

tive example, He must be first a Son. It is not necessary to rely upon His birth, upon His miracles, or even upon His resurrection, to prove His claim to sonship. In fact, the natural process of reasoning is to confirm the Bible account of His birth, His miracles, and His resurrection by showing what He said, what He did, and what He was. When He is understood, nothing said of Him will seem impossible. He is a fact which can not be disputed—the greatest fact of history. That a mere man should have said what He said, should have done what He did, and should have lived and died as He lived and died is incomprehensible. Reared in a carpenter's shop; without contact with the sages of other lands and without knowledge of the sages dead, except as He gained it from the Old Testament, He, at the age of thirty, announced His messiahship, gathered a few disciples about Him, set forth a code of morals surpassing anything known before—surpassing any code that the non-Christian world can formulate today—and then was crucified.

And yet from this beginning His religion spread until thousands of millions have become His followers and millions have been willing to die rather than surrender the faith which He put into their hearts. Here is One who, for 1900 years, has exerted an increasing influence over the hearts and minds and lives of men—One who wields more power today than ever before! How can it be explained? It is not a matter to scoff at; the question, "What think ye of Christ?" is not a question to be brushed aside; it is a question that must be answered. **IT IS EASIER TO BELIEVE HIM DIVINE THAN TO EXPLAIN IN ANY OTHER WAY HIS WORDS, HIS LIFE, AND HIS DEATH.**

And the same conclusion is reached by another course of reasoning. The work to be done was more than a man's task. No man, aspiring to be God, could save his fellows from their own selfishness and sin, fortify them against the temptations that come with appetite and passion, and bring them into harmony with the divine will. It required A GOD, CONDESCENDING TO BE A MAN, to work in the human heart that continuing miracle which is witnessed when one begins to love the things he hated, and to hate the things he loved—when one who, before the change, would have sacrificed a world for his ambition, stands ready, after the change, to give his life for a principle and finds pleasure in making sacrifice for his convictions.

(From The Fruits of the Tree.)

THE CHRIST OF TODAY

Measure Him by the task which He came to perform—it was not a man's task. Measure Him by the record He has made. Why, if He was but a man, has not our civilization produced another of His kind? Why are even his enemies compelled to admit the magic of His name and the wonder-working influence of the philosophy He taught? Why are His words as potent today as when the fishermen of Galilee became his disciples—as convincing as they were when "the common people heard Him gladly" upon the Mount of the Beatitudes?

Are you in doubt about his power to perform miracles when He walked among men? He is performing them today. The Christ who can today open the eyes of a young man, who sees nothing but the body and knows nothing but the pleasures that come through the flesh—the Christ who can open the eyes of such an one to the larger vision of the spiritual life could have opened the eyes of the physically blind. Do you question His power to raise the dead? Go into any rescue mission and hear the testimony of those who, after years of dissipation and of crime, have come under the influence of His grace and have been born again;—behold the change—the Christ who can take a man from the gutter, one who has fallen so low that even his own flesh and blood have abandoned him, and lift him up, cleanse his heart and fill it with a passion for service—such a Christ could break the bonds of the tomb.

(From The Making of a Man.)

CHRIST THE GROWING FIGURE

Christ is the growing Figure of all time; the story of His life touches the hearts of men and women wherever it is told, and it is being translated into every tongue.

(From The Fruits of the Tree.)

CONVERSION

Conversion, as I understand it, is surrender of one's self to God—obedience to the first commandment. It is putting the kingdom of God and his righteousness first. And how long does it take to be converted? Not longer, I rejoice to believe, than it does to reject God. It does not take longer to be converted to righteousness than to be converted to sin. It takes but an instant for an honest man to be converted into a thief—just the instant in which he decides to steal. It takes just an instant for a law-abiding man to become a murderer. And so it takes but an instant for the heart to surrender itself to its Maker and pledge obedience to God. A man may spend weeks weighing the question before deciding to steal, but the decision to steal is made in a moment; a man may harbor revenge for months and brood over a real or imagined wrong, but the decision is made in a moment. And so a man may consider for years whether he will change his course, but it takes but a moment to resolve "I will arise and go to my father."

(From The First Commandment.)

THE LIVING SPRING

To me a spring is the most fascinating fact in nature. It is the best representation of the ideal life, just as the stagnant pool is the best illustration of a selfish life. The pool receiving the surface water from the sloping sides around it and, giving forth nothing, at last becomes the center of disease and death. There is nothing more repulsive than a stagnant pool, except the selfish life which it so properly represents.

The spring, on the contrary, pours forth its continuing flood of that which refreshes and invigorates. There is nothing more inspiring than a spring, except a human life built upon the plan of the spring.

AND WHY IS A SPRING A SPRING? BECAUSE IT IS CONNECTED WITH A RESERVOIR WHICH IS HIGHER THAN ITSELF; it is the means through which the water from above finds an outlet. And what has Christ done by his coming? He has connected man with the Heavenly Father, so that the goodness of God may flow out through him to a waiting world. This is what Christ has done for multitudes and what he can do for all. He can take the frailest, weakest mortal and, by bringing him into living contact with the source of life and of light and power, make him an important factor in the world's work.

(From The First Commandment.)

SPIRITUAL POWER

If we measure man in units of horse power he is not as strong as some of the beasts about him. If we measure him in units of intellectual power we soon find his limitations; but when we measure him in units of spiritual power there is no arithmetic which can compute his possibilities. When a boy I used to read how wicked cities might have been saved by a few righteous men; I can understand it better now. Cities can be saved today, and countries as well, by the spiritual power which begins with a few and spreads until the whole body politic is aroused.

It is only when we understand the spiritual power of man that we comprehend the lines of the song:

"I know of a land that is sunk in shame,
Of hearts that faint and tire,
But I know a Name, a Name, a Name,
That can set that land on fire."

The great need of the world today is the spiritual power necessary for the overthrow of evil, for the establishment of righteousness and for the ushering in of the era of perpetual peace; and that spiritual power begins in the surrender of the individual to God. It commences with obedience to the first commandment. I am glad to press upon your consideration the commandment—"Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me;" or, as Christ phrased it, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." When one obeys this commandment, he is in position to understand and obey the second, "which is like unto it"—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He who obeys the two will be neither barren nor unfruitful.

(From The First Commandment.)

PRAYER

If God is a Spirit, and we worship Him in spirit and in truth, it is only natural that there should be some means of communication between Him and His worshippers. Christ taught that such a line of communication could be established, and no one will dispute it who has learned how to pray.

It is not necessary that I should be able to explain how, in olden times, the prophets spake as the Lord commanded them, or how the Bible was written by inspiration; man could see the lightning's flash and feel the shock long before he understood the laws which govern the action of that wonder-working fluid which we call electricity; so, until I have more complete knowledge of the subject, I am content to know that there is an unseen Power which can speak peace to the troubled heart and renew the flagging zeal—sometimes manifesting itself in the "still small voice," sometimes pouring itself out in a pentecostal flood.

(From The Fruits of the Tree.)

LOVE

God is love, and Christ was both the evidence of love and the supreme illustration of it. The Man of Galilee gave the world a new definition of love. The world had known love before; husbands had loved their wives, and wives their husbands; parents had loved their children and children their parents; and friend had loved friend. But here was a love as boundless as the sea—a love whose limits were so far-flung that no one could travel beyond its bounds.

Love is enlightened—it is not blind, as some would have us believe. It penetrates into the dark places—into the prisons where light and sympathy can be carried; it discovers the sick to whom kindness can be shown; it discerns latent power in those unknown to fame; it detects the weak points in the armor of boasting strength.

Love begets love: heart answereth unto heart. "We love him because he first loved us," has been said of all whom the world has ever loved.

Love is a growing force because it is the one weapon for which there is no shield.

Thought looks up to love as the flower opens to the sun.

When navies no longer mock the thunder with their roar; when armies no more shake the earth with their tread, "and the battle flags are furled"—love's roll call will still be sounded; love will marshal increasing hosts and lead them into a higher arena in which the energies will be employed in saving rather than in destroying, and in which life will be round instead of lost.

(From The Fruits of the Tree.)

FAITH

Faith is the spiritual extension of the vision; it is the moral sense which reaches out toward the throne of God and takes hold upon those verities which the mind can not grasp.

The great things of the world have been accomplished by men and women who had faith enough to attempt the seemingly impossible and to trust to God to open the way.

Faith is a heart virtue; doubts of the mind will not disturb us if there is faith in the heart.

Faith in the triumph of truth, because it is truth, has ever been an unfailing source of courage and power. Faith leads us to trust the omnipotence of the Ruler of the Universe, and to put God's promises to the test.

Faith is as necessary to the heart of the individual as it is necessary to world-wide peace. What can equal the consolation that comes from reliance upon the care of Him who gives beauty to the lily, food to the fowls of the air, and direction to all?

"He, who from zone to zone,
Guides from the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright."

(From The Fruits of the Tree.)

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is the test of love. At no other point is the contrast more sharply drawn between the precepts of Christ and the teachings of the philosophers of the non-Christ-