth burned into our being that all who reject the Gospel of Christ go down to hell! Surely this truth alone would preserve all of us from levity when preaching to sinners! Men are perishing all around us, so let all who preach the Gospel do so with a clear knowledge of the extreme importance attaching to the acceptance or rejection of Christ. Consequent on the declaring of the message sinners are faced with the choice of life or death, heaven or hell, eternal bliss or eternal woe. Let this fact be well pondered by all who serve God in this work.

The motive for all Gospel service must be love to God and love to men, in addition to which the preacher must have implicit faith in the message he declares. A preacher who is only half-convinced of the power of his

message will never win souls. If actors can, on a stage, make unrealities appear real, surely we who are declaring eternal verities ought never to speak of them in such a manner as to make them appear unreal. When we preach the Gospel may God preserve all of us from being like Lot who *"seemed as one that mocked"* (Genesis 19:14).

We must not have the slightest doubt about the power and value of Gospel preaching. Just as there must be sincerity in the service of the Gospel, so there must be simplicity of expression. All preaching of this message ought to be in such language that one who has never heard the Gospel before will be left in no doubt as to the way of salvation. *"Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?"* (1 Corinthians 14:9). The great elementary truths of the Gospel must be preached fearlessly and clearly, the Cross-work of the Savior being the central theme (not His death merely, but all that is entailed in His Cross). Power is essential to the fruitful preaching of the Gospel, and this is only possessed as a result of much prayer. It is of no use preaching to sinners, and looking for results, if there is not much prayer made to God for His guidance and blessing on the service. Before every Gospel meeting there ought to be a considerable time spent in prayer that sinners might be saved. Days are darkening around us, the Devil is doing all he can to hinder the work of God, and men are being led captive by him at his will; so it is surely high time that we who are the children of the day were up and doing for our Master while we still have the opportunity. There is no nobler work under heaven than of being instrumental in God's hands of leading sinners to the Savior. The time is short, the Lord will soon be here, before long the day of Gospel service will be over. Will there be any souls in heaven as a result of our labors?

The love of Christ is like the blue sky, into which you may see clearly, but the real vastness of which you cannot measure. It is like the sea into whose bosom you can look a little way, but its depths are unfathomable.

The Supreme Requisite

Franklin Ferguson

One thing stands preeminently above all others in our relation with God, and that is obedience. He attaches the utmost importance to His will alone being done, whether in Heaven or on earth (Matt. 6:10). Implicit obedience on the part of His creatures is demanded, and never will He allow His supreme will to be resisted with impunity (Rom. 9:19). Pharaoh found this out to his complete destruction. Why have the Jews, the ancient chosen people, been so severely chastened? Simply, they persisted in refusing to obey the voice of the Lord. Of that nation we have His pathetic lament: *"O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river"* (Isa. 48:18). To know and do the will of God is what He requires of us. We must therefore read His Word daily, meditatively, consecutively, prayerfully, and according to the four key words of Deuteronomy—hear, remember, keep, do.

So important is it to learn to obey, that God begins with the child, giving it the only commandment with promise, that it may be well with the child and its days lengthened. And the father is told to bring up his child *"In the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* (Eph. 6:1-4). If the child does not learn to obey the parents when it is young, how will it obey God in after life? Young believers are exhorted to submit themselves unto the elder, obeying them that are the guides of the Assembly (1 Pet. 5:5; Heb. 13:17); yea, all of us are enjoined to be subject to one another; and this subjection is likewise to be rendered to those who are in authority, to the King and all rulers (1 Pet. 2:13-17).

The "spirit of lawlessness" is spreading everywhere—in the home, in the Church, in the world—preparing the way for the Lawless One, whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of His Coming (2 Thess. 2:8). In contradiction, let us seek grace that it may truthfully be said of both reader and writer, *"Your obedience is come abroad unto all men"* (Rom. 16:19).