

METHODS OF CHRISTIAN WORK :

BOOK TWO of HOW TO WORK FOR CHRIST by R. A. Torrey

HOW TO WORK FOR CHRIST

A Compendium of Effective Methods

By R. A. Torrey

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BOOK II

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BOOK II

METHODS OF CHRISTIAN WORK

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@01 CHAPTER ONE

HOUSE TO HOUSE VISITATION

I. ITS IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. IT IS APOSTOLIC. The Apostle Paul was a house to house visitor. In Acts 20:20 he calls to the minds of the Ephesian elders the fact that he had taught them not only publicly, but also "from house to house." Many of us feel above this work, but the Apostle Paul, the prince of preachers, found a great deal of time to do it. We have also the example of Christ Himself. Not a little of His work was done in the home. One of the most touching scenes of His life was in the home at Bethlehem, with Mary sitting at His feet listening to the words of eternal life (Luke 10:39).

2. IT BRINGS YOU NEAR TO THE PEOPLE. When Mr. Moody was in Glasgow, some one asked him how to reach the masses, and his reply was, "Go for them." There is no better way of going for them, and getting near to them, than by going into their homes. One of the simplest solutions of the problem of how to reach the unchurched in city and country is to go right into their homes.

3. YOU CAN GET HOLD OF PEOPLE THAT YOU CANNOT REACH IN ANY OTHER WAY. There are people who never enter a church, who will not attend a theatre service nor a mission meeting, who will not even attend an open-air meeting, but there is nobody who does not live somewhere, therefore you can get hold of everybody by house to house visitation. There are special classes who can be reached in this way and in this way alone, for instance the very poor, who are afraid to enter a church because of their shabby dress, or who may be utterly unable to leave home on account of the multiplicity of home duties. The sick also can be reached only in this way. Then there are in every city many who would not attend {184} church if they could; among these are infidels, and other

classes of non-churchgoing people who are never seen within the walls of an evangelical church. Some workers pay no attention to Roman Catholics because they think that they cannot be reached. Yet they can be reached by going right into their homes. Many a minister can tell of the large number of them that have been converted and come into the church. When once shown their duty to the Lord Jesus Christ they make splendid Christians. There is no better way to reach them than by house to house visitation. You may not get them the first time, nor the second, nor the third, but they are bound to yield at last, to simple genuine kindness.

4. IT WINS PEOPLE'S CONFIDENCE AND ATTENTION. Many people seem to feel that a great honor has been bestowed upon them when the missionary, minister or Christian worker calls at their home and takes an interest in them. I once called upon a saloon-keeper, but I did not realize what an honor he considered had been conferred upon him until a neighboring saloon-keeper afterwards upbraided me for not calling upon him, and asked me if he was not just as good as the other man. Few Christian workers realize how much good it does people to go into their homes, and what a short road it is to their confidence and attention. You first go to them, and they will afterwards come to you.

5. IT GIVES YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE HOW THE PEOPLE LIVE, AND THUS TEACHES YOU HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM. It has been well said that "one-half of the world does not know how the other half lives," and we never will know until we go right into their homes. It is a perfect revelation to see some people on Sunday in their Sunday clothes, and then go on Monday and see them at work in the home. You are forced to say, "Does this woman come from a house like this?" or, "Does this child come from a home like this?"

6. THEY WILL OPEN THEIR HEARTS TO YOU MORE FREELY AT THEIR HOMES THAN ELSEWHERE. People feel at home at home. They are always more or less restrained at church, or in an inquiry meeting, or in a mission hall -- less probably in a mission hall than in a church, and still less in a cottage meeting than either -- but when you get them at

home they throw off restraint and talk freely. You {185} never know what is going on in people's hearts until you go to their homes and they open their hearts to you there.

7. IT OFFERS OPPORTUNITY FOR CLOSE DEALING WITH SOULS. You can get at a man for close personal dealing far better in a quiet house than anywhere else. People do not like to open their hearts in public, and even an inquiry meeting is more or less public.

8. IT AFFORDS OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUGGESTIONS REGARDING HOME LIFE. The great majority of people need to be taught how to live in this world. They need to be taught plain truths on plain subjects. The ignorance of many poor people on the little affairs of everyday life is perfectly astonishing. One great trouble with many poor people is that they do not know how to live, they do not know what to eat, or how to cook what they buy; they do not know how to dress, or how to spend their money to the best advantage. They do not know how to train their children. They do not know how to eat properly at the table, nor how to make a bed or air their houses. A family living in Minneapolis were in great poverty and destitution; they were in absolute need of the bare necessities of life. The attention of a friend of mine was called to them, and he sent me \$7 with the request that I should go and look them up, investigate the case, and if I found them in real distress, give them this money. I called and found them in very great need. The mother was sick in bed, the father out of work, the glass out of the window and an old garment stuffed in the place. They were without the commonest necessities of life, and I saw at once that it was a case of real distress. Being quite without experience at the time, I gave the family the \$7 as requested. Thinking it well to follow up the work, I called again. To my astonishment, I found that they had used the \$7 in purchasing a mirror that reached from the floor to the ceiling. It was simple ignorance on their part.

I once gave a man some money to buy groceries for a family in extreme destitution. When he came back I asked him what he had bought. He told me among

other things, that he had bought three pounds of cheese and a lot of loaf sugar. I asked him why he bought the loaf sugar, and he said the father said the children liked to have it to eat. A few instructions as to the most economical food to buy and how to prepare it, would save many a family from want, without it being necessary to give them a cent. {186}

9. IT SANCTIFIES THE HOME. Let a minister of Jesus Christ, a true man of God, go into a home and talk and read the Bible and pray, and that home is a different place ever afterward. If the minister is a man who in his prayer actually brings God down to the place where he is praying, it will make a change in that household. The same is true of the visit of a godly woman. Oftentimes after that they will be on the point of doing something wrong, when they will think what the messenger of Jesus Christ said in that prayer. They will think hallowed things when they go into that room. Many a home has been changed by the presence of the minister of God. You can set up a family altar for them. When you get people converted who have had religious training, they know what family worship means, but if they have never had family worship, it never occurs to them that they ought to have family worship at home. Tell them to "set up a family altar," and you might as well talk Greek to them, but go into their homes, read the Bible to them and pray, then ask them, "Do you enjoy this?" and when they say "Yes," tell them to keep right on doing it every day, and show them how to keep on.

10. IT RESULTS IN MANY CONVERSIONS. It is a question whether any other form of Christian work results in as many satisfactory conversions as house to house visitation. of course it is a great deal more gratifying to our pride to stand up before a large audience and speak to them; there is an exhilaration in doing that, but when it comes down to definite results, I do not know of any kind of work that brings larger results in souls won for Christ than patient house to house visitation. I have often thought that a person who would devote his whole life to going from house to house week after week, would have a far more

splendid record at the close of life than the minister who preaches to from one hundred to one thousand every Sunday. Take the London Home Missionary Society, they are doing a magnificent work in many directions, but a very large proportion of it is this kind of work. Many women are employed for simple house to house visitation, and they are accomplishing great results. In country work I am sure we have been laying comparatively too much stress on the church as a church, and the gathering at the central meeting house, and too little on the work in the scattered homes. {187}

A great deal of foreign missionary work, and oftentimes the best part of it, is house to house work. Foreign missionaries have been far wiser in their work in this direction than we have at home. Perhaps it is so partly from the necessities of the case.

II. HOW TO DO HOUSE TO HOUSE VISITATION.

1. BE SYSTEMATIC. It pays to be systematic in everything. The man who has a plan for doing things and carries out his plan is the man who reaps the largest results. Many, however, spend their whole time in making plans which they never carry out. Better have a poor plan which you execute, than a perfect plan that you spend your whole time in elaborating.

2. A THOROUGH HOUSE TO HOUSE VISITATION SHOULD BE MADE BY DISTRICTS. What I mean by thorough house to house visitation is that every habitation in the district should be visited. This is the true way to begin a country pastorate. In a town where there are churches other than your own, you can invite the Methodists to the Methodist church, the Congregational people to the Congregational church, etc., but you should not be too sensitive about calling on people that do not belong to your own flock. Better to call upon someone that belongs to someone else's flock than to leave someone neglected. Surely if your own church is the only one in the vicinity, you should visit every habitation in that part of the country. It will take time; you will have less time for general reading and for study than if you did not do this work, but you are in the ministry to win

souls, and not primarily for the glorification of your intellect. You must spend and be spent, you must make full proof of your ministry. Just so in the city, you should yourself visit every family, or else get every family visited. It is not the man who can preach good sermons who succeeds, it is the man who gets hold of the people. In district visitation, it should be borne in mind that people are constantly moving, and need to be visited very frequently.

In an evangelistic campaign, one of the first things that should be done is to have a house to house canvass of every house and habitation anywhere within reach of the church, or churches, where the meetings are to be held. Every family in the town or district where you are working should be visited. That means not merely that some one should go to the door with a dodger in his {188} hand which he hastily gives to the first one who comes to the door, it means that someone should go into every house in the town. Visitors should be sent out two and two to go to every house and deal with people personally about their salvation. If it is a union meeting it is well that the two should be of different denominations. There should be a thorough house to house canvass of every city at least once a year, covering the entire city. This is easily accomplished when the churches unite in the work.

3. SELECT HOMES FOR REGULAR VISITATION. In some communities you must visit every home regularly, and where you cannot do it yourself, you can see that it is done. In other communities it is wise to visit only part of the homes regularly.

How shall we select the homes?

(1) BY A THOROUGH CANVASS.

As you go around visiting from house to house you will find some homes that should be visited regularly, and others that it will not do to visit regularly. Do not be too hasty in concluding that it is of no use to visit a certain family. For instance, do not conclude because a family is Roman Catholic it is of no use to visit them regularly. Every one of much experience knows that some of the "hopeless" families are those which turn out best in the long run.

(2) SELECT PERSONS WHO DO NOT ATTEND CHURCH.

Every person who does not attend church should be visited. Not merely the members of your church should be visited regularly and systematically, but those who do not attend at all should be visited.

(3) THE PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN WHO ATTEND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

You have a good excuse and a wide opening in visiting the parents of children who attend your Sunday School. Of course there may be exceptions.

There are sometimes children attending Sunday School whose parents do not know that they are attending, and who would be angry and opposed if they did know. In such cases the parents should not be visited, or if they are visited, nothing should be said to them about the children attending the Sunday School. {189}

(4) PARENTS OF CHILDREN YOU GET HOLD OF ON THE STREET.

Talk with the children as you go about the street, and if you find children that do not attend Sunday School anywhere, go and visit their homes, go and deal with their parents, and gather the whole family into the church of God.

When Mr. Moody was engaged in Sunday School work in Chicago, he was constantly picking up children on the street and getting them into the Sunday School, and afterwards getting into their homes.

One day on the street he met a little girl with a pail. He asked her if she went to Sunday School. She said she did not. He then gave her a hearty invitation to his school, and she promised to go, but she did not keep her promise. He at once began to watch for that girl. Weeks after he saw her on the street. He started for her, and she broke into a dead run and he ran in pursuit. Down one street and up another she went, the eager missionary running behind her. Finally she shot into a saloon and he followed. On she went up a back flight of stairs and Mr. Moody still in close pursuit. She dashed into a room and under a bed. He followed and pulled her out by the foot and had a talk with her. Her mother was a widow with several children; her father had been a drunkard. Mr. Moody had a talk with the mother and called again and again,

until at last the whole family was won for Christ, and became prominent in the work of the Chicago Avenue Church. There are many families that you can get hold of in no other way than by such persistent pursuit.

(5) FUNERALS AFFORD A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO GET HOLD OF A FAMILY.

Almost everybody wants a minister to conduct a funeral. When you once get an entrance into a home this way, do not let go of it. I do not know how many families I have gotten hold of by being invited to conduct a funeral in the home. Do not consider your work done when the funeral has been conducted, just consider that an opening for further work.

(6) WEDDINGS ALSO AFFORD GOOD OPPORTUNITIES FOR GETTING INTO HOMES.

When you conduct a wedding do not be satisfied when the \$5.00 is safely deposited in your pocket. You have gained an opening {190} into another family, another opportunity of winning a family for Christ. Follow it up.

4. KEEP BOOKS. Be just as systematic and thorough as a man in business. Have your families classified alphabetically and by streets. Keep an accurate record of when you called last and the result of your call. If one has a large parish, the card system of indexing is better than the use of books.

5. ALWAYS REMEMBER TO PRAY BEFORE STARTING OUT. If there is any work that requires wisdom, it is house to house visitation, and God alone can give the wisdom that is necessary.

6. INTRODUCE YOURSELF THE BEST WAY YOU CAN. It is impossible to lay down rules about this. It often takes almost infinite tact to get into a home, and quite as much tact to visit there after you get in. Frequently it is necessary not to let it be known in first coming to the home that you are there on a religious errand. Proceed to win the confidence of the people. Be very courteous. Do not notice any rudeness on the part of the people that you are visiting; leave your pride at home, and no matter what insults are offered you, let them pass unheeded. Remember that you are there not to serve your own interests, nor to spare your

own feelings, but as an ambassador of Jesus Christ, and to win souls to Him. If you keep your eyes open, an opportunity will afford itself for doing some kindly thing that will open the hearts of the people to you, and win their confidence. A young lady got into one home by offering to do the washing of an overworked woman. It was hard work, but it won that woman and her husband and child to Christ. The woman, who was thoroughly worldly, became a very active Christian, and the husband, who was a drunkard, is now in heaven. The child has grown up into a fine young man.

Take an interest in the things the people you are visiting are interested in. One minister got an entrance into the home of a surly farmer by proving that he could plow. Be sure to notice the children. Children are worth noticing anyhow, and there is no surer road to the confidence and affection of the parents than by showing attention to the children.

7. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BEGIN TO OPEN THE SCRIPTURES. Very frequently it is not wise to begin this at once. It must be led up to. {191} When the time comes, the Scriptures should be thoroughly applied. Use them to convince of sin, to reveal Christ, to bring to a decision, to lead to entire consecration, and to instruct in the fundamental duties and truths of Christianity. It is astonishing how little the average man or woman really catches of a plain sermon. If there is to be thorough indoctrination in fundamental truths it must be done largely in the homes.

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@02 CHAPTER TWO COTTAGE MEETINGS

I. THEIR IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. YOU CAN REACH PEOPLE WHO CANNOT BE REACHED IN ANY OTHER WAY.

(1) People who cannot go to church on account of family duties. There are a great many people in every city, and still more in the country, for whom it is absolutely impossible to go to church. A mother may have a large family of children and no servant. Many others are detained at home on account of sickness. Few of us realize how many people there are in every place who cannot go to

church either on account of their own physical infirmities, or the infirmities of those with whom they have to stay.

A great many cannot go to church on account of age. Who that has ever seen it will forget the joy that lights up the face of these elderly people when you bring a meeting to them? How often such people have asked me if we could not have a meeting in their home. One of the greatest joys in Christian life and service is to hold a cottage meeting for people who cannot go to church.

(2) People who will not go to church. I recall a family who would not go to church at all through simple indifference. They were an intelligent family, a father and mother, two boys and two girls. As they would not go to church, we took the church just as near them as we could get it. We held a cottage meeting next door to their home.

They came to it out of friendship to the family where the meeting was held. They were interested at once, came to church, and the parents and grown-up children were converted.

Some people will not go to church on account of their clothes. It is all very well for us to say, "Never mind about your clothes," but at the same time it is not very pleasant to go to a place where almost everybody else is better dressed than you are yourself. But {193} one can go to a cottage meeting in the poorest of clothes and not be noticed.

Some people will not go to church because of their positive hatred to the Gospel, and yet the same people can often be induced to attend a cottage meeting.

2. YOU CAN HOLD COTTAGE MEETINGS WHERE YOU CANNOT GET A LARGE ROOM OR RENT A HALL. You can always get a cottage room. How many sections of the United States today have no church accessible to the population? In the center of the town there will be found two or three churches struggling for supremacy, but three or four miles out in the country there is no church at all. Many churches are trying to maintain possession of "strategic points" where they can glorify the denomination instead of God, while other points are entirely neglected. The only way to reach the people in

these far-away and neglected communities is by cottage meetings. I look back upon my early pastorate in the country with great regret. I fancied I was killing myself with preaching three times on Sunday. I kept it up for three years, and people made me believe I would kill myself. I held these three meetings on Sunday, and during the week conducted a class in German, a class in geology, and other things of that sort, instead of attending to my proper business, and now I think with bitter regret of the district I could have worked if I had only known how. There was not another church for miles in any direction. Scores and scores of people could never get to church. There was enough work in that pastorate alone to have kept a man busy if it had been done right. A church which at one time was the largest in that region had almost died because about the only work done was the ordinary preaching. Do not be content with preaching your regular sermons on Sunday, but have services all over your parish for miles in every direction, and work the parish for all it is worth. Search out the destitute places and hold cottage meetings for several nights in the week. Set the other pastors in the district an example of how to work a parish. There is not one parish in fifty today that is worked as it should be. The spiritual destitution of the city is nothing compared with the spiritual destitution of the country. Wherever you get a parish, be sure to work it for all there is in it. If there is any part of that neighborhood where nobody is doing anything, go to {194} work there. Do not be afraid of stepping on someone else's toes, but be sure to go to work.

3. THE INFORMALITY OF COTTAGE MEETINGS. There should be nothing stiff about a cottage meeting. Of course some people turn a cottage meeting into a stiff church service, but that is not necessary. In these meetings you can get people to talk that you could not get to open their mouths in a church prayer meeting, and you can so train them in a cottage meeting that they will soon be able to take part in the church prayer meeting.

4. IN A COTTAGE MEETING, IF YOU HAVE WORKED IT UP AS IT SHOULD BE, YOU HAVE TO PACK PEOPLE TOGETHER

LIKE SARDINES IN A BOX, while in the church there is a gulf between the minister and the pews, and the people usually get in pews as remote from the minister as possible.

5. ITS SIMPLICITY -- ANYBODY CAN HAVE A COTTAGE MEETING. It is the simplest thing in the world to hold a cottage meeting, though it is not always the easiest thing in the world to have a good cottage meeting.

6. THE COTTAGE MEETING SANCTIFIES THE HOME. It brings religion right into the home. It turns the home into the house of God. The home should be a consecrated place, and the cottage meeting does much to make it so. There is no other place like the place where you have come together for prayer, and where, it may be, you have been brought to the Lord Jesus Christ. The home that has been used for a cottage meeting becomes a hallowed place.

7. COTTAGE MEETINGS ARE APOSTOLIC. The first churches were in the homes (1_Corinthians 16:19). We are going back to apostolic times when we return to the homes to hold religious services. A very large share of Paul's work was holding cottage meetings.

8. COTTAGE MEETINGS TAKE THE GOSPEL TO THE PEOPLE. There are two ways of reaching the people. One way is to invite them to come to you, the other way is to go to them. The latter is God's way, the former is the twentieth century way.

II. HOW TO PREPARE FOR A COTTAGE MEETING.

1. GET ON YOUR KNEES BEFORE GOD. That does not need any amplification, but it needs a good deal of exemplification. {195}

2. SELECT A PLACE TO HOLD THE MEETING.

(1) Because of the commodiousness and accessibility of a room. If you can get a large room, get it, unless you are pretty sure you are going to have a small meeting. If you get a large room it will be an incentive to you to work hard to have a large meeting. If possible get a room that is accessible. Of course if you cannot do better, you can get a room where you have to climb two or three flights of stairs, but if a room can be had on the first floor, so much the better.

There may be reasons why a room that is quite inaccessible will be better in some special case

for your meeting.

(2) Because of some one you wish to reach. This is an important point in the selection of a room. It may be there is a father you want to get at -- the wife and children have been reached, but the father will not come to the meeting. The only way you can get him to a meeting is to have a meeting in his own home. Have the meeting in that case in his house. I prayed for one man for fifteen years. I tried to talk with him, but every time I would talk with him he would be worse than ever. I think he used to swear in my presence more than anywhere else just because he knew I was a Christian. But I got him one time where I had him cornered. He was sick for two weeks in a Christian home. He heard the Bible read and heard prayer every day during these two weeks and heard religious conversation constantly. At the end of these two weeks, the day he got up and got out, he took Christ as his Savior, and afterwards became a preacher of the gospel. You must be as wise as a serpent in looking for souls.

(3) Select a room because of the popularity of the family. Avoid as far as possible selecting a home that is unpopular. Many an inexperienced worker tries to hold a meeting and gets for that purpose what appears to be a desirable home, but afterwards wonders why the people will not come to it. Probably the reason is that there is something about the family that makes them unpopular. There may sometimes be reasons for holding the meeting in such a home, but as a rule, if you know a family that everybody likes, that is the place to hold your meeting, other things being equal.

3. WORK UP THE MEETING. Have a great deal of invitation work done, not by yourself only, but by others as well. Be sure not {196} to do it all yourself. Mr. Moody used to say, "It is a great deal better to get ten men to work than to do the work of ten men." Be careful as to whom you invite. If there is enmity existing between the person at whose house the meeting is to be held and some other person in the vicinity, you would better bring about a reconciliation between the two before inviting the latter person to the meeting. A minister should not cater to the

prejudices of the people, but he should know their prejudices, and be governed in his actions by his knowledge of them. You have to deal with people on the practical basis of what they are, and not on the ideal basis of what they ought to be.

Oftentimes it is well to leave the whole matter of invitation to the lady of the house. In some homes they are willing that you should invite everybody, while in others they are particular as to whom you invite. Reaching the poor in the alleys is far easier than reaching the wealthy people up on the avenues. You can go into the homes of the poor and invite them to come and hear the Gospel, but for some reason you do not want to go into the homes of the people living in the elegant houses. But it is quite easy for people who are rich themselves, and who are Christians as well, to invite other rich people to gather at their homes, and then have someone there to open up to them the Word of God.

4. PROVIDE FOR THE SINGING AND PLAYING TOO, IF IT IS POSSIBLE. Instrumental music, however, is not absolutely necessary. We have fallen into the way of depending too much upon instrumental music. The best singing is oftentimes without any musical instrument. It is well to bear in mind that very poor singing goes a good way in a poor home. As far as possible, you should have the hymns you are going to use selected beforehand, and selected with care.

5. GO TO THE PLACE OF HOLDING THE MEETING, EARLY. If when you arrive you find the chairs arranged in a most formal way, looking like a funeral, get things a little disarranged. Do not put the chairs in straight lines, but arrange them as for a social gathering.

Another reason for going to the place early is to be ready to welcome people when they come. When they come do not leave them to take care of themselves; get them talking, and open the meeting in an informal way before they know it has begun.

{197} Make everybody feel as much at home as you can. While people are still talking you can suggest a song, and when that is over, have some one lead in prayer. Oftentimes it is well not to let people know that it is going to be a prayer

meeting; call it a social and make it a social, but give it a religious turn.

III. HOW TO CONDUCT THE MEETING.

1. ALWAYS BEGIN PROMPTLY. That is if it has been announced as a meeting beginning at a certain time, be sure to begin at that time. In regard to the form of beginning the meeting, it is not necessary to have any particular form.

2. BE AS INFORMAL AS POSSIBLE.

3. GET EVERYONE TO SING. People like to sing. Oftentimes the people who have the poorest voices and the least knowledge of music are the ones most fond of singing. Encourage them to sing. This will shock the really musical people present, but not one person in a thousand is really musical, and you can afford to shock them. If necessary sing the same verse over and over again until the people learn it; do it with enthusiasm. Comment on the hymns. Use for the most part familiar hymns, though a new hymn with a catchy tune will often take well.

Everything about the meeting should be made cheery and bright. There are hosts of people in the world who have very little brightness in their lives, and if you have a bright cottage meeting, they will find it out and come.

4. MAKE EVERYTHING BRIEF. Have no long prayers, no long sermons and no long testimonies. One man went to a cottage meeting and read a chapter with seventy verses and read the whole chapter. I have heard of a man praying fifteen minutes in a cottage meeting. Those were doubtless extreme cases, but not a few cottage meetings have been killed by long-winded leaders.

5. TAKE A SIMPLE SUBJECT TO SPEAK UPON. Some foolish workers take the cottage meeting as an opportunity for displaying their profound knowledge of theology. Such people kill the meeting. Do not preach, but talk in an informal, homely way. Do not talk too loud. {198}

6. DRAW THE PEOPLE OUT. One of the advantages of a cottage meeting is that you can draw the people out. Be sure to use this opportunity of getting people to speak in meeting. To you it may be a very simple matter to speak in meeting, yet most of us can remember when it was a very difficult

thing to do, but it is far more difficult for those plain people among whom we hold most of our cottage meetings. It is, however, very easy to draw them out by simply saying, "Now, Mrs. Jones, what do you think about this matter?" "Mr. Brown, what have you to say of this?" Before they know it you have got them to talking on the subject of religion just as they would talk about their sewing or washing or everyday work. A young lady used to attend a service that I conducted. She warned me beforehand that I must not call upon her to speak, that she had heart trouble, and if she got excited, it was dangerous; at the same time she was unhappy because she did not take part in meeting. One day when a meeting was going on, quite naturally I turned to her and in an informal way asked her a question upon the subject that was under discussion. Without thinking at all, she got up and expressed her opinion upon it. Afterward I said to her, "You have spoken in meeting, you did not seem to have much trouble about it." She now enjoys speaking in meeting and her heart trouble has disappeared. Perhaps you could not do this in a church or chapel meeting, but it is the easiest thing in the world in a cottage meeting to get everybody talking on the subject of religion just the same as on any other subject. It is a remarkable fact that when you go into a house and approach the subject of religion after having talked about other things, the people immediately begin to talk in another tone of voice, and in a different way. You must break up that sort of thing. Cultivate the habit of gliding into the subject of religion as naturally as into any other subject.

7. DO NOT HAVE A STEREOTYPED WAY OF CONDUCTING A COTTAGE MEETING. It is not well to have a stereotyped way of doing anything. Go to some churches and they put into your hands an order of service. Every part of the service has its fixed place. It gets to be an abomination in the church service, but it is far more of an abomination in a cottage meeting. One of the greatest advantages of a cottage meeting is its informality. Some men get into the way {199} of uttering stereotyped prayers. When he gets to the point where he prays

for the Jews, you know that his next prayer will be for the sick of the congregation, etc., etc. That sort of thing is unspeakably tiresome even in church, but it is utterly unendurable in a cottage meeting.

8. DO NOT LET THE MEETING GET AWAY FROM YOU. We have said to draw the people out and get them to talking, but if you are not very careful they will get to talking, and the meeting will run away from you. Let your ideal be perfect freedom and at the same time perfect control.

9. OFTENTIMES HAVE A SEASON OF SENTENCE PRAYERS.

Sentence prayers are one of the best things that our Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor have introduced into our church life. Of course, sentence prayers can become formal and stereotyped and meaningless. When I first began to go to prayer meeting there were three or four good old men who monopolized the whole time. To begin with, the minister would give out a hymn, and then make a long prayer, and then sing another hymn, and then read a long chapter, and talk fifteen or twenty minutes, and then throw the meeting open. This meant that brother Brown would grind out a long prayer, and then brother Jones would grind out another long prayer, they would sing a hymn, and then brother Smith would pray anywhere from ten to twenty minutes. Another hymn would be sung and the minister would pronounce the benediction, and the affair was over, and all would go home glad the thing was through. Many people cannot pray five minutes in public, and it is a good thing they cannot, and they fancy that it is impossible for them to pray at all unless they can get off an elaborate address to God. But anybody can ask for what he wants. Make it clear to people that this is real praying, asking God for what we really want. How near God seems to draw during a season of sentence prayers! You can say, "If there is one thing you want today more than anything else, just put that in your sentence prayer. Never forget that prayer is simply asking God for what you want, and expecting to get it."

10. OFTENTIMES HAVE REQUESTS FOR PRAYER. Do not be mechanical about that. I would not always have the same kind of a meeting. {200} I knew a man who

was very successful in cottage meeting work who used to have the people get up and move around and talk with one another, and then sit down and go on with the meeting.

11. HAVE PERIODS OF SILENT PRAYER. Oftentimes the most hallowed moments in a meeting are when all the people are silent before God. Before having these periods of silent prayer, you must be careful to warn people to keep their thoughts fixed upon God, and to keep pouring out their souls before God in prayer. You and I may not need that warning, but many Christians do. If not warned, Mrs. Jones is likely to spend the time thinking about Mrs. Brown's hat, and Mrs. Brown about Mrs. Jones' dress. They would not be thinking about God at all.

12. DO PERSONAL WORK. A cottage meeting that does not close with personal work has been mismanaged.

The cottage meeting offers a very unusual opportunity for this kind of work. The meetings are small, it is rare indeed that there are more than forty people present. You should find out how many of these people are saved. It does not follow that because a person is saved, we do not need to do personal work with him. Saved people can get help in these meetings that they cannot get in a large meeting. It is the easiest and simplest thing in the world to get a mother to talking, say about her children. Draw her away from the crowd, and then lead her on the subject of her soul's salvation, or her spiritual condition. People feel more at home in their own house, and you can get into their hearts as you cannot in a more public gathering.

13. CLOSE PROMPTLY. Be sure to do that. If nine o'clock is understood to be the hour of closing, close promptly at that time, if possible. It is a good thing to establish a reputation for beginning and closing promptly. In this way you will get many people to go to your meeting who would not otherwise go. They can stay to a certain hour, and if they know you will close promptly at the hour appointed, they will go to the meeting. If the interest is so great that you wish to continue the meeting, close the meeting at the appointed time, giving all those who desire to leave an

opportunity to do so, and then have a second meeting. You must never forget that a great many people have to get up early in the morning, {201} and in order to do so, they must go to bed early. It is very embarrassing for timid people to get up and leave a meeting while it is going on. Then again, the woman of the house where you are holding the meeting may be obliged to get up at five o'clock in the morning to prepare breakfast, and so must go to bed early. Furthermore, it is far better to close the meeting while there is good interest, than to wait until the interest dies out. If you close at high tide, people will want to come again. If people desire to stay around and chat at the close of a meeting, be sure to have them chat on the subject of religion. If people are disposed to hang around after the meeting is over and make themselves a nuisance, you can say pleasantly, "It is getting late; and Mrs. B. wants to shut up her house. I guess we must be going."

As to the time of holding the meeting, the evening is the usual time, but sometimes the afternoon is a good time, especially in country districts.

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@03 CHAPTER THREE

PARLOR MEETINGS

Parlor meetings are much the same in thought and in method as cottage meetings, with this difference, that cottage meetings are intended to reach people of the middle classes and the poor, while parlor meetings are intended to reach the rich. There are many who think there is no use trying to reach the rich with the Gospel. This is a great mistake. Some of the most devoted and delightful Christians that I have ever known have been people of much wealth and high position. Indeed, perhaps the dearest Christian friend I ever had, and the one from whom I learned the most by personal contact, was a man who stood very high socially and politically in his country. I think this man more fully realized the meaning of Christ's words, "Except ye be converted and become as little children," than any other man I ever knew. I have known people of much wealth in our own country, and members of the nobility in

England, Germany and Russia who were among the most humble Christians that I have ever met.

I. ADVANTAGES AND IMPORTANCE.

The principal advantage in parlor meetings is that they reach many who can be reached in no other way. It may be admitted that the rich are the hardest class to reach of any. It is much easier to bring the Gospel to people who live in the slums than to the people who live in palaces, but many of these latter have been reached by parlor meetings.

II. HOW TO CONDUCT.

1. GET SOME CHRISTIANS OF WEALTH AND POSITION TO OPEN THEIR PARLORS FOR THE MEETINGS.

Rich Christians should make far larger use of their homes than they do, to reach people of their own class. {203} Many of them do not open their homes simply because their attention has never been called to the fact that this is a way in which they can do good. Many of them show a great readiness to do this when it is suggested to them.

2. HAVE THE LADY OF THE HOUSE INVITE HER INTIMATE FRIENDS.

Many of them will come out of curiosity, others will come out of friendship. Oftentimes it gets to be a fad to attend these meetings and people go scarcely knowing why. It does not matter so much why they go, so long as they go; for if the Gospel is presented in the power of the Holy Spirit after they get there some of them will be converted.

3. GET AN ATTRACTIVE AND SPIRIT- FILLED SPEAKER.

Sometimes it is well to have the speaker himself a person of wealth or position, but there are many who have never known what it means to be rich themselves who still have a peculiar faculty for winning the confidence and esteem of wealthy people.

4. SOMETIMES TAKE UP SOME LINE OF BIBLE STUDY.

Bible study under a wise teacher can be made exceedingly interesting for people of wealth and fashion. Indeed, many of these people hardly know how to use their time, and Bible study presents to them a pleasing novelty. Of course the teacher must be a wise man or a wise woman, and filled with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes it is possible to have a regular class for systematic Bible

instruction, extending through many weeks or months.

5. Sometimes have an address on some living religious topic by a Spirit-filled man or woman.

6. IT IS WELL OFTEN TIMES TO INTEREST THOSE WHO ARE GATHERED TOGETHER FOR PARLOR MEETINGS IN SOME MISSIONARY WORK OR CHARITY. Many of them like to give, and it is a blessing to them to give. They should be educated to know just what the crying needs of the wide world are.

7. AIM DIRECTLY AT THE CONVERSION OF THOSE WHO ATTEND. Very little is accomplished after all in parlor meetings, unless the unsaved ones are brought to Christ. The probability is that they will be brought to Christ at the parlor meeting or else will never be brought to Him. If any man should have a profound sense that it {204} is "now or never," it is the one who is addressing a company of wealthy men or women gathered together for a parlor meeting in a Christian home.

A woman of wealth once asked a Christian man who called at her home, "Are you a missionary?" "Yes," he replied. "Do you ever speak to people about their souls?" "I do." "Well," she replied, "I wish you would speak to me about my soul." He did, and led her to Christ. When the conversation was over, the lady said, "I have often wished I was poor; missionaries come and talk to my servants about Christ, but they never speak to me. My pastor calls upon me, but he never speaks about my own religious needs, and I have often wished that I were poor so that some one might speak to me about my soul."

Preparation for a parlor meeting need not be elaborate. The principal thing is to teach those who gather together the great fundamental truths of the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit. If there is music, it should be of the very best, but should be spiritual, rather than classical. The class of people that you are aiming to reach are quite sated with high class music, but simple Gospel singing in the power of the Holy Ghost is a novelty to them, and will touch their hearts and lead to the conversion of many of them. An attractive young woman with a sweet voice, a true knowledge of Christ, a burden for souls, and the

power of the Holy Spirit, will be greatly used of God.

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@04 CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHURCH PRAYER MEETING

I. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

The prayer meeting ought to be the most important meeting in the church. It is the most important meeting if it is rightly conducted. Of course the church prayer meeting in many churches is more a matter of form than a center of power. The thing to do in such a case is not to give up the prayer meeting, but to make it what it ought to be. There are five reasons why the church prayer meeting is of vital importance.

1. IT BRINGS POWER INTO ALL THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH. If there is any real power in the church it is from God, and God has given it in answer to prayer. The prayer meeting is the real expression of the prayer life of the church. Of course all the living members of the church are praying in private, but it is in the prayer meeting that they come together and pray as a church. God delights to honor the prayers of the church as a whole (Acts 12:5, Acts 1:14). If the prayer meeting of a church runs down, it is practically certain that all the life of the church will run down, and its work prove a failure so far as accomplishing anything real and lasting for God is concerned.

2. IT DEVELOPS THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH. In the regular services of the church, but few members of the church are developed; the minister plays the leading role; but in the prayer meeting there is an opportunity for the exercise of gifts on the part of the whole body. Altogether too little stress is laid in modern church life on the development of the gifts of the church. The whole organization is conducted on the idea of the work being done by one {206} man or by a few men. It was not so in early church gatherings. Here the people came together for mutual benefit, and every member of the church was allowed to exercise his gifts (1_Corinthians 14:26). About the only place where this is possible in modern church life is in the prayer meeting. A real prayer meeting is one

of the most apostolic meetings that we have in our modern churches.

3. IT RESULTS IN MANY CONVERSIONS. If a prayer meeting is conducted as it ought to be, many people will be converted in the prayer meeting. In not a few churches the presence of the Holy Spirit is much more manifest in the prayer meeting than in any other gathering of the church, and unconverted men and women and children coming in there feel His presence, and are convicted of sin and oftentimes converted to Christ. Of course there is nothing in many prayer meetings to convert any one, but if a prayer meeting is conducted as it ought to be, conversions may be looked for at every meeting.

4. IT PROMOTES THE LIFE AND FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH. In a large church it is quite impossible for people to get very close to one another in the Sunday services. Everything conspires to prevent it, but in the prayer meeting not only do people get in closer physical contact, but heart touches heart in a way that is unknown in the more formal service. People warm up toward one another, and come to understand one another in the prayer meeting as in perhaps no other service. Love is increased and multiplied. There has perhaps never been a time in the history of the church when this was more important than today. People belong to the same church, and sit under the same minister, and look into one another's faces once a week for years, and scarcely know one another's names, but in the prayer meeting people learn to know and to love one another.

5. IT PROMOTES THE HOME AND FOREIGN MISSION WORK OF THE CHURCH. It is very difficult, and in many cases altogether impossible, to keep up a strong missionary interest without a church prayer meeting. Not only does the prayer meeting afford opportunity for missionary intelligence, but it also affords an opportunity for the many in the church to pour out their heart in prayer for the {207} missionary work. When Jesus wished to promote a missionary interest among His disciples, He set them to praying for missions (Matthew 9:38; 10:1). If we wish to promote the foreign missionary interest in any church, we must get the

church to praying for missions.

II. HOW TO CONDUCT.

I. REMEMBER THAT THE PRAYER MEETING IS PRIMARILY A

P_R_A_Y_E_R MEETING. Do not transform it into a

lecture course or into a Bible class. It would be

going too far to say that the prayer meeting

should be only a prayer meeting. There are, of

course, times when this should be the case, when

the whole hour should be given up to prayer, but

this is not wise as a universal rule; but at least

it ought to be pre-eminently a prayer meeting.

Many of our modern prayer meetings are so only in

name. There may be a prayer by the minister at the

opening of the meeting, and a prayer by some one

else in closing, but the meeting is largely given

up to talking, and oftentimes very desultory and

unprofitable talking at that. Let prayer be the

prominent thing in the prayer meeting. It may be

that the major part of the time is not taken up by

prayer, but see to it that the Bible comment and

the testimony has something to do with prayer, and

leads naturally to prayer.

2. DRAW OUT ALL THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH IN

THE PRAYER MEETING. The prayer meeting is the

place for the cultivation of the gifts of the

membership of the church. In many churches it is

only the chosen few who exercise their gifts and

get the fullest measure of blessing. It will not

do to say that every member should take part in

every prayer meeting. In a large church this is

impossible, and furthermore it leads to a certain

mechanical way of taking part that is unprofitable

and vain; but the pastor should see to it that all

the membership take part some time. If there is

any attendant at the prayer meeting who never

takes part, make a study of that person and find

out what his gifts are, and give him an

opportunity for their exercise. Assign backward

ones something definite to do; it may be nothing

more than to read a verse of Scripture. It is not

wise, however, to allow people to be content with

simply getting up week after week and quoting

{208} some passage of Scripture. It is better to

give them some suggestive verse to study during

the week, and then let them bring some thought

that has come to them in meditating upon that

verse.

3. ASSIGN PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE TO STUDY. For example, one of the most helpful series of prayer meetings I ever conducted took up the book of Psalms; about seven Psalms were given out each week, and the people were requested to read these Psalms over and over again, and then to come to the meeting prepared to give some thought that had come to them in the study of these Psalms. When this request was made, one of the most experienced members of the church went to a public library and got down all the leading commentaries on the Psalms and began to study them. He confessed afterwards that he had gotten far greater blessing from the comments made by some of the plainest and most uneducated people in the church than he had gotten from all the commentaries that he had studied. A prominent minister who dropped in during these meetings was so impressed by the interest and power of the meeting, that he afterwards adopted the same plan in his own church. He said that it gave him an entirely new idea of the possibilities of the prayer meeting.

4. HAVE A WELL CHOSEN LIST OF SUBJECTS. It is not well always to have a list of subjects that is followed week after week in the prayer meeting. It is quite possible to get into a stereotyped and formal way in doing this, but lists of subjects are oftentimes helpful. Usually the best list of subjects is the one you make up for yourself. Get as many lists of subjects as you can for suggestion, and then make your own. Usually it is not wise to have a list of subjects that extends over too long a period. A list of subjects extending over an entire year oftentimes gets to be a great nuisance.

5. HAVE DEFINITE REQUESTS FOR PRAYER. There is a discouraging vagueness in the prayers at many prayer meetings. When something definite is presented for the meeting, it goes far to give life to the meeting; the prayers no longer wander all over creation, but aim at a definite object. It is well when the requests for prayer are read to have the people bow their heads in silent prayer. Do not {209} read the requests so rapidly as to make it impossible for each one to

be remembered definitely. After a few requests have been read, it is well to have some one lead in prayer, then read others and have some one else lead in prayer, and so on through the list. It is well oftentimes to have the requests made verbally from the audience, but there is a great advantage in having them written out. If people are not interested enough to write the request out, it is doubtful that there is much good in asking for the things desired; furthermore, if the request is written out, it can be read so that everybody in the room hears it.

6. HAVE A DEFINITE OPPORTUNITY FOR THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE. Thanksgiving should always go hand in hand with prayer. The Apostle Paul said, "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication **WITH THANKSGIVING** let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). This is a good rule for the conduct of a prayer meeting. Giving definite thanksgiving and praise for blessings already received will increase our faith in asking for new and larger blessings. There is nothing that seems to promote the presence of the Spirit more than true thanksgiving; indeed a large share of the testimony and the talk in prayer meeting should be along the line of thanksgiving and praise.

7. MAKE MUCH OF MUSIC IN THE PRAYER MEETING. Of course the prayer meeting ought not to be a song service, but it should be a service in which there is much song. Every one should be encouraged to sing. See to it that all do sing. The singing should be in the Spirit, but should also be with the understanding. Dwell on the meaning of the words. Have verses sung over and over until they are sung from the heart. A prayer meeting should be one of the brightest, cheeriest gatherings ever held on earth. If it is made so, there will be no need of urging people to come out to the meeting, and scolding them for not coming; they will want to come. It will be the brightest spot in the whole life of the week.

8. TRAIN THE PEOPLE TO FEEL THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRAYER MEETING. To do this it is not necessary to scold people for not attending, but often drop a word that emphasizes the importance of the {210}

prayer meeting. Let people know of the good time that you are having. Speak to people personally about coming out. Have people go after them and bring them out, and keep after them until they come. Make the meetings so interesting that when they do come once they will want to come again.

9. MAKE PEOPLE FEEL AT HOME. About the stiffest thing on earth is a stiff prayer meeting, but if the prayer meeting is made a homey place, people will want to come again and again. It is well to stand at the door to welcome people as they come in, having a smile and pleasant word for all who come. It is not at all necessary that the pastor be behind the desk during the opening moments of the meeting; he can oftentimes do more good down by the door than he can in his seat of honor.

10. SOMETIMES MAKE THE PRAYER MEETING LIKE A SOCIAL. Do not have the people sit in stiff rows, but have them stand up and move around. Then the meeting can be begun in an informal way, and you are in the midst of the meeting almost before you know it.

11. ALWAYS AIM AT, AND LOOK FOR, CONVERSIONS IN THE PRAYER MEETING. If the prayer meeting is conducted as it ought to be, many unconverted people will come, and the whole atmosphere of the place is such as to prepare people for a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ. There is no place where it is so easy to speak to people about their souls as after a good warm prayer meeting. Oftentimes when the opportunity is given for requests for prayer, the question should be put, "Is there not some one here tonight who wishes us to pray that they may be saved tonight," or some question of that character.

12. STAND AT THE DOOR AND SHAKE HANDS WITH PEOPLE AND SPEAK TO PEOPLE AS THEY GO OUT. There is oftentimes untold good in a hearty handshake. I stood one night at the door of our prayer meeting shaking hands with people as they went out, and a lady said to me, "I have been in Chicago for a long time; I have gone to church again and again but you are the first Christian that has {211} shaken hands with me." I believe another said that the only reason she went to the prayer meeting was to get a good handshake.

13. MAKE THE PRAYER MEETING A MATTER OF PRAYER.

Ask God to teach you how to conduct the prayer meeting and make it what it ought to be. Ask God definitely to bless every prayer meeting that you conduct or attend; do it expectantly. Always go to the prayer meeting expecting that you are going to have a good time. I always do and am never disappointed.

14. MAKE THE PRAYER MEETING A MATTER OF STUDY. Do

not make it so much a study as to what you will say, but as to how it can be improved. Avoid getting into ruts. It is not well to keep in a rut even if it is a good rut.

III. SOME SUGGESTIONS.

1. DON'T TAKE UP ALL THE TIME YOURSELF. The prayer meeting is not so much your meeting as the meeting of the whole church. You have your opportunity to air your views on the Lord's Day; be fair and give the other people an opportunity on the prayer meeting evening.

2. DON'T LET ANYONE ELSE TAKE UP ALL THE TIME.

There is liable to be in every community a prayer meeting killer, a man given to making long prayers or long speeches, and as stale as they are long. Everybody looks blue as soon as he gets up to speak. This must not be permitted, but just how can it be stopped? First of all, look to God to give you wisdom, in the second place don't lose your temper, in the third place watch for your opportunity. Sometimes he will say something that will enable you to break in with a remark; then ask somebody else his opinion, and some one else his, and then propose a song. Sometimes it will be necessary to say to the member, publicly and plainly, but kindly, that you are glad his heart is so full, but the time is getting very short and there are many who want to speak. Sometimes it will be wisest to go to the man privately and tell him that it is not wise for him to take up so much time in the meeting. If you have tact, you can generally do this without hurting his feelings, but at any cost he must be stopped. {212}

3. DON'T BEGIN LATE. If a prayer meeting is announced to begin at a certain hour, begin at the very tick of the clock. This encourages more people to attend than most people suspect.

4. DON'T RUN OVER TIME. If the prayer meeting is announced to close at a certain time, close at that time. It may be wise to have a second prayer meeting, but close the meeting at the time announced.

5. DON'T LET THE MEETING DRAG. If it begins to drag, ask some one a question that will draw him out, or say something yourself that will set other people to thinking and talking. Oftentimes the best thing to do is to propose a season of silent prayer, but do not urge people to "fill up the time." That leads to unprofitable talking. People ought not to speak merely to fill up time; they ought not to speak unless they have something to say that is worth listening to. Far better a season of silent prayer than a season of vain talking.

Sometimes it is well to bring the meeting to a close before the announced hour comes. Some leaders make the mistake of thinking that it is necessary to carry the meeting through to the announced hour, no matter how it drags.

6. DON'T HAVE BAD AIR. The air in the room has more to do with the excellence or dullness of the meeting than most people suspect.

7. DON'T BE STEREOTYPED. The fact that a prayer meeting conducted in a certain way was a good prayer meeting does not prove that every prayer meeting should be conducted in just that way. It is well to do unexpected things; it wakes people up; but be sure that you do not do foolish things in your desire to do unexpected things.

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@05 CHAPTER FIVE THE USE OF TRACTS

Comparatively few Christians realize the importance of tract work. I had been a Christian a good many years, and a minister of the Gospel several years, before it ever entered my head that tracts were of much value in Christian work. I had somehow grown up with the notion that tracts were all rubbish, and therefore I did not take the trouble to read them, and far less did I take the trouble to circulate them, but I found out that I was entirely wrong. Tract work has some great advantages over other forms of Christian work.

I. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. ANY PERSON CAN DO IT. We cannot all preach; we cannot all conduct meetings; but we can all select useful tracts and then hand them out to others. Of course some of us can do it better than others.

Even a blind man or a mute man can do tract work. It is a line of work in which every man, woman and child can engage.

2. A TRACT ALWAYS STICKS TO THE POINT. I wish every worker did that, but how often we get to talking to some one and he is smart enough to get us off on to a side track.

3. A TRACT NEVER LOSES ITS TEMPER. Perhaps you sometimes do. I have known Christian workers, even workers of experience, who would sometimes get all stirred up, but you cannot stir up a tract. It always remains as calm as a June morning.

4. OFTENTIMES PEOPLE WHO ARE TOO PROUD TO BE TALKED WITH, WILL READ A TRACT WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING. There is many a man who {214} would rebuke you if you tried to speak to him about his soul, who will read a tract if you leave it on his table, or in some other place where he comes upon it accidentally, and that tract may be used for his salvation.

5. A TRACT STAYS BY ONE. You talk to a man and then he goes away, but the tract stays with him. Some years ago a man came into a mission in New York. One of the workers tried to talk with him, but he would not listen. As he was leaving, a card tract was placed in his hands which read, "If I should die tonight I would go to _____. Please fill out and sign." He put it in his pocket, went to his steamer, for he was a sailor, and slipped it into the edge of his bunk. The steamer started for Liverpool. On his voyage he met with an accident, and was laid aside in his bunk. That card stared him in the face day and night. Finally he said, "If I should die tonight I would go to hell, but I will not go there, I will go to heaven, I will take Christ right here and now." He went to Liverpool, returned to New York, went to the mission, told his story, and had the card, which was still in his pocket, filled out and signed with his name. The conversation he had had in the mission left him, but the card stayed by

him.

6. TRACTS LEAD MANY TO ACCEPT CHRIST. The author of one tract ("What is it to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" received before his death upwards of sixteen hundred letters from people who had been led to Christ by reading it.

II. PURPOSES FOR WHICH TO USE A TRACT.

1. FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE UNSAVED. A tract will often succeed in winning a man to Christ where a sermon or a personal conversation has failed.

There are a great many people who, if you try to talk with them, will put you off; but if you put a tract in their hands and ask God to bless it, after they go away and are alone they will read the tract and God will carry it home to their hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost. One of our students wrote me in great joy of how he had at last succeeded in winning a whole family for Christ. He had been working for that family for a long time but could not touch them. One day he left a tract with them, {215} and God used that tract for the conversion of four or five members of the family. Another student held a cottage meeting at a home, and by mistake left his Bible there. There was a tract in the Bible. When he had gone, the woman of the house saw the Bible, picked it up, opened it, saw the tract and read it. The Spirit of God carried it home to her heart, and when he went back after the Bible she told him she wanted to find the Lord Jesus Christ. The tract had note what he could not do in personal work. I once received a letter from a man saying, "There is a man in this place whom I tried for a long time to reach but could not. One day I handed him a tract, and I think it was to the salvation of his whole family."

2. TO LEAD CHRISTIANS INTO A DEEPER AND MORE EARNEST CHRISTIAN LIFE. It is a great mistake to limit the use of tracts to winning the unsaved to Christ. A little tract on the Second Coming of Christ, once sent me in a letter, made a change in my whole life. I do not think the tract was altogether correct doctrinally, but it had in it an important truth, and it did for me just the work that needed to be done.

There is a special class of people with whom this

form of ministry is particularly helpful, those who live where they do not enjoy spiritual advantages. You may know some one who is leading a very unsatisfactory life, and you long to have that person know what the Christian life really means. His pastor may not be a spiritual man, he may not know the deep things of God. It is the simplest thing in the world to slip into a letter a tract that will lead him into an entirely new Christian life.

3. TO CORRECT ERROR. This is a very necessary form of work in the day in which we live. The air is full of error. In our personal work we have not always time to lead a man out of his error, but oftentimes we can give him a tract that can do the work better than we can. If you tried to lead him out of his error by personal work, you might get into a discussion, but the tract cannot. The one in error cannot talk back to the tract. For example, take people that are in error on the question of seventh day observance. It might take some time to lead such a one out of the darkness into {216} the light, but a tract on that subject can be secured that has been used of God to lead many out of the bondage of legalism into the glorious liberty of the Gospel of Christ.

4. TO SET CHRISTIANS TO WORK. Our churches are full of members who are doing nothing. A well-chosen tract may set such to work. I know of a young man who was working in a factory in Massachusetts. He was a plain, uneducated sort of fellow, but a little tract on personal work was placed in his hands. He read it and re-read it, and said, "I am not doing what I should for Christ." He went to work among his companions in the factory, inviting them to the church, and to hear his pastor preach. Not satisfied with this, he went to doing personal work. This was not sufficient, so he went to work holding meetings himself. Finally he brought a convention to his city. Just that one plain factory man was the means of getting a great convention and blessing to that place, and all from reading that little tract. He was also instrumental in organizing a society which was greatly blessed of God. It would be possible to fill this country with literature

on Christian work that would stir up the dead and sleeping professors of religion throughout the land, and send them out to work for the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. WHO SHOULD USE TRACTS.

1. **MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL SHOULD USE THEM.** Many ministers do make constant use of them in their pastoral work, leaving well chosen tracts where they make their pastoral calls, handing out tracts along the line of the sermons that they preach. It is said of Rev. Edward Judson of New York, that he seldom makes a call without having in his pocket a selection of tracts adapted to almost every member of the family, and especially to the children. "At the close of the Sunday evening preaching service, he has often put some good brother in the chair, and while the meeting proceeds he goes down into the audience and gives to each person a choice leaflet, at the same time taking the opportunity to say a timely word. In this way he comes into personal touch with the whole audience, gives each stranger a cordial welcome, and leaves in his hand some message from God. At least once a year he selects some one tract that has in it the very core of the Gospel. On this he prints the notices of the services, and selecting his church as a center, he has this tract put in the hands of every person living within half a mile in each direction, regardless of creed or condition. He sometimes uses 10,000 tracts at one distribution, and finds it very fruitful in results."
2. **SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.** Every Sunday School teacher should be on the lookout for tracts to give to his scholars. In this way he can do much to supplement his hour's work on the Lord's Day.
3. **TRAVELING MEN.** Traveling men have a rare opportunity for doing tract work. They are constantly coming in contact with different men, and finding out their needs. A Christian "drummer" with a well-assorted selection of tracts can accomplish immeasurable good.
4. **BUSINESS MEN.** Business men can use tracts to good advantage with the very men with whom they have business engagements. They can also do excellent work with their own employees. Many a business man slips well chosen tracts into many of

the letters which he writes, and thus accomplishes an effective ministry for his Master.

5. SCHOOL TEACHERS. It is very difficult for school teachers in some cities and towns to talk very much with their pupils in school. Oftentimes the rules of the school board prevent it entirely, but a wise teacher can learn all about her scholars and their home surroundings, and can give them tracts just adapted to their needs.

6. HOUSEKEEPERS. Every Christian housekeeper should have a collection of well assorted tracts. She can hand these out to the servant girls, the grocery men, the market men, the butcher, to the tramps that come to the door. They can be left upon the table in the parlor and in bedrooms. Only eternity will disclose the good that is accomplished in these ways. {218}

IV. HOW TO USE TRACTS.

1. TO BEGIN A CONVERSATION. One of the difficulties in Christian work is to begin. You see a person with whom you wish to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ. The great difficulty is in starting. It is easy enough to talk after you have started, but how are you going to start a conversation naturally and easily? One of the simplest and easiest ways is by slipping a tract into the person's hand. After the tract has been read, a conversation naturally follows. I was once riding in a crowded car. I asked God for an opportunity to lead some one to Christ. I was watching for the opportunity for which I had asked, when two young ladies entered. I thought I knew one of them as the daughter of a minister. She went through the car looking for a seat, and then came back. As she came back and sat down in the seat in front of me, she bowed, and of course I knew I was right as to who she was. I took out a little bundle of tracts, and selecting one that seemed best adapted to her case, I handed it to her, having first asked God to bless it. She at once began to read and I began to pray. When she had read the tract, I asked her what she thought about it. She almost burst into tears right there in the car, and in a very few moments that minister's daughter was rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ as her personal Savior. As she

afterwards passed out of the car, she said, "I want to thank you for what you have done for me in leading me to Christ."

2. USE A TRACT TO CLOSE A CONVERSATION. As a rule when you have finished talking with some one, you should not leave him without something definite to take home to read. If the person has accepted Christ, put some tract in his hands that will show him how to succeed in the Christian life. If the person has not accepted Christ, some other tract that is especially adapted to his need should be left with him.

3. USE TRACTS WHERE A CONVERSATION IS IMPOSSIBLE.

For example, one night at the close of a tent meeting in Chicago, as I went down one of the aisles a man beckoned to me, and intimated that his wife was interested. She was in tears, and I tried to talk with her, {219} but she stammered out in a broken way, "We don't talk English." She had not understood a word of the sermon, I suppose, but God had carried something home to her heart. They were Norwegians, and I could not find a Norwegian in the whole tent to act as interpreter, but I could put a Norwegian tract in her hand, and that could do the work. Time and time again I have met with men deeply interested about their soul's salvation, but with whom I could not deal because I did not talk the language that they understood.

One day as I came from dinner, I found a Swede waiting for me, and he said he had a man outside with whom he wished me to talk. I went outside and found an uncouth looking specimen, a Norwegian. The Swede had found him drunk in an alley and dragged him down to the Institute to talk with me. He was still full of whisky, and spit tobacco juice over me as I tried to talk with him. I found he could not talk English, and I talked English to the Swede, and the Swede talked Swedish to the Norwegian, and the Norwegian got a little bit of it. I made it as clear as I could to our Swede interpreter, and he in his turn made it as clear as he could to the Norwegian. Then I put a Norwegian tract in his hands, and that could talk to him so that he understood perfectly.

Oftentimes a conversation is impossible because of

the place where you meet people. For example, you may be on the street cars and wish to speak to a man, but in many instances it would not be wise if it were possible, but you can take the man's measure and then give him a tract that will fit him. You may be able to say just a few words to him and then put the tract in his hands and ask God to bless it.

4. USE TRACTS TO SEND TO PEOPLE AT A DISTANCE. It does not cost a tract much to travel. You can send them to the ends of the earth for a few cents. Especially use them to send to people who live in out of the way places where there is no preaching. There are thousands of people living in different sections of this country where they do not hear preaching from one year's end to another. It would be impossible to send an evangelical preacher to them, but you can send a tract and it will do the preaching for you. {220}

V. SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE USE OF TRACTS.

1. ALWAYS READ THE TRACTS YOURSELF BEFORE GIVING THEM TO OTHERS. This is very necessary. Bad tracts abound today, tracts that contain absolutely pernicious doctrine. They are being circulated free by the million, and one needs to be on his guard, lest he be doing harm rather than good in distributing tracts. Of course we cannot read all the tracts in other languages, but we can have them interpreted to us, and it is wise to do so. Besides positively bad tracts, there are many tracts that are worthless.

2. SUIT YOUR TRACT TO THE PERSON TO WHOM YOU GIVE IT. What is good for one person may not be good for another.

3. CARRY A SELECTION OF TRACTS WITH YOU. I do not say a COLLECTION, but a SELECTION. Tracts are countless in number, and a large share of them are worthless. Select the best, and arrange them for the different classes of people with whom you come in contact.

4. SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF GOD. This is of the very highest importance. If there is any place where we need wisdom from above, it is in the selection of tracts, and in their distribution after their selection.

5. SEEK GOD'S BLESSING UPON THE TRACT AFTER YOU

HAVE GIVEN IT OUT. Do not merely give out the tract and there let the matter rest, but whenever you give out a tract ask God to bless it.

6. OFTENTIMES GIVE A MAN A TRACT WITH WORDS AND SENTENCES UNDERSCORED. Men are curious, and they will take particular notice of the underscoring.

It is oftentimes a good thing to have a tract put up in your office. Men who come in will read it. I know a man who had a few words put upon his paper weight. A great many who came into his office saw it, and it made a deep impression upon them.

7. NEVER BE ASHAMED OF DISTRIBUTING TRACTS. Many people hand out tracts to others as if they were ashamed of what they were doing. People are not likely to read tracts if you hand them to them {221} as if you were ashamed to do it; but if you act as though you were conferring a favor upon them, and giving them something worth reading, they will read your tract. It is often well to say to a person, "Here is a little leaflet out of which I have gotten a good deal of good. I would like to have you read it."

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@06 CHAPTER SIX

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS

I. THEIR IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. THEY ARE SCRIPTURAL. Jesus said, "Go out quickly INTO THE STREETS and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." Every great preacher of the Bible was an open-air preacher. Peter was an open-air preacher, Paul was an open-air preacher, and so were Elijah, Moses and Ezra. More important than all, Jesus Christ Himself was an open-air preacher, and preached for the most part out of doors. Every great sermon recorded in the Bible was preached in the open air; the sermon on the Day of Pentecost, the Sermon on the Mount, the sermon on Mars Hill, etc. In this country we have an idea that open-air preaching is for those who cannot get any other place to speak, but across the water they look at it quite differently. Some of the most eminent preachers of Great Britain preach in the open air.

2. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS ARE PORTABLE, YOU CAN CARRY THEM AROUND. It would be very difficult to carry a

church or mission building with you, but there is no difficulty about carrying an open-air meeting with you. You can get an open-air meeting where you could by no possibility get a church, mission hall or even a room. You can have open-air meetings in all parts of the city and all parts of the country.

3. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS ARE MORE ATTRACTIVE IN THE SUMMER THAN HOT, SWELTERING HALLS OR CHURCHES.

When on my vacations, I used to attend a country church. It was one of the hottest, most stifling and sleepy places I ever entered. It was all but impossible to keep awake while the minister attempted to preach. The church was located {223} in a beautiful grove where it was always cool and shady, but it seemed never to enter the minds of the people to go out of the church into the grove. Of course only a few people attended the church services. One day a visiting minister suggested that they have an open-air meeting on the front lawn of a Christian man having a summer residence near at hand. The farmers came to that meeting from miles around, in wagons, on foot and every other way. There was a splendid crowd in attendance. The country churches would do well in the summer to get out of their church building into some attractive grove near at hand.

4. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS WILL ACCOMMODATE VAST CROWDS.

There are few church buildings, especially in the country, that will accommodate more than one thousand people; but people by the thousands can be accommodated by an open-air meeting. It has been my privilege to speak for several summers in a small country town with less than a thousand inhabitants. Of course the largest church building in the town would not accommodate more than five hundred people. The meetings, however, were held in the open air, and people drove to them from forty miles around, and at a single meeting we had an attendance of 15,000 people. Whitefield was driven to the fields by the action of church authorities. It was well that he was. Some of his audiences at Moorfields were said to number 60,000 people.

5. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS ARE ECONOMICAL. You neither have to pay rent nor hire a janitor. They do not

cost anything at all. God Himself furnishes the building and takes care of it. I remember that at a Christian Workers' Convention a man was continually complaining that no one would hire for him a mission hall in which to hold meetings. At last I suggested to him that he had all outdoors, and could go there and preach until some one hired him a hall. He took the suggestion and was greatly used of God. You do not need to have a cent in your pocket to hold an open-air meeting. The whole outdoors is free.

6. YOU CAN REACH MEN IN AN OPEN-AIR MEETING THAT YOU CAN REACH IN NO OTHER WAY. I can tell of instance after instance where men who have not been at church or a mission hall for years have {224} been reached by open-air meetings. The persons I have known to be reached and converted through open-air meetings have included thieves, drunkards, gamblers, saloon-keepers, abandoned women, murderers, lawyers, doctors, theatrical people, society people, in fact pretty much every class.

7. YOU CAN REACH BACKSLIDERS AND PEOPLE WHO HAVE DRIFTED AWAY FROM THE CHURCH. One day when we were holding a meeting on a street corner in a city, a man in the crowd became interested, and one of our workers dealt with him. He said, "I am a backslider, and so is my wife, but I have made up my mind to come back to Christ." He was saved and so was his brother-in-law.

8. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS IMPRESS PEOPLE BY THEIR EARNESTNESS. How often I have heard people say, "There is something in it. See those people talking out there on the street. They do not have any collection, and they come here just because they believe what they are preaching." Remarks like this are made over and over again. Men who are utterly careless about the Gospel and Christianity have been impressed by the earnestness of men and women who go out on to the street and win souls for Christ.

9. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS BRING RECRUITS TO CHURCHES AND MISSIONS. One of the best ways to fill up an empty church is to send your workers out on the street to hold meetings before the church service is held, or better still, go yourself. When the

meeting is over, you can invite people to the church (or mission). This is the divinely appointed means for reaching men that cannot be reached in any other way (Luke 14:21). All Christians should hear the words of Christ constantly ringing in their ears, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor," etc.

10. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS ENABLE YOU TO REACH _M_E_N_.

One of the great problems of most ministers of the Gospel today is how to get hold of the MEN. The average church audience is composed very largely of women and children. One of the easiest ways to get hold of the men is to go out on the streets, where the men are. Open-air meetings are as a rule composed of an overwhelming majority of men.

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11. OPEN-AIR MEETINGS ARE GOOD FOR THE HEALTH. An

English preacher was told that he must die, that he had consumption. He thought he should make the most of the few months he had allotted to live, so he went out on the streets and began preaching. The open-air preaching cured his consumption, and he lived for many years, and was the founder of a great open-air society.

II. WHERE TO HOLD OPEN-AIR MEETINGS.

To put it in a single word, hold them where the people are that you wish to reach. But a few suggestions may prove helpful.

1. WHERE THE CROWDS PASS. Find the principal thoroughfare where the crowds throng. You cannot hold your meeting just at that point, as the police will not permit it, but you can hold it just a little to one side of that point, and the crowds as they pass will go to one side and listen to you.

2. HOLD THEM NEAR CROWDED TENEMENTS. In that way you can preach to the people in the tenements as well as on the street. They will throw open their windows and listen. Sometimes the audience that you do not see will be as large as the one you do see. You may be preaching to hundreds of people inside the building that you do not see at all. I knew of a poor sick woman being brought to Christ through the preaching she heard on the street. It was a hot summer night, and her window was open,

and the preaching came in through the window and touched her heart and won her to Christ. It is good to have a good strong voice in open-air preaching, for then you can preach to all the tenements within three or four blocks. Mr. Sankey once sang a hymn that was carried over a mile away and converted a man that far off. I have a friend who occasionally uses in his open-air meetings a megaphone that carries his voice to an immense distance.

3. HOLD MEETINGS NEAR CIRCUSES, BASEBALL GAMES, AND OTHER PLACES WHERE THE PEOPLE CROWD. One of the most interesting meetings I ever held was just outside of a baseball ground on Sunday. The police were trying to break up the game inside by arresting the leaders. We held the meeting outside just back of the grand stand. As there was no game to see inside, the people listened to {226} the singing and preaching of the Gospel outside. On another Sunday we drove down to Sell's circus and had the most motley audience I ever addressed. There were people present from almost every nation under heaven. The circus had advertised a "Congress of Nations," so I had provided a congress of nations for my open-air meeting. On that day I had a Dutchman, a Frenchman, a Scotchman, an Englishman, an Irishman and an American preach. We took care at the open-air meeting to invite the people to evening meeting at the mission. That night a man came who told us that he was one of the employees of the circus, and was touched that afternoon by the preaching of the Gospel, and had come to learn how to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He accepted the Savior that night.

4. HOLD MEETINGS IN OR NEAR PARKS OR OTHER PUBLIC RESORTS. Almost every city has its resorts where people go on Sunday. As the people will not go to church, the church ought to go out to the people. Sometimes permission can be secured from the authorities to hold the meetings right in the parks. Wherever this is impossible they can be held near at hand. One who is now a deacon of our church spent his Sundays at Lincoln Park before he was converted; an open-air meeting was held close at hand, and there he heard the Gospel and was

converted.

5. HOLD MEETINGS IN GROVES. It would be well if every country church could be persuaded to try this. Get out of the church into a grove somewhere, and you will be surprised at the number of people who will come who would not go near the church at all.

6. HOLD OPEN-AIR MEETINGS NEAR YOUR MISSIONS. If you have a mission, be sure to hold an open-air meeting near it. It is the easiest thing in the world to keep a mission full, even during the summer months, if you hold an open-air meeting in connection with it, but it is almost impossible to do so if you do not.

7. HOLD OPEN-AIR MEETINGS IN FRONT OF CHURCHES. A good many of our empty churches could be filled if we would only hold open-air meetings in front of them. Years ago, when in London, I went to hear Newman Hall preach. It looked to me like a very orderly and aristocratic church, but when I left the church after the {227} second service, I was surprised to find an open-air meeting in full blast right in front of the church, and people gathered there in crowds from the thoroughfare.

8. BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE LITTLE DETAILS IN CONNECTION WITH THE LOCATION. On a hot day, hold the meeting on the shady side of the street. On a cool day, on the sunny side. Make it as comfortable for the audience as possible. Never compel the audience to stand with the sun shining in their eyes. Preach with the wind, and not against it. Take your own position a little above the part of the audience nearest you, upon a curbstone, chair, platform, rise in the ground, or anything that will raise your head above others so that your voice will carry.

III. THINGS TO GET.

1. GET IT THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD BETWEEN YOURSELF AND GOD THAT HE WANTS YOU TO DO THIS WORK, AND THAT BY HIS GRACE YOU ARE GOING TO DO IT WHATEVER IT COSTS. This is one of the most important things in starting out to do open-air work. You are bound to make a failure unless you settle this at the start. Open-air work has its discouragements, its difficulties and its almost insurmountable obstacles, and unless you start out knowing that

God has called you to the work, and come what will, you will go through with it. you are sure to give it up.

2. GET PERMISSION FROM THE POWERS THAT BE TO HOLD OPEN-AIR MEETINGS. Do not get into conflict with the police if you can possibly avoid it. As a rule it is quite easy to get this permission if you go about it in a courteous and intelligent way. Find out what the laws of the city are in this regard, and then observe them. Go to the captain of the precinct and tell him that you wish to hold an open-air meeting, and let him see that you are not a disturber of the peace or a crank. Many would-be open-air preachers get into trouble from a simple lack of good sense and common decency.

3. GET A GOOD PLACE TO HOLD THE MEETING. Do not start out at random. Study your ground. You should operate like a general. We are told that the Germans studied France as a battle ground for years before the Franco- Prussian war broke out, and when the war {228} out there were officers in the German army that knew more about France than the officers in the French army did. Lay your plan of campaign, study your battle field, pick out the best places to hold the meetings, look over the territory carefully and study it in all its bearings. There are a good many things to be considered. Do not select what would be a good place for some one to throw a big panful of dishwater upon you. These little details may appear trivial, but they need to be taken into consideration. It is unpleasant, and somewhat disconcerting, when a man is right in the midst of an interesting exhortation, to have a panful of dishwater thrown down the back of his neck.

4. GET AS LARGE A NUMBER OF RELIABLE CHRISTIAN MEN AND WOMEN TO GO WITH YOU AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN.

Crowds draw crowds. There is great power in numbers. One man can go out on the street alone and hold a meeting; I have done it myself; but if I can get fifteen or twenty reliable men to go with me, I will get them every time. Please note that I have said RELIABLE Christian men and women. Do not take anybody along with you to an open-air meeting that you do not know. A man that is in the habit of making a fool of himself be sure to leave

at home. He may upset your whole meeting. Do not take a man or woman with you who has an unsavory reputation. Probably some one in the crowd will know it and shout out the fact. Take only people who are of established reputation, and well balanced. Never pick up a stranger out of the crowd and ask him to speak. Some one will come along who appears to be just your sort, but if you ask him to speak you will wish you had not done so.

5. GET THE BEST MUSIC YOU CAN. Get a baby organ and a cornet if you can. Be sure to have good singing if it is possible. If you cannot have good singing, have poor singing, for even poor singing goes a good way in the open air. One of the best open-air meetings I ever attended was where two of us were forced to go out alone. Neither of us was a singer. We started with only one hearer, but a drunken man came along and began to dance to our singing, and a crowd gathered to watch him dance. When the crowd had gathered, I simply put my hand on the drunken man, and said, "Stand still for a few moments." My companion took the {229} drunken man as a text for a temperance sermon, and when he got through I took him for a text. People began to whisper in the crowd, "I would not be in that man's shoes for anything." The man did us a good service that night. He first drew the crowd, and then furnished us with a text. The Lord turned the devil's instrument right against him that night. If you can, get a good solo singer, or even a poor solo singer will do splendid work in the open air, if he sings in the power of the Spirit. I remember a man who attempted to sing in the open air, who was really no singer at all, but God in His wonderful mercy gave him that night to sing in the power of the Spirit. People began to break down on the street, tears rolled down their cheeks, one woman was converted right there during the singing of that hymn. Although the hymn was sung in such a miserable way from a musical standpoint, the Spirit of God used it for that woman's conversion.

6. GET THE ATTENTION OF YOUR HEARERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. When you are preaching in a church, people will oftentimes stay even if they are not

interested, but unless you get the attention of your audience at once in the open air, one of two things will happen, either your crowd will leave you or else they will begin to gyp you. In the first half dozen sentences you must get the attention of your hearers. I was once holding a meeting in one of the hardest places of a city. There were saloons on three of the four corners, three breweries, and four or five Roman Catholic churches were close at hand. There was scarcely a Protestant in that part of the city. The first words I spoke were these, "You will notice the cross on the spire of yonder church." By this means I secured their attention at once, and then I talked to them about the meaning of that cross. On holding a meeting one labor day, I started out on the subject of labor. I spoke only a few moments on that subject, to lead them around to the subject of the Lord Jesus Christ. Holding a meeting one night in the midst of a hot election, near where an election parade was forming, I started out with the question, "Whom shall we elect?" The people expected a political address, but before long I got them interested in the question whether or not we should elect the Lord Jesus Christ to be the ruler over our lives.

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7. GET SOME GOOD TRACTS. Always have tracts when you hold an open-air meeting. They assist in making permanent the impressions and fixing the truth. Have the workers pass around through the crowd handing out the tracts at the proper time.

8. GET WORKERS AROUND IN THE CROWD TO DO PERSONAL WORK. Returning from an open-air meeting years ago in the city of Detroit, I said to a minister who was stopping at the same hotel that we had had several conversions in the meeting. He replied by asking me if a certain man from Cleveland was not in the crowd. I replied that he was. He told me that he thought if I looked into it I would find that the conversions were largely due to that man, that while the services were going on, he had been around in the crowd doing personal work. I found that it was so.

9. GET A GOSPEL WAGON IF YOU CAN. Of this we shall have more to say when we speak of Gospel Wagon

Work.

IV. DON'T.

1. Don't unnecessarily antagonize your audience. I heard of a man addressing a Roman Catholic audience in the open air and pitching into the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope. That man did not have good sense. Another man attempted a prohibition discourse immediately in front of a saloon. He got a brick instead of votes.

2. DON'T GET SCARED. Let Psalm 27:1 be your motto: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" There is not a particle need of being scared. You may be surrounded by a crowd of howling hoodlums, but you may be absolutely certain that you will not be hurt unless the Lord wants you to be hurt; and if the Lord wants you to be hurt, that is the best thing for you. You may be killed if the Lord sees fit to allow you to be killed, but it is a wonderful privilege to be killed for the Lord Jesus Christ. One night I was holding a meeting in one of the worst parts of Chicago. Something happened to enrage a part of the crowd that gathered around me. Friends near at hand were in fear lest I be killed, but I kept on speaking and was not even struck. {231}

3. DON'T LOSE YOUR TEMPER. Whatever happens, never lose your temper. You ought never to get angry under any circumstances, but it is especially foolish to do so when you are holding an open-air meeting. You will doubtless have many temptations to lose your temper, but never do it. It is very hard to hit a man when he is serene, and if you preserve your serenity, the chances are that you will escape unscathed. Even if a tough strikes you, he cannot do so a second time if you remain calm. Serenity is one of the best safeguards.

4. DON'T LET YOUR MEETING BE BROKEN UP. No matter what happens, hold your ground if you can, and you generally can. One night I was holding a meeting in a square in one of the most desperate parts of a large city. The steps of an adjacent saloon were crowded with men, many of whom were half drunk. A man came along on a load of hay, went into the saloon and fired himself up with strong drink.

Then he attempted to drive right down upon the crowd in the middle of the square, in which there were many women and children. Some man stopped his horses, and the infuriated man came down from the load of hay and the howling mob swept down from the steps of the saloon. Somehow or other the drunken driver got a rough handling in the mob, but not one of our number was struck. Two policemen in citizens' clothes happened to be passing by and stopped the riot. I said a few words more, and then formed our little party into a procession, behind which the crowd fell in, and we marched down to the mission singing.

5. DON'T FIGHT. Never fight under any circumstances. Even if they almost pound the life out of you, refuse to fight back.

6. DON'T BE DULL. Dullness will kill an open-air meeting at once. Prosiness will drive the whole audience away. In order to avoid being dull, do not preach long sermons. Use a great many striking illustrations. Keep wide awake yourself, and you will keep the audience awake. Be energetic in your manner. Talk so people can hear you. Don't preach, but simply talk to people.

7. DON'T BE SOFT. One of these nice, namby-pamby, sentimental sort of fellows in an open-air meeting the crowd cannot and will {232} not stand. The temptation to throw a brick or a rotten apple at him is perfectly irresistible, and one can hardly blame the crowd.

8. DON'T READ A SERMON. Whatever may be said in defence of reading essays in the pulpit, it will never do in the open air. It is possible to have no notes whatever. If you cannot talk long without notes, so much the better; you can talk as long as you ought to. If you read, you will talk longer than you ought to.

9. DON'T USE CANT. Use language that people are acquainted with, but do not use vulgar language. Some people think it is necessary to use slang, but slang is never admissible. There is language that is popular and easily understood by the people that is purest Anglo-Saxon.

10. DON'T TALK TOO LONG. You may have a number of talks in an open-air meeting, but do not have any of them over ten or fifteen minutes long. As a

rule do not have them as long as that. Of course there are exceptions to this, when a great crowd is gathered to hear some person in the open air. Under such circumstances I have heard a sermon an hour long that held the interest of the people, but this is not true in the ordinary open-air meeting.

V. THINGS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO SUCCESS.

1. CONSECRATED MEN AND WOMEN. None but consecrated men and women will ever succeed in open-air meetings. If you cannot get such, you might as well give up holding open-air meetings.

2. DEPEND UPON GOD. There is nothing that will teach one his dependence upon God more quickly and more thoroughly than holding open-air meetings.

You never know what is going to happen. You cannot lay plans that you can always follow in an open-air meeting. You never know what moment some one will come along and ask some troublesome question. You do not know what unforeseen event is going to occur. All you can do is to depend upon God, but that is perfectly sufficient.

3. LOYALTY TO THE WORD OF GOD. It is the man who is absolutely loyal to God's Word, and who is familiar with it and constantly uses it, who succeeds in the open air. God often takes a text {233} that is quoted, and uses it for the salvation of some hearer. Arguments and illustrations are forgotten, but the text sticks and converts.

4. BE FREQUENTLY FILLED ANEW WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

If any man needs to take advantage of the privilege of fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit, it is the open-air worker. Spiritual power is the great secret of success in this, as in all other Christian work.

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@07 CHAPTER SEVEN

TENT WORK

I. ITS IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. YOU CAN REACH PEOPLE BY THE TENT YOU CAN REACH BY NO OTHER METHOD. People that you cannot get inside of a church or mission hall, people that will not even listen to the preaching from a Gospel wagon, people that you could not step up to and talk with personally, will come into a tent.

The tent itself awakens curiosity. It looks like a circus. Time and again I have preached in a tent where six-sevenths of the audience were curiosity seekers; and not only did we get them into the tent, but many of them were won to Christ. It is stated in the official report of a large and successful tent work that 95 per cent of the audience was composed of thieves, murderers, drunkards and abandoned women. The other 5 per cent were respectable people. A great many of the abandoned classes were converted. People who tried to pull the tent down, threw stones at the workers, cut ropes, and stood outside and tried to prevent people going in, before the meetings had been going on very long were on their knees calling on God for pardon. One of these had recently been released from prison where he had served fourteen years as a safe breaker. He became a very bright convert.

2. **THEY ARE PORTABLE.** Wherever you put a church up, there it must stay; you cannot easily move it.

But if you put a tent up in one neighborhood, if it proves to be a poor neighborhood you can move it to another, or when that neighborhood is worked out you can move it to a new one, at a small cost.

3. **IT IS INEXPENSIVE.** A new tent can be purchased for anywhere from \$150 to \$350, or you can get them second hand, but {235} this does not pay.

The life of a tent is about three years. You have to pay extra for the seats, but these can be made out of lumber that can afterwards be used for other purposes. For many reasons canvas benches are better.

4. **TENT WORK TURNS THE SEASON OF THE YEAR WHICH IS REGARDED THE POOREST FOR EVANGELISTIC EFFORT INTO THE VERY BEST.** Ask almost any pastor what he regards the best season for evangelistic work, and he will tell you the second week in January, or Lent. If you ask him what is the worst season, he will tell you July and August, but with a tent July and August prove to be the best season in the year for evangelistic work. This has been demonstrated in Chicago, Philadelphia, New York, Boston and in many smaller cities, and in country towns. There can be little doubt that the number of conversions in tents in the summer far exceeds

the number of conversions in evangelistic services in churches in the winter.

II. HOW TO CONDUCT TENT MEETINGS.

1. HAVE THE RIGHT SORT OF A MAN IN CHARGE OF THE

TENT. The most important thing in any tent work is the man who has the superintendency of the tent.

If you have the right man the rest will take care of itself, and if you have the wrong man, nothing that you can do will make a success of the work.

What sort of a man is needed? A man who is perfectly fearless, who can stand up when ruffians are stoning the tent, and not be the least bit ruffled if a stone comes through the tent and strikes him on the back of the head; a man who can stand the boys shooting at him with tacks, and sharp double-pointed tacks striking him in the face; a man who can stand perfectly unmoved with a lot of roughs moving about and seeking to disturb the meeting in every possible way; a man who trusts God, and believes that God is going to take care of him.

In the next place he should be a man who has handled men; a man who can go into a mixed crowd of various denominations, and hold the conflicting elements in the hollow of his hand so that they will behave; a man who has control of his own temper as well as control of the crowd; a man who is never ruffled, just stands there perfectly serene with sunshine in his face but with a grip like {236} iron upon the audience; a man who can preach a plain direct Gospel sermon; a man who can hold the attention of people who are not in the habit of paying attention to ministers when they preach. To put it in a word, you want a man filled with the Holy Ghost, who preaches the Gospel in the power of the Spirit, who if he has time to prepare will prepare, and if he does not have time will stand up without a word to say, but just look to God to give him the message, and as soon as he gets it will give it to the people in the power of the Holy Ghost.

2. HAVE THE RIGHT SORT OF A TENT.

The larger the tent is, the better, other things being equal. It is a great mistake to get too small a tent; they are unserviceable. If enough people do not come at first to fill your tent, you can so arrange the

seats in the middle of the tent that it is not noticed that there are large vacant spaces on the sides. If the tent is small people will think it is a small thing, and your attendance will be small. A big tent makes a large impression upon the neighborhood.

3. GET THE RIGHT PLACE TO LOCATE YOUR TENT. A good place is one where the crowds gather, upon some great thoroughfare where they are sweeping by the hundreds and by thousands. Tents should often be taken into rough neighborhoods. Some one may ask, "Is it safe there?" The safest place on earth is where the Lord takes you. The safest place for Moses was out in the river among the crocodiles, when God was taking care of him in the little ark. You can put a tent anywhere with safety if God leads you to put it there. We located a tent once where there were two murders during the first week within a block of the tent. One of the men was in the tent a half an hour before he was stabbed. He was urged to take the Lord Jesus Christ that night, but he said, "No, I cannot do it tonight, I will come Sunday night." Within half an hour he was found dying in a lot, where he had been stabbed.

Always select a dry spot. Be careful not to get into a place where you are going to be flooded out. If you are not on your guard at this point, you will oftentimes see what seems to be a beautiful place for a tent, but the first thunder storm that comes up the tent will be useless.

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4. CHOOSE THE RIGHT SORT OF A MAN TO BE JANITOR.

The man who acts as janitor is next in importance to the man who superintends the tent. He must be fearless; he must be exceedingly wise and extremely patient. If your janitor loses his temper, you are going to get into trouble. If you have a Christian man who is wise and firm and gentle and loving and fearless, you are all right.

5. BE DETERMINED THAT YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE YOUR OWN WAY IN YOUR TENT. Set about that in the very first meeting. If you let the crowd get the upper hand of you once, they will have it for all time; but if you show them the very first time that you are going to have your way, you will have it. Be

very pleasant, but be as immovable as a rock. If it becomes necessary, take a man by the collar and help him out of the tent, but be sure you do it with a genial, winning smile. This often proves a means of grace to this kind of people. Do not turn a man out if you can help it, but turn him out rather than have your meeting broken up or seriously disturbed. Drunken men may be allowed some liberties because they know no better, but have it distinctly understood that they cannot go beyond a certain point.

6. GIVE A GOOD DEAL OF THOUGHT TO THE SINGING.

Have the very best singing you can get. Have as big a choir as you can possibly gather together, but allow no one in the choir who is not saved. It is well to have an orchestra if you can get it.

7. HAVE THE VERY BEST PREACHING THAT CAN BE SECURED.

But what is good preaching for a church is not always good preaching for a tent. A tent preacher should be a man who can hold the attention of plain people. Many a man who can preach to great audiences in a church is an utter failure in a tent.

8. ALWAYS HAVE AN AFTER MEETING AND DO PERSONAL WORK.

The purpose of tent meetings is not to keep men out of the saloons; they do keep men out of the saloons, but the purpose of tent meetings is to bring men to Christ. A man once said to me, "This is magnificent. Here are almost a thousand people here who are not {238} Christians. It is magnificent if not a soul of them was converted, for it keeps them out of the saloons." But if all we do for men is to keep them out of the saloon for an hour or two, not much is accomplished. What tent work is carried on for is to lead men to a personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. The best way to accomplish this is by definite, personal, hand-to-hand work in the after meeting.

9. HAVE CHILDREN'S MEETINGS IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR TENT WORK.

The neighborhoods where tents are ordinarily put up are thronging with children. It would be easy to fill the tent with children, but it is best not to allow them in the evening service unless they come with their parents. If they are allowed in the evening service, they will crowd out the grown people, but the children must

not be neglected, therefore have special services for the children in the tent in the afternoon.

Tell them they cannot be admitted to the evening service unless they bring their parents with them.

In this way a great many parents will be induced to come to the evening meetings for the sake of the children. The results that are accomplished among children in tent meetings are astonishing.

These children come largely from utterly unchristian homes, but many children even of Jewish parents and of drunken parents are won to Christ. A little boy came to one of our tents one afternoon. He heard the story of the Cross, accepted Christ, and went straight home. That night he brought with him his father and brother, and they were both converted, and then he brought two other brothers and two sisters, and these four were converted. His mother who was a backslider was brought back to the Lord. There were also two older daughters who led lives of sin. The whole family had been converted except these two abandoned girls. One of the workers started out with the determination to bring those two girls down to the meeting, and if possible get them to accept Christ. Some of the other workers stayed at home and prayed. This worker pled with the girls to come down to the meeting, and at last persuaded them to come. They got there very late, and just as they entered, Major Whittle was talking about wayward girls, and before the meeting was over these girls were rejoicing in Christ. Three boys, four girls, father and mother, brought to Christ through the conversion of a little boy. {239}

10. ENCOURAGE THE MOTHERS TO COME AND BRING THEIR

BABES. If they can't bring their babies they can't come at all. One very successful tent worker promised a rattle to every baby brought a certain night. The scheme took, and mothers and babies and baby carriages came pouring in that night. They had a wonderful meeting, and that man gained the love of the whole community. Another night he had a watermelon meeting, and that was a great success.

III. WHERE TO CONDUCT TENT WORK.

We have already spoken about putting up tents in crowded parts of our great cities, but that is not

the only place.

1. IN THE PORTION OF A CITY WERE YOU WISH TO ORGANIZE A CHURCH. You may not be quite sure whether it would be wise to start a church in that locality. Set up a tent and make a test of it. In one locality in Chicago where a tent was set up, a Methodist church and Baptist church were organized, a Congregational mission revived, and one other mission started.

2. IN COUNTRY TOWNS. One of the solutions of the summer problem in country churches is for the church to get a tent and hold its services in that during the summer months. Many will go to it who will not go to the church. Oftentimes it is well for all the churches of a country town to combine in a summer tent work.

3. RELIGIOUSLY DESTITUTE SECTIONS OF THE COUNTRY. There are many places in our country where there are many people but no church for miles. Tents can be set up in these remote parts of townships, and a splendid work done. It would be well for country pastors to take tents out on to the borders of their parishes and do Gospel work there.

4. SUMMER RESORTS. We think that if people go out to spend the summer anywhere, we cannot reach them, but there is no place {240} where you can reach them better, provided you go at it wisely. Set up a tent near where the great vacation throngs congregate. People at these resorts do not know how to spend Sunday; they do not like to go to the country churches, but they will go to a tent.

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@08 CHAPTER EIGHT

THE USE OF AUTOS, TRAILERS, ETC.

The Christian worker should always watch for new methods and new means of presenting the gospel. The message is changeless, but we must not be blind to the changes in our civilization which offer the possibility of fresh approach with our message.

I. MEANS OF REACHING THE PEOPLE.

1. TRAILER EVANGELISM. Not many can afford to purchase and maintain a trailer, but through such a vehicle, trailer camps, work camps, migratory groups, and otherwise inaccessible places and

persons can be reached. Much of the work by means of a trailer is of the colportage type.

2. AUTO EVANGELISM. You have seen political caravans. Why not a caravan of cars to a given town for a great open-air meeting?

3. TRUCK EVANGELISM. The business man who owns a clean, open truck can make a contribution to the cause by loaning the truck for a chain of openair meetings. The singers and speakers can use the truck as a platform. Such services should be bright and brief, and Gospels and good tracts should be left in the hands of the interested. Also, an invitation to attend services at some permanent meeting place should be extended.

II. MECHANICAL AIDS.

There are several mechanical aids to open-air meetings which should be used where it is possible to purchase them.

1. PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM. Nearly everyone has some measure of acquaintance with this help to speech and hearing. It carries the {242} speaker's voice to all within sight, without strain on ear or throat. This device can be tuned up or down, and should never be so loud as to be annoying. Music can be played on a phonograph and carried through the loud speaker. Such a system can be purchased at a reasonable price.

An auto equipped with such a device can tour a city and announce special meetings. Some cities have ordinances against sound trucks, etc. Always inform yourself as to the law.

2. SOUND FILMS. We all recognize the value of the visual in attracting and holding attention.

Biblical pictures on inexpensive films can be effectively used for children and grownups, for, remember, no one is even too old to be interested in pictures.

Machines which have films and sound synchronized are also most effective. While these are somewhat expensive to produce, they are not expensive to use. They always hold attention, if the material is good and is well presented.

III. THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND.

In all of the things mentioned in this chapter there are a few things to be always kept in mind. The kind of evangelism presented here is what

could be named rapid evangelism. In ordinary parlance it might be called "hit and run." It is an attempt to reach people who are on the move, and who rarely or never enter a church.

1. THIS EVANGELISM MUST BE OF A CONCENTRATED NATURE. The message should be short. Not more than two verses of a song should be used. The entire program should be planned. The technique used may be similar to that of radio broadcasting. Note how the broadcasters do it. They are trying to hold attention.

2. THIS DEMANDS THE BEST WE HAVE. It is always unfortunate when a Christian service in the open air has a cornetist who blows two sour notes a minute. In the days of the forty-niners the sign in the boom town saloon said, "Don't shoot the piano player. He's doing the best he can." but that isn't good enough; certainly not for the Lord's work. Because of the radio, nowadays people have an improved taste. As a Christian worker yours should always be {243} an improved service. Let us give our Lord the best we have, and strive to make that better.

3. ALL EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE KEPT IN GOOD CONDITION. Cars and trucks should be clean and fresh. Public address systems should be smooth and clear. Pictures must be replaced when worn or faded. Workers, too, should be neat. Women in particular should give careful thought to their dress and general appearance, that they may bear consistent testimony for their Lord. For the most part men are more effective in work of this type.

4. ALL MEETINGS OF THIS KIND SHOULD BE THOUGHTFULLY PLANNED AND PRAYERFULLY CARRIED THROUGH. Many people fail in services of this variety because they depend on their natural "gift of gab," rather than on the Holy Spirit and real preparation. A radio program may sound casual and spontaneous, but it is in reality carefully planned and rehearsed in every detail. You are not putting on a show, so you are not going to rehearse your message, but do not leave things to chance. As in all service for the Lord, work and prayer are essential to success.

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@09 CHAPTER NINE

COLPORTAGE WORK

I. COLPORTAGE WORK DEFINED.

What is Colportage work? By Colportage work we mean the distribution of religious literature from house to house. As a rule, the literature thus distributed is sold, sometimes for its full value, sometimes at less than cost.

II. ITS IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. PEOPLE WHO FAIL IN OTHER LINES OF CHRISTIAN WORK CAN SUCCEED IN COLPORTAGE WORK.

There are many who wish to work for the Lord, and feel they have a definite call to give their whole time to that work, who are unable to preach to edification, who are incompetent to run a mission, who would not even succeed as house to house visitors. What can they do? They can do Colportage work and oftentimes meet with great success in it. I have in mind one man who felt a call to Christian work, but it soon became evident that he had no gifts whatever that would warrant his preparation for the ministry. He was exceedingly slow and tiresome in speech, he lacked fire, and apparently lacked energy. He was induced to take up the Colportage work, and he became one of the most successful Colporters I even knew, not only making a very generous living by the work, but also reaching many homes and touching people who could be reached in no other way. Another man who could not even speak to edification in prayer meeting, who was exceedingly limited in all directions, sold during a single month 1,200 volumes and cleared about \$54 over and above expenses; the same person cleared about \$400 in ten months. Going from town to town, he was the means of doing untold good. Superannuated ministers who have reached the point where their services {245} are no longer in demand for churches, do not need to give up the Lord's work. They can take up Colportage work, and perhaps be more useful than they were in their preaching days.

Ministers and other Christian workers who are broken down physically, and unable to bear the strain of regular work, can take up Colportage work with great advantage to their health, and accomplish very much for the Master.

2. COLPORTAGE WORK REACHES NEGLECTED DISTRICTS.

All over the land there are stretches of country so sparsely settled that it would be impossible to maintain religious services, yet in these thinly settled districts taken together, there are thousands upon thousands of souls that need to hear the Gospel. Oftentimes they can be reached by Colportage work better than in any other way. One solution of the religious problem in the country is to be found in Colportage work.

3. COLPORTAGE WORK IS SELF-SUPPORTING. The

Colporter needs to have no missionary society back of him. He can go out and sell his books and support himself, and if he has any gift in this direction, make a comfortable living. Take for example the books of the Colportage Division of the Moody Press. They contain some of the very best evangelical literature of the day, books adapted to the unsaved to lead them to Christ, books on the deeper Christian life, books on Christian work. They are written by some of the best known and most gifted authors, men like F. B. Meyer, Campbell Morgan, Andrew Murray, D. L. Moody, Major D. W. Whittle, Charles Spurgeon, and others. These books can be secured in quantities from the Moody Press.

4. COLPORTAGE WORK CONVERTS SINNERS AND BUILDS UP

CHRISTIANS. All over our land today there are many people who have been led to Christ, and many Christians who have been led into a deeper knowledge of Christ, through the work of Colporters.

5. ITS RESULTS ARE PERMANENT AND EVER-WIDENING. A

preacher goes away, but a book stays. One man reads a book and is blessed by it and hands it to another, and he to still another. A single book may be read by scores of persons. {246}

6. IT OPENS DOORS TO OTHER WORK. Many a man begins

Christian work as a humble Colporter, but as he goes from house to house and village to village with the little books that carry the knowledge of Jesus Christ, he soon begins to preach the Word, and is quite likely in time to receive a call to be a pastor or an assistant pastor.

7. COLPORTAGE WORK IS A SPLENDID PREPARATION FOR OTHER CHRISTIAN WORK. The Colporter gets right

into the home, gets acquainted with all kinds of men, has to learn through necessity the modes of convincing men. There is perhaps no better preparation for many phases of ministerial work than the work of a Colporter.

III. HOW TO DO COLPORTAGE WORK.

1. GET A FEW BOOKS TO BEGIN WITH, AND THEN BEGIN.

A man once came to me out of money and out of employment. I bought for him four Colportage books, and sent him out. He came back in less than half an hour. He then took his share of the money and bought himself other books, and thus the work widened. The way to begin is to begin.

2. VISIT EVERY HOUSE AND STORE AND SALOON.

When one undertakes to do Colportage work in any given district, as a rule it is well to visit every house and store and saloon in the district. Of course, if one continues to work the same district, he will soon learn what houses can be visited again and again, and what places to avoid. Experience shows that many even in saloons will buy the books, and sometimes the saloon-keepers themselves, and no one can measure the good thus done.

3. LEAVE THE BOOKS IN ENVELOPES FOR EXAMINATION.

Some have found it very useful to have envelopes that will contain the books, and leave the books in every house on a street, giving notice that they will be called for afterward, and if the people wish to keep the books, they can leave the money in the envelope; if not, return the books. Opportunities for conversation are often thus opened. One prominent Christian worker, wishing to experiment on the work for himself, went down one of the leading streets of a western city, leaving a book in every house. As he came back, he found interesting opportunities for speaking with people whom the {247} ordinary missionary could not reach. Even where the books are not purchased, they will often be read and so the truth will get a hearing.

4. _Churches can employ a church visitor without expense to themselves, by equipping the church visitor with Colportage books which he can sell, and thus meet his expenses._

Of course the visitor must have the public endorsement of the pastor of

the church, and in this way he gets an entrance for his work. This plan has been adopted with great success in some quarters.

5. GET PASTORS TO RECOMMEND THE BOOKS. When the Colporter visits a new village, he should look up the pastors of the place and present to each of them a copy of one of his best books. In this way the interest of the pastors will be enlisted, and if they will speak a word of endorsement in the prayer meeting or some other place, it will be a great help. Many churches have the Colportage books on sale in the vestibule.

6. _Get pastors to preach on certain lines, and then go around and sell the books that bear upon the subject in which the pastor has awakened an interest._ For example, if the pastor speaks upon the baptism with the Holy Spirit, go through the community with a book like McNeil's _Spirit-Filled Life_.

7. ATTENDING RELIGIOUS CONVENTIONS. A great work can be done by Colporters attending religious conventions, and there disposing of books along the lines of the subjects treated in the conventions.

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@10 CHAPTER TEN

SERVICES IN THEATRES, CIRCUSES, ETC.

I. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. MANY PEOPLE ARE LIKELY TO BE REACHED BY SERVICES IN THEATRES, CIRCUSES, AND OTHER PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT, WHO ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE REACHED ELSEWHERE. Actors, actresses, and the other employees of theatres seldom attend services at churches; it is difficult also to find them in their homes, but they can be reached on their own ground. At the very first service in Forepaugh's circus tent in Chicago during the World's Fair, an actor was brought under deep conviction of sin and converted to Christ. In services held in the city of Minneapolis I had frequent opportunity of speaking personally with the actors and other employees of the places. But not only can the employees be reached, but also the frequenters. We held services one New Year's afternoon in the Theatre Comique in the city of Minneapolis. A few days afterward I received an anonymous letter from

an Iowa city. The writer said that he had been present at the theatre service that day. It was the first time he had been in a religious service for years, although in the old country he had been a local preacher. In the two or three weeks preceding that service, he had squandered over \$300 in that theatre, but the word spoken that afternoon had brought him back to Christ. The man afterwards returned to Minneapolis and made himself known, and subsequently became a deacon and one of the most faithful workers in our church.

2. ANOTHER ADVANTAGE OF SERVICES IN A THEATRE IS THEIR NOVELTY AND ATTRACTIVENESS. The interest especially of young men is awakened by seeing a service advertised in a theatre. They go out of curiosity, and an opportunity is thus offered of bringing them to Christ. Everything about the place attracts them; they like the {249} surroundings; they are off their guard and the Gospel gets an entrance into their hearts.

3. MANY ARE CONVERTED. It has been the writer's privilege to conduct services every Sunday afternoon for several winters in the theatres of one of our American cities, and during the World's Fair to conduct theatrical services for many weeks, seven nights in the week. In both places most encouraging results followed. In the services in Chicago many were converted every night. At a recent theatre service for men only in a southern city, about one hundred and fifty men professed conversion.

II. HOW TO CONDUCT.

1. THE FIRST IMPORTANT MATTER IN THE CONDUCT OF THEATRE SERVICES IS THE CHOICE OF THE THEATRE.

What sort of a theatre to choose depends upon the purpose for which the meetings are held. If the aim is to get hold of those who have sunk into the deepest depth of sin, of course a theatre of the lower order is preferable. On the other hand, there are objections to such a theatre. It is not a good place to take people, but you are not likely to take anybody there except those who frequent it already, or those who go for a definitely Christian purpose. Nevertheless great care should be exercised in the choice of workers

for such a place. Girls and boys should not be taken to such a place unless they already frequent it. A young man approached a prominent business man in the city of Minneapolis who was handing out dodgers on the street, inviting people to the Theatre Comique for a Gospel service. The young man said, "Do you know what kind of a place the Theatre Comique is?" The business man replied that he had not lived in Minneapolis twenty years not to know. The young man asked again, "Do you think that such a place is a proper place to hold a religious service?" The reply was made, "When you go fishing, where do you go?" The young man smiled and answered, "Oh, I see, I go where the fish are." A good many fish were caught in that pool, though it was a cesspool.

If the aim is to reach a better class of people, of course one must engage a theatre of the higher order. During the World's Fair the Haymarket Theatre and Columbia Theatre in Chicago {250} were packed to overflowing each Sunday morning, to hear the Gospel preached by leading preachers of this country and Europe, and there were a great many conversions.

Sometimes the size of the theatre will be a determining factor. Twenty thousand people could be crowded into the Forepaugh tent, and were crowded into it each morning that services were held there; this in spite of the fact that the heat was almost insufferable. The circus men were so astonished at the vast audiences that came out to religious services, that they approached Mr. Moody to see if he would not furnish a speaker to go around with their show and hold services every Sunday, they offering to pay all the expenses. It is best to select, if possible, a theatre that is in use rather than one that is abandoned. If the theatre has been given up, the probability is that people did not go to it, and they will not be likely to go to a religious service in that place. I knew of a case of what appeared to be a very desirable theatre being purchased to hold religious services in. It seemed to be in a good locality and well adapted to the work. The theatre, however, had been abandoned by the theatrical people, and it was never possible to

get the people to attend religious services there in any great numbers.

2. THE SECOND POINT OF IMPORTANCE IS SECURING THE THEATRE FOR THE SERVICES. Oftentimes this is not a

very difficult matter. Theatrical people are frequently very glad to have their building used for religious services. I once went to the proprietor of a very vile den to see if I could secure his place for Gospel meetings. To my surprise, he received me very cordially, and said certainly we could have the place, and he only charged a nominal rent. Going the next year to another theater in the same city, only a theatre of a much higher order -- a very attractive and respectable place -- I inquired of the manager if I could secure his theater for Sunday afternoon services. He replied, "Certainly." When I asked him what he would charge for it, he asked me if there was any money in it. I told him none at all, that we were going to spend money and not take it in. "In that case," he said, "you can have the theatre for nothing." He stood to this agreement, furnished light and heat, ushers and everything, and would take absolutely nothing for it. Even the stage manager was in attendance every Sunday to see {251} that everything was in perfect order. As a rule it is far better to rent a theatre than to buy it. If you buy it, it ceases to be a theatre and becomes your church, and the very people you wish to get hold of are no longer attracted.

3. EXERCISE GREAT CARE ABOUT THE MUSIC. Provide just as large a choir as possible. Secure the very best leader possible; the best leader is a man with a good large voice, a great deal of enthusiasm and ability to get people to sing, who is filled with the Holy Ghost, and knows how to sing to save. In addition to a good leader and a large choir, it is well to have male choruses, duets, quartets and solos. A band is sometimes helpful, but not at all a necessity. A good cornetist is of great help, but the singing attracts as much as instrumental music, and does far greater execution.

4. SECURE THE BEST POSSIBLE SPEAKERS. No man is a good speaker for a theatrical service who does not

preach the straight Gospel, and preach it in a way to attract and hold the public. If there is one person in the community who has a peculiar gift in this direction, it is best usually to have him do the major part of the speaking week after week. It will do to throw in another speaker occasionally, and good may be accomplished by it, but one speaker who knows the audience and the work, and follows one sermon up by another, will accomplish the most definite and most satisfactory results.

5. BE SURE THAT THE SERVICES ARE THOROUGHLY EVANGELICAL, AND EMPHATICALLY EVANGELISTIC. Very little good comes from holding meetings in theatres and similar places unless these meetings are emphatically Gospel meetings. Preaching along ethical and social and philanthropic lines accomplishes very little good. If, however, the meetings are thoroughly evangelical and evangelistic, the ethical and social results will necessarily follow. Drunkards will be converted and give up their drinking, gamblers will give up their gambling, impure people will forsake their impurity, politicians will be brought to Christ and thus their politics will be reformed. I was talking to a converted politician last night. The night he came to the meeting where he was converted (during the World's Fair) he had been out with a number of his political {252} friends. They had been planning for his election to an important office here in Chicago. At the service he heard nothing about political reform; he heard the simple Gospel, a Gospel that would save the slave of drink. He accepted Christ that night. The result has been that his whole life, personal, domestic, commercial and political, has been renovated. A sermon on political reform would not have touched him at all.

6. ADVERTISE THE MEETINGS LARGELY AND WIDELY. Large billboards such as the theatrical people use for their own advertisements are perhaps the best of any, but the newspapers should also be used to the utmost. Newspapers are generally willing to do a great deal of free advertising for services of this character. Men, with invitations to the meetings should be placed upon all the street corners for blocks around. Transparencies, carried

through the streets by men, attract the attention and bring many to the services.

7. HAVE A THOROUGHLY DRILLED CORPS OF USHERS.

Sometimes the theaters provide their own ushers, and for many reasons it is well to use them. They know the building, understand just how to seat people, and furthermore they need to hear the Gospel themselves and are likely to be converted.

8. HAVE WISE AND WELL-TRAINED PERSONAL WORKERS SCATTERED THROUGH THE AUDIENCE.

This is of the very highest importance, even more important in the theater than it is in a church. No speaker can take note of what is happening in every part of a theater. Many men and women will be touched by the sermon, but only touched. If gotten hold of right then and there by a watchful and wise worker, and the effect of the sermon followed up, those persons will be converted, whereas if they are allowed to go out, the impression will soon die away and they may be lost forever. These workers should be carefully trained, as to exactly where to sit, and what to do during the service, and at the close of the service.

9. HAVE AFTER-MEETINGS. This is of the highest importance. For details regarding aftermeetings, see chapter on "Aftermeetings." {253}

10. INVITE THE AUDIENCE TO THE CHURCHES.

There is a prevalent opinion among the masses of the unchurched that they are not welcome at the churches. We should do everything in our power to disabuse them of this false notion. The theatre service affords a splendid opportunity for doing it. It is well to have the ministers themselves extend the invitation. In this way a permanence is given to the work. The church is the only thing that goes on continually. Missions, theatre services, tent services, come and go, but the church was established by Christ and perpetually continues. A work that does not lead the people ultimately into the churches and get them connected therewith, seldom results in any permanent good. It is well to have printed invitations from the churches to distribute among the audience. These invitations should be gotten up in an attractive form so that the people will be glad to take them home and keep them.

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@11 CHAPTER ELEVEN

ORGANIZING AND CONDUCTING A GOSPEL MISSION

I. IMPORTANCE OF GOSPEL MISSIONS.

1. In every large city, and in many of our smaller cities, there are great masses of the people that the churches are not reaching. The reasons why they are not being reached by the church are various. First of all because of the location of the churches. The churches as a rule in our larger cities are inaccessible to the great majority of our poorer population. The churches follow the well-to-do people up-town, as a rule, and where the thickest population is, where the people are to whom the Lord Jesus especially ministered during His life, there the churches are not. The churches are not reaching them because they are not near enough to where these people are. In the second place, the services of the regularly organized church are of such a character that they do not reach them. Oftentimes when they pretend to preach the Gospel they do not preach it; and, when they do preach the Gospel, it is preached in such a manner that it does not take hold of the common people. A laboring man, a poor man, an ignorant man, a beggar or a drunkard, who wishes to be reformed, goes into many of our churches, and the minister stands up and preaches the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet he preaches the Gospel in such a manner that it does not leave any impression upon the man's mind. The preacher is before everything else a scholar and a literary gentleman, and he does not know how to get down to the hearts and lives of ordinary folks. In the third place, the whole atmosphere of the church is not such that these people feel at home. Sometimes the style of dress, the social etiquette, the music, the whole general conduct of the church, are such as to repel them {255} Down in the mission, on the other hand, there is an entire absence of conventionality, but there is a friendliness, a kindness, a home-likeness that their hearts warm to. There is something that attracts them to the place, and they go again and again until the Spirit of God opens their hearts and they are saved.

It is the work of the mission to evangelize these masses of men and women and children existing in all our larger cities, and in many of our smaller cities, who are not reached by the ordinary ministrations of the church. It is to EVANGELIZE the masses not simply to reach them. It is of no great importance to know merely how to reach the masses, any one can reach the masses, but the question is, how to gospelize them. The work of the mission is not to conduct innocent entertainment, nor to provide a nice, warm, pleasant place for the people to go into from the streets; it is not to clothe the poor and the naked: but the work of the missions is to bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to bear upon the hearts and lives of lost men and lost women. What they find, or ought to find, in the mission is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ seven nights in the week. If they desire amusement, or weak imitations of dime museums, they can get them elsewhere. The true business of the mission, as well as the true business of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to preach the Word of God, and to bring it to bear upon lost men. The Word of God is the one lever that will lift them, not only out of the ditch, but into the kingdom of God.

2. THE GOSPEL MISSION IS IMPORTANT AS A SOUL WINNER. The question of how to evangelize the masses is often discussed as if it were a problem that nobody had solved, but it has been solved. There is no experiment about it. There are many who know exactly how to reach the masses with the Gospel, and prove that they know how by doing it. The Gospel missions are winning souls, and their chief importance lies in this fact. I have in mind a mission to which you can go any night in the fifty-two weeks in the year, and you will see anywhere from twelve to fifty men kneeling at the altar and seeking the Lord Jesus Christ. Go to many other missions and you will see practically the same thing. The Gospel missions of America are winning thousands upon thousands of poor lost men and women to Jesus Christ every year; winning them and saving {256} them, transforming them, making them children of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, by the power of the Gospel of

our Lord Jesus Christ. Here is where the prime importance of the mission lies, not because it is trying to do the work, but because it is doing it.

3. GOSPEL MISSIONS ARE IMPORTANT AS AN INSPIRATION TO THE CHURCHES.

Some of the most satisfactory local revivals in the history of the country have come from some member of a church attending a mission, getting a new conception of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and going home and kindling his church. The fire has gone through the whole church, and the church has been awakened to a mighty work for God. Oftentimes when people who have not even attended a mission have read reports of the work, they have wakened to the fact that Paul meant just what he said when he wrote that the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation to every one that believed, and they have gone to work with new faith and new energy, and the Gospel has proved a saving power in their own community.

4. GOSPEL MISSIONS ARE IMPORTANT AS A FEEDER TO THE CHURCHES.

Many of the best working members, and sometimes the best paying members, in our churches today are converts of missions. Many rich people have gone from the regular churches down to the missions, and have been there converted, and have gone back to their churches to be a power and blessing. Some people get an idea that all men who are converted in missions are men of no gifts or promise. It is a great mistake. Many a man who has been converted in a mission is indeed from the deepest depths of poverty and ruin, but it is sin that has brought him to his present condition. When the mission has gotten hold of him and won him to Christ, oftentimes the man regains his old position in society and business. A man who had been mayor of a large Southern city, but who had gone down through drink until he was a penniless tramp, was converted in a New York mission. He afterwards became the manager of one of the largest publishing houses in America. The night of his conversion, discouraged, disheartened, despairing, he had started from his lodging house to go and commit suicide in {257} the East River. He had gone to a saloon to get one more drink, was thrown out because he was penniless, was brought into a mission by one who saw him

thrown out of the saloon, and was converted that night. Many a man who is today in the regular Gospel ministry was converted in a mission. One of the brightest and most promising congregational ministers that I know in our land, the beloved pastor of a well-to-do church, was converted in a New York mission.

5. MISSIONS ARE IMPORTANT AS FURNISHING A PLACE WHERE MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCHES CAN WORK.

A Christian cannot grow without work. One of the great troubles in many of our churches today is that there is nothing to do. The members go Sunday after Sunday and are fed and fed and fed until they are dying of spiritual dyspepsia, apoplexy, or both. A minister once said to me, "My greatest difficulty is that I haven't anything for my members to do." It was literally true. It was a college church, and a parish in which there were more workers than work. A mission gives Christians something to do, something exceedingly inspiring to do, something in which there is a tremendous uplift to their own spiritual energy. What a blessing would come to many of our wealthy churches if the members of these churches who go Sunday after Sunday and hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus would go out from these churches down into the lowest parts of the city, and come right into living touch with lost men and women, and try to use the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to lift them up where they ought to be. If they should do this, we would have new life in our prayer meeting, we would not have two or three long and labored prayers; we would have prayer after prayer, short, right to the point, appeals to God for His blessing upon this man or that woman. We would have a new conception of the power of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, we would have a new vision of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. I never knew Jesus as I know Him today, until I knew what it was to go down among the poor and outcast, and kneel right beside a dirty drunkard, and put my arm about his neck, and whisper to him that Jesus died for him, and that Jesus came to save him and could save him, and then hear him with breaking heart lift his voice to God in prayer, and then see him rise a new {258} man in Christ

Jesus. I understood the Gospel then; I understood Jesus then; I saw Jesus then as I never saw Him before. If you wish to be a better Christian than you ever were in all your life, if you wish to understand the Lord Jesus as you never understood Him before in all your life, if you wish to have the spirit of prayer as you never had it before in all your life, go to work in a mission. If you are a pastor and wish to have a better membership than you ever had in your life, send your members out to work in a mission. If you have not a mission where they can do it, start one, have one anyhow. I pity from the bottom of my heart the man or woman who does not know the inspiration, the joy and uplift, that come from going down into some mission where perhaps there are five, ten or one hundred lost men and women, and just pleading with them in the simplest language you can command to take the Lord Jesus Christ who saved you.

II. HOW TO START A MISSION.

The best way to start a mission is to start it. A great many people talk about starting but they never start. In one city they had a great gathering and were going to build a \$200,000 building. They had a wonderful meeting, and one man subscribed \$30,000. Some one who was present was asked what he thought about it, and he replied, "I can tell you better after they have started." They never started. The whole thing went to pieces. Our country is full of people who are going to start missions and other Christian enterprises, but they never do it. The way to begin is by beginning.

1. IN THE FIRST PLACE, BE SURE GOD WISHES YOU TO START A MISSION. It is not enough to be sure that you wish to start one. It is as a rule far better to go and help a mission already existing, than to go and begin a new one of your own. Many people hear of the wonderful work they are doing in some mission, and then go and start one without consulting the Lord. There have been hundreds of missions opened in this country that the Lord never wished opened, and if those who started them had gone to Him about it they would never have been started. {259}

2. IF YOU ARE SURE THAT IT IS THE LORD'S DESIRE

THAT YOU START A MISSION, START WITH THE DETERMINATION TO GO THROUGH WITH IT. People attend conventions or read articles about missions, and see only the bright side, they do not see that the work is also full of discouragements. If there is any work that is full of discouragements, it is mission work; so when you start, begin with the determination that you will go through every obstacle, and then you will get through.

3. BE SURE YOU GET THE RIGHT LOCATION. That is very important. Be sure to consult God about the place. There is a great deal in the place, and the place that you think best may not be the best place. Here are a few hints as to location:

(1) Go where there is the hardest work, not the most attractive work, to do.

(2) Go where there is the most need for work.

(3) Go where there are a great many passers-by.

(4) As a rule the first floor is best for many reasons, but there are some advantages in a second-floor mission.

(5) A vacant store, saloon or theater will answer the purpose for a mission excellently.

(6) Don't start on too large a scale. Everybody seems to wish a bigger mission than anybody else, and if they start on a large scale, as a rule in a few months they have enough of it. Sometimes the best place to start a mission is on a street corner. Go and hold an open air meeting, and if the Lord approves of your work He will give you a more permanent place.

(7) The location of the mission must be largely determined by the purpose of the mission. If the purpose of the mission is to reach drunkards, the place for the mission is near the saloons; if the purpose of the mission is to reach fallen women, oftentimes it is desirable to have the mission right among the places that these women haunt, though if possible there should also be a home remote from the dens of iniquity to which the converts can be sent. If the purpose of the mission is to reach into the lives of the poor, of course the location of the mission has to be determined by that fact. {260}

4. FURNISH PLAINLY. Fancy missions as a rule are

failures. They are nice in theory, but plain ones do the work.

5. _When you have made up your mind where you are going to start, and have gotten everything ready, advertise your meetings everywhere; in the houses, in the stores, in the saloons and on the street._ Send men and women out to bring people in, to "compel them to come in." Get as many consecrated Christian workers as you can together. Expect fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit as you seek to win souls.

III. HOW TO SUPPORT THE MISSION.

1. DON'T SUPPORT IT ON CREDIT. Many people get in debt and call it walking by faith. God says, "Owe no man anything." Running into debt is not faith, but disobedience. It is better to shut a mission up than to run it into debt. Debt dishonors God. If you run into debt you will be discredited, the church will be discredited, God will be discredited, sinners will stumble to perdition over the dishonor brought to the name of Christ.

2. DO NOT SUPPORT YOUR MISSION BY FAIRS, SOCIALS, IMITATION DIME MUSEUMS, OR ANYTHING OF THAT SORT. The man who goes into the disgraceful methods of raising church finances that are so common in our day lacks faith in God.

3. DO NOT SUPPORT YOUR MISSION BY INDISCRIMINATE SOLICITATION. Never go to an ungodly man for money. God says that the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. He certainly does not wish us to use an abomination to support His work.

4. IF YOU ARE ABLE TO DO IT, IT IS OFTENTIMES WELL TO SUPPORT A MISSION OUT OF YOUR OWN POCKET. In almost every large city there are many Christian men who could support a mission. One of the most efficient missions in the world was for years supported by a business man out of his own pocket. He worked six days in the week the entire day, spent all the evenings at the mission, then went fourteen miles to his home, and before he could go to bed {261} would have a long list of people to pray for. He was past fifty years old when he began this work; he kept it up for many years, and the work continues to this day. Another man of wealth in another city put \$10,000 or more a year

into a mission that he organized. He found that that work paid so much better than his business, that he finally turned his back upon his business and put himself into the work. He is still in the work, a young man at nearly three score years and ten. It does not require a very rich man to support a mission. Four young men in one city, each of them working on a meager salary, supported a very successful mission with scarcely any help from others. Of course it required self-denial, but they felt that the self-denial abundantly paid.

5. ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO SUPPORT A MISSION IS TO HAVE AN INDIVIDUAL CHURCH BACK OF IT. The church will be a blessing to the mission, and the mission to the church. Every rich church ought to have one or more missions that it is supporting.

6. THE BEST WAY TO SUPPORT A MISSION IN MANY CASES IS TO SUPPORT IT BY THE FREE WILL OFFERINGS OF THOSE WHO ATTEND IT. This is best even where the attendants are all poor people. Very few realize how much poor people can give and will give if they are interested in a work, and if the work really is of God. Far more missions as well as churches could be self-supporting if the people only believed it and undertook it. The people always appreciate the mission better, and think more of it, when they have money in it.

7. MISSIONS CAN BE SUPPORTED BY FAITH. If you are SURE the Lord wishes you to carry on mission work, ask Him for means and He will supply them. You will not need to make personal solicitations from anybody but the Lord. I say this not from speculation, but from experience. Many others have had the same experience.

IV. HOW TO CONDUCT A GOSPEL MISSION.

1. LET GOD CONDUCT IT. Missions often fail because there is too much of man's machinery and man's management. Cast-iron rules and cast-iron methods of conducting missions, red tape and other {262} nonsense, shut God out. Give your mission over unreservedly to the control of God. Be sure you do it -- seek His guidance and wait for it. The promise of the thirty-second Psalm applies as well to mission work as to other work: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt

go, I will guide thee with mine eye." The trouble is, oftentimes we are not near enough to see the glance of the Father's eye.

2. CONDUCT YOUR MISSION ALONG STRICTLY GOSPEL

LINES. Refuse to be switched off on to side issues. Amusements and entertainments may be a good enough thing in their place, but the time is short and the Lord is at hand. We cannot afford to be reaching out in such indirect and indefinite ways. Thousands of souls are perishing, and the only thing that has God's power in it to save is the Gospel (Romans 1:16). A fine text for the mission worker is, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." The missions that have been successful are the missions that have held strictly to the Gospel, the missions that have given the Gospel clearly, simply and constantly. Experiments along other lines are nothing new. They have been tried for over a quarter of a century. I remember a church which in my early life seemed to me a model church. It had most cunningly devised machinery for reaching the people -- lectures, entertainments, clubs, classes, etc., etc. It did reach the people, but it did not convert them. It grew marvelously, but it was made up of such heterogeneous and unconverted material that it went to pieces and ended in a free-for-all fight; yet every little while some new work is springing up along these old and discredited lines, yet imagining that it is striking out in new and promising paths. The Gospel alone can do the work we aim to do. Run your mission along Gospel lines seven nights in the week.

3. TEND STRICTLY TO BUSINESS. Missions will not run themselves. People attend a few meetings of a successful mission, or read about them, and conclude that missions are a fine thing. Then they open one somewhere and expect it to go of itself, and it does go -- to pieces. This has occurred again and again. There is no form of Christian work that demands more careful and prayerful watching {263} and attention to business than mission work. A single ill-conducted service in a church may not do much harm, but a single illconducted

service in a mission is likely to have far-reaching consequences of evil. One unfortunate meeting in a mission may mar the work for years.

4. PUT ONLY TRIED MEN IN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE MISSION. Use only men of irreproachable character, and who have a good understanding of God's Word, men of good common sense, and uncommon push. It is too much the custom if a notorious sinner is converted, to open a mission for him at once and put him in charge. He has not been tested, and nothing is known of his qualifications, but he has a remarkable story. The condition of many missions is simply horrible because of this sort of thing. Of course such a man ought to be set to work, and there is much that he can do, and do well, and without any risk. He can be used to hand out dodgers and to get people into the mission; he can testify humbly and effectively as to what God has done for him; very likely he can do most efficient personal work, but for his own sake and for Christ's sake, do not put him into any place of leadership until he is tried, and has proven the stability of his Christian character, his gifts and his Bible knowledge, to be such as fit him for the work: "Lay hands hastily on no man" (1_Timothy 5:22 RV); however good a man he may be, it will hurt him to put him forward at once.

5. MAKE MUCH OF THE BIBLE. People in a mission should be given a great deal of the Word of God. Stable and well-rounded Christian character is built upon a study of the Word of God. The Christian character that is built merely upon the foundation of experience is unreliable; it breaks down easily; but the Christian character that is built upon the Word of God never goes to pieces. The converts and attendants ought to be encouraged to study the Word for themselves. There should be classes also for thorough systematic instruction in Bible truth. There should be training classes where they are taught how to use the Bible in leading others to Christ. They should be encouraged to make much use of the Bible in giving their experience. In some successful missions {264} the men always begin their testimony by a quotation from Scripture, giving chapter and verse.

6. MAKE MUCH USE OF TESTIMONY. There can be no doubt of the great power of living testimony, especially in mission work. Men and women who regard themselves not only lost, but hopelessly lost, come into the mission and there hear some other man or woman who has been as deep down in sin as themselves, tell the story of the saving power of Christ. Hope is kindled in their hearts, and they turn to Christ and are saved. There are thousands of earnest Christians in our land today who were saved through the testimonies of redeemed men and women. Of course care has to be exercised as to the character of the testimonies thus given. We should be careful to see that it is genuine and not hypocritical; we should see to it that the men live out in their daily lives what they testify to in the evening meeting. If men give their testimony about their past sinful life in a boastful way, they should be instructed in private not to do this. Sometimes it is necessary to say a word about it publicly. But the fact that there are evils connected with the relation of our experience is not a sufficient reason for altogether giving up this mighty weapon of testimony.

7. MAKE MUCH USE OF MUSIC. Get the best music you can. Be sure it is converted music. Tolerate nothing but a converted chorister, a converted organist and a converted choir. Have an organist that you can depend upon. An organist of modest ability who is always there is much better than a much better organist who is sometimes late or absent. Get the best soloist you can, but be sure they sing hymns that contain the real Gospel, and sing them in the power of the Holy Spirit. Have duets, quartets and choruses, but best of all, have a lively congregational singing. Be careful in your selection of hymns. Choose hymns that are full of life and full of the Gospel. Sing them over and over again until you have sung them into the hearts of the hearers. Many a man will go out of the mission unconverted, but the hymn that he has heard will go on singing itself in his heart until it has sung him into the kingdom of God. It is wonderful how the Gospel in song sticks in the minds of hearers. {265}

8. MAKE A GREAT DEAL OF PERSONAL WORK IN THE MISSION. It is not enough to get those who desire to be saved up to the altar, though that is a good thing to do; have workers deal with them individually. Be sure that the workers themselves know how to do personal work. One great cause of the instability of much of our mission work is that there has been no thorough hand-to-hand dealing with the converts.

9. LOOK AFTER YOUR CONVERTS. Keep a list of them, and hunt them up in their homes if they have any. If they have no homes, hunt them up in their lodging houses or wherever they may be. Follow them up persistently, instruct them individually as to how to succeed in the Christian life. Be watchful to see that they follow the instructions given. Get them into some live church of Jesus Christ. We ought to be careful as to the church which mission converts join. Many churches would prove to be an icehouse to them, and would freeze them to death. It is oftentimes best to have the mission itself organized into a church, where there is regular church life, and where the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered.

10. THROW AS MUCH OF THE WORK AS YOU CAN UPON THE CONVERTS OF THE MISSION. Send them out into the streets and saloons to invite people in; be careful, however, about sending reformed drunkards into saloons. Put the converts out on the street corners and in front of the mission with dodgers. Organize them into a choir and get them to sing. Train them to use their Bibles in dealing with inquirers. Work them into the Sunday School as officers and teachers as fast as it is wise. Organize them into lookout committees, sick committees, hospital committees, jail committees, etc. Set them to conducting cottage meetings. Use them in open-air work.

11. HAVE PLENTY OF GOOD USHERS. Let them meet people at the door and give them a warm handshake, and show them a seat. Ladies are oftentimes the best ushers for a mission. It has been a long time since some of those who enter the mission have come in contact with a pure woman, and her mere presence is a benediction; {266} their hearts

are touched, and memories of olden days come to mind.

12. LET NO ONE GO OUT WITHOUT A PERSONAL INVITATION TO COME TO CHRIST. The best work in many a mission is that which is done with those who start to go out before the meeting is over. Some one stays near the door and follows out every one who leaves and preaches Christ to them. Many have been won to Christ this way, just outside the mission.

13. HAVE NO CAST-IRON FORM OF SERVICE. It is well to begin one way one time and an entirely different way another. Let everything be unconventional. Avoid getting into ruts.

14. NEVER BE AFRAID OF DRUNKARDS, THIEVES, THUGS OR CRANKS. You have God back of you, and if you look to Him, He will give you the victory every time. Many things may happen that would frighten an ordinary preacher out of his wits, but out of these very unforeseen incidents blessing oftentimes comes.

I was once conducting a meeting when a drunken man rose in the back part of the audience and wanted to speak. As he came forward I said, "Do you want me to pray for you?" The man faced the audience and broke out, "I am a damned fool!" then he apologized for swearing. He said, "I did not mean to swear." I said, "My friend, you told the truth, you are a fool and you are damned, but Christ can save you. Do you wish us to pray for you?" And down the man went upon his knees. In a little while a tall, muscular, drunken lumberman rose to his feet and said he wished to ask a question. I replied, "All right, what is it?" He said, "I wish to ask about the blessed Trinity." I said, "Never mind that now, Christ died for you; do you wish us to pray for you?" The man replied, "I am not such a fool but what I am willing to be prayed for," and down he dropped upon his knees. The power of God came upon the meeting, and there was great blessing that night.

15. DEPEND UPON THE HOLY SPIRIT. You may have the right machinery, you may have the building and the crowds, you may have even the Word of God itself, but unless you have the power {267} of the Holy Spirit to accompany the divine seed as you sow it,

your work will come to nothing. All this machinery, unless the power of the Holy Spirit is in it, is worse than useless, but if you have the fire from above, you will win souls.

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@12 CHAPTER TWELVE

MEETINGS IN JAILS, HOSPITALS, POORHOUSES, ETC.

Jails, hospitals, poorhouses and other public institutions offer a very important and much-neglected field of operations for the devoted soul winner.

I. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

1. MANY OF THE INMATES OF THESE INSTITUTIONS MUST BE REACHED WHILE THERE, OR NOT AT ALL. Many of them in fact spend pretty much all of their lives there, and many others still will die there.

2. THE INMATES ARE OFTENTIMES IN A FAVORABLE MOOD FOR THE RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL. Things have gone against them. Life looks hopeless. The Gospel, which is full of hope, just appeals to their need.

Take for example the men in jail. They have found out by bitter experience that "the way of the transgressor is hard"; they are humbled and sobered. They are very likely to be in a thoughtful mood; they have much time for thought, little opportunity in fact for anything else; furthermore the whisky is out of them, and with many of them the only time the whisky is out of them is when they are in jail or prison. There could not be a more favorable opportunity for preaching the Gospel. I have known many men who thanked God that they were ever sent to jail, for there they heard the Gospel, some of them for the first time, and others of them in a different mood from that in which they had ever heard it before.

3. THE CONVERTS CAN BE FOLLOWED UP. A prisoner is reached with the Gospel one Sunday in jail, he is likely to be there the {269} next Sunday as well, and perhaps for many Sundays to come, and there is an opportunity to get him thoroughly established before he is out in the world again.

The same is true of an inmate of a hospital; he is reached one day, and is likely to be there where he can be dealt with for many days to come.

4. THE INMATES HAVE TO ATTEND. In some instances attendance is compulsory. When one is confined to

a sick bed in the ward of a hospital where a religious service is being held, they are obliged to hear the Gospel preached and sung. Further than this, where the inmates of such institutions are not compelled to attend, there is so little to do that they are willing to go to anything for a novelty.

5. THE RESULTS OF SUCH SERVICES ARE VERY LARGE. It

has oftentimes been our privilege in the Cook County Jail to preach to fifty or more persons there under charge of murder, besides great numbers of others. Very many of the most desperate and hardened characters have been converted in jail services. There is scarcely any other work that yields so important and so good results as jail work. Some of the leading ministers and other Christian workers of this country were converted while incarcerated. One of the leading ministers of one of our evangelical denominations, a man whose name is known not only in this country but in Europe, a man who has remarkable power of preaching the Word of God, was first reached while in jail. At that time he was a brilliant but drunken lawyer. He was converted in jail, and has been for many years an honored preacher of the Gospel. In one of our cities a reckless young man was incarcerated under charge of arson. He had burned the property of his own father. His father was himself a Godless man. While in jail this young man was brought to Christ, and has been for years a most devoted Christian at the head of a very successful mission work. Jerry McAuley, perhaps the leader in rescue mission work in this country, was converted while in Sing Sing prison. Christian workers should see to it that every jail, poorhouse, and similar institution in the land has a regular evangelistic service. The formal services held under the city or state in such institutions frequently are purely formal, and of no real value. As a rule the best work is that which is done by volunteers. {270} Service should also be held in every hospital in the land where it is possible to get an entrance.

II. HOW TO CONDUCT.

1. FIRST OF ALL, YOU MUST GET PERMISSION. The way to get permission is to ask for it. The request

should not be made in the way of a demand, it should be made with great tact and courtesy. If it is possible to get influence back of your request, get it.

2. KEEP THE GOOD WILL OF THE ATTENDANTS. Here is a place where many zealous but unwise workers make a mistake; they unnecessarily antagonize jailers or keepers or nurses or other attendants. This is the height of folly. It does not cost much to keep the good will of people, and in a case like this it is of inestimable value.

3. BE SURE TO VIOLATE NONE OF THE RULES OF THE INSTITUTION. Be careful at the outset to find what the rules of the institution are, and then observe them to the very letter. It makes no difference whether you think the rules of the institution are wise or not, keep them anyhow. It is not your business to make the rules, but to observe them.

4. ATTEND STRICTLY TO YOUR OWN BUSINESS. Don't try to run the whole jail or hospital. Some men when they go to preach in an institution seem to be seized with the idea that they own the whole institution. I have known workers to go to work among the inmates of a hospital, and then try to get them to give up the use of medicine and accept divine healing, or sometimes try to get them to go to some other hospital they thought was better. In such a case, the authorities are of course warranted in turning the workers into the street.

5. GO REGULARLY. Regular services, week after week, month after month, year after year, accomplish far more than spasmodic efforts. One great trouble in all this kind of work is that there are so many people who get enthusiastic for some weeks, and then their enthusiasm cools. When institutions have a number of experiences with this kind of work, they become unwilling to permit {271} a new band of workers to take up again a work that has so often failed in the past.

6. HAVE GOOD MUSIC, AND PLENTY OF IT. These people get very little music, and they enjoy it. Frequently they enjoy the music more than they do the preaching, and it is easier to reach many of them by a solo sung in the power of the Spirit than it is by a sermon. Adapt your music to the

circumstances; for example, in a hospital the music should not be loud or exciting; it should be bright and comforting. A doleful tune in a hospital may hasten the death of some of the patients, but a bright, cheerful, Gospel tune is likely to save the lives of some of the patients.

The music that is adapted to a hospital is frequently not adapted to a jail, and vice versa.

7. PREACH THE WORD. Stick close to the Bible. Be simple, plain, vivacious, right to the point.

8. BE WISE IN YOUR PRAYER. An indiscreet prayer in a hospital may do much harm, so may an indiscreet prayer in a jail or workhouse.

9. IN A JAIL BE CAREFUL TO AVOID ALL AIR OF SUPERIORITY. Many an inexperienced man begins to talk to the inmates in jail, as if he were an angel and they were demons. Such a man will get no hearing. Let the prisoners feel that you realize that you are their brother. Do not assume a patronizing air, avoid all unnecessary sentimentality and gush.

10. MAKE USE OF TESTIMONY. Jerry McAuley was converted through the testimony of Orville Gardner. He had known Orville Gardner in the old days as a desperate character in New York, going by the nickname of "Awful Gardner." When he went to Sing Sing prison and saw Orville Gardner in the pulpit, he could hardly believe his own eyes; but when Orville Gardner rose and gave his testimony, it went home to Jerry McAuley's heart, and thoroughly roused him to a study of the Bible itself, with the result that he was converted in his cell. There are many men in this country today who in olden days have been inmates of jails and {272} prisons -- notorious criminals -- but who are today living consistent Christian lives. The testimony of such a man has great weight with other convicts.

11. DEAL INDIVIDUALLY WITH THE INMATES. The public preaching does much good, but the personal work does more, it brings matters to a personal decision. The great majority of converts in jail work come through individual work. It may be difficult at first to get permission to deal individually with the inmates, but if you are wise, and win the confidence of the authorities,

you will get the opportunity in time.

12. MAKE A LARGE USE OF TRACTS AND OTHER GOSPEL LITERATURE. Prisoners have so much time on their hands that they are ready to read anything. Select your literature very wisely. Goody-goody religious literature is not what is needed, but that which shows real ability and strength, and goes right to the heart of things. There is no better literature for use in jails and hospitals than that published by the Colportage Division of the Moody Press. It is possible to get free grants from this society. While their prison fund is usually overdrawn, somehow or other they manage to honor drafts made upon them.

13. PRAY MUCH IN SECRET. Prayer is one of the great secrets of success in all forms of religious enterprise, but this is peculiarly true regarding work in jails, hospitals and similar institutions. If a record could be kept and published regarding God's answers to prayers for work under such circumstances, it would make a most interesting and inspiring book.

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@13 CHAPTER THIRTEEN REVIVAL MEETINGS

By revival meetings we mean consecutive meetings, day after day and night after night, for the quickening of the life and activity of the church, and for the salvation of the lost. We speak of them as revival meetings because such meetings result from new life either in individuals or in the church as a whole, and if properly conducted always result in the impartation of new life to the church and the salvation of the lost.

I. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

The importance of revival services can scarcely be overestimated. There are those who say that we ought not to have special revival meetings, but should have a revival in the church all the time. It is true that there should be a revival in the church all the time. There was a continuous revival in the apostolic church; there are churches which have a continuous revival in these days; but it is almost always the case that the churches which have a continuous revival are those which believe in and make use of special revival

services, and what are known as revival methods.

1. THE FIRST ADVANTAGE OF SPECIAL REVIVAL SERVICES IS THAT WHICH COMES FROM REPEATED AND CONSECUTIVE IMPRESSION.

An unsaved man hears a sermon on Sunday evening. An impression is made upon his mind by the truth he has heard, but the impression has not been profound enough to lead to his acceptance of Jesus Christ then and there. Before the next regular preaching service of the church comes, the impression has faded away, and an entirely new impression has to be made. If the Sunday evening sermon had been followed up by another on Monday evening, the impression of Sunday evening would have been deepened; if that had been followed {274} by still another sermon on Tuesday evening, the impression would have been made deeper still, and very likely before the week was over, the man would have been converted. Only those who have made a careful and prolonged study of this matter can realize how important in the work of bringing men to Christ is the element of repeated and consecutive impression. Men who have attended church for years, and who have been only superficially impressed, are oftentimes readily brought to Christ in a series of consecutive services.

2. THE SECOND ADVANTAGE OF REVIVAL SERVICES IS THAT, IF PROPERLY CONDUCTED, THERE WILL BE AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF PRAYER, AND UNACCUSTOMED EARNESTNESS IN PRAYER.

Some one may say that Christians ought always to pray, and so they should, but we have to take the people as they are. As a matter of fact, the average Christian does far more praying in a time of special revival services than he does at any other time. The professed Christians who spend as much time as they ought in regular prayer day by day, when there is no special effort being made for the salvation of the lost, are very rare indeed.

3. THE THIRD ADVANTAGE OF REVIVAL SERVICES IS THAT AT SUCH TIMES CHRISTIANS PUT FORTH SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR THE SALVATION OF THE LOST.

Every Christian should do everything in his power every day of his life to lead men to Christ, but in point of fact very few Christians do this. How often those who are cold and indifferent and do almost nothing at

all for the salvation of the lost under ordinary circumstances will display a great activity at the time of special services, and not seldom those who have never been known as workers before not only take hold of the work during special meetings, but continue it after the meetings are over.

4. REVIVAL SERVICES AWAKEN AN UNUSUAL INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT OF RELIGION IN THE COMMUNITY. The

outside world is aroused to the fact that the church exists, and that there is such a thing as religion. They begin to think about God, Christ, the Bible, eternity, heaven and hell. People who are never seen in the house of God at any other time in the year will flock there during revival meetings. Many of them will be converted, and others will become attendants {275} at the church. They find out what the church has to offer, and suddenly wake up to the fact that what the church has to offer is just what they need.

5. AS A MATTER OF EXPERIENCE AND HISTORY, REVIVALS HAVE BEEN GREATLY HONORED OF GOD. This is true in

the history of the church as a whole and also in the history of local churches. The church of Christ has been saved, humanly speaking from utter ruin by the revivals which God has graciously sent from time to time in its history. As regards local churches, the churches which have grown and prospered are those that have believed in and made use of revivals. Study the yearbooks of the various denominations, and you will find that the ministers who have believed in revivals and have fostered them in their churches, are the ones who have been able to report from year to year accessions to their church, and gifts to the various branches of Christian activity. On the other hand, it will be found as a rule, an almost universal rule, that the ministers who have pooh-poohed revivals have had their churches run down on their hands. If there is anything that the history of the church of Jesus Christ absolutely demonstrates, it is the tremendous importance, if not the imperative necessity, of revivals.

II. TIME TO HOLD REVIVAL MEETINGS.

When shall revival meetings be held in a church or community?

1. WHEN THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF SPECIAL BLESSING.

An alert pastor who keeps in touch with his people and the community will often be able to detect signs of special interest and blessing. He will notice a new interest in his preaching on the part of his congregation. He will have a new sense of liberty and power as he preaches. He will see tears in the eyes of his congregation as he speaks about sin and its consequences. People will come to him for spiritual counsel and to be shown the way of life. Perhaps members of his church who are more spiritually alert than himself will say to him that they think there are signs of blessing in the church or community. All these things are indications that God is ready to favor that church or community with an especial {276} outpouring of His Spirit, and arrangements should be made at once to take advantage of these favorable conditions, and to gather a harvest of souls, by holding special revival services.

2. WHEN THERE IS SPIRITUAL DEARTH IN THE COMMUNITY AND CHURCH.

When the Gospel seems to have lost its hold upon the people; when the congregations are constantly declining and conversions are few; when iniquity and infidelity are rampant in the community, such a time is also an important one. Special effort should be put forth to arouse the church and to save the perishing. God has promised His special blessing at such a time. He has said, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him" (Isaiah 59:19). When everything goes hard in a church, and infidelity and irreligion and immorality seem to triumph, the minister whose trust is fixed upon God and in His Word need not become discouraged. Let him cry to God with a new earnestness and faith, and then go to work to bring about the conditions upon which God is always ready to bless His people.

3. REVIVAL MEETINGS SHOULD BE HELD IN EVERY CHURCH

EVERY YEAR. This is entirely feasible. The writer of this book has been the pastor of four different churches, all quite different from one another; a village church with the usual village congregation and environment, a young suburban church in a large city, and an established metropolitan church with a large and varied membership. In each of

these churches he found it quite possible to have special revival meetings every year. Largely as a result of these special revival meetings, each of these churches had what could probably justly be termed a continual revival, there being accessions to the church at every communion. Many other pastors ministering to churches of still different varieties from these here described testify to the same experience.

As to the time in the year when these services can most wisely be held, this depends upon local conditions. It seems to be the experience of most pastors that the especially favorable time is the week of prayer, and the weeks immediately following. People expect something to be done at that time, and to a certain extent {277} are ready for it. There is, however, a growing tendency to begin these meetings during Easter week or earlier in Lent. This is an especially favorable time in large cities on account of the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian elements. In large cities the social life is at an ebb at that time.

Even the theaters take this fact into consideration. While we may not personally believe in observing times and seasons and days, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that other people do believe in it, and we should take advantage of this fact as giving us an especially good opportunity of getting hold of people, and getting them out to hear the Word of God.

III. HOW TO ORGANIZE AND CONDUCT A REVIVAL MEETING.

1. When it has been decided that the time has come to hold special services, A LETTER SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, STATING THE PLANS, AND REQUESTING THEIR INTEREST AND PRAYER AND CO-OPERATION IN EVERY WAY. It is sometimes well in connection with this letter to give all members of the church some book to read that will stir them up to self-examination, to prayer and to effort. A book largely used by some evangelists and many pastors for this purpose, is the book, How to Pray, by the author.* It can be secured in paper cover for this purpose at a very low price. In the letter there should be a request that all members should answer it,

pledging themselves not only to read the book that is sent, but also to prayer and co-operation in the work. The members of the church who have been absenting themselves from the church service or from the prayer meeting should be visited personally and dealt with gently but earnestly, and led to realize their responsibility to Christ and His church, and also their responsibility regarding the unsaved in the community.

*{In 2001, How to Pray by R.A.Torrey is currently in print in a copyrighted Whittaker House edition, and is also available in a free public domain and freely distributable etext edition from the Christian Digital Library Foundation {<http://www.cdif.org>}. }

2. MEETINGS FOR UNITED PRAYER SHOULD AT ONCE BE BEGUN. Sometimes it is wisest to hold these at the central church, but oftentimes, especially when the membership of the church is very much scattered, it is better to have cottage meetings at first, in the various neighborhoods of the parish. These separate cottage meetings can afterwards be brought together for a united meeting at the church. If the revival services are to be of a union character, it is well for each church to begin prayer meetings by itself, and for them afterwards {278} to come together for union prayer meetings. There short addresses should be given upon the importance of prayer and how to pray, but the major part of the meeting should be devoted directly to prayer. The people should be instructed as to what they should pray for; they should be drawn out in prayer for the membership of the church, then in prayer for the unsaved, and not merely for the unsaved in general, but for specific persons in whom they are interested; their duty to uphold the hands of the pastor in prayer should be emphasized; they should be instructed as to the lines along which they should seek God's help for the pastor -- in his personal life, in his selection of topics to preach upon, in his preparation of his sermons, and especially that his preaching may be in demonstration of the Spirit and of power (1_Corinthians 2:4; Ephesians 6:19); they should be encouraged to pray for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the

community. Oftentimes it is important to get them to take a higher outlook than the needs of their own local community, and to pray for a general outpouring of the Spirit throughout the world.

3. IN THE NEXT PLACE, A CANVASS OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN. The whole village or city or section of the city should be carefully mapped out, different districts assigned to different workers, and every house and store in the community visited. Those visited should be informed of the meetings that are to be held, but more important than this, as far as possible they should be dealt with and prayed with personally in regard to their salvation. If the services are to be of a union character, the visitors should go out two and two, each one representing a different church in the community.

4. AFTER THIS PRELIMINARY WORK HAS BEEN DONE, MEETINGS SHOULD BE ANNOUNCED AT THE CHURCH. The number of meetings to be held each day will depend very much upon the location and the interest. In many places it will be possible to hold only an evening meeting at first. In other places the meetings can be begun with as many as three or four meetings a day, for what may be best in this line in one place is utterly impossible in another. The ideal is a meeting for prayer, a meeting for the study of the Bible on the part of believers and an evening evangelistic service for the {279} unsaved, with possibly a fourth meeting for children; but this ideal is not attainable in every community. Where it is not, there should at least be in addition to the evening meeting, a gathering for prayer. It may be held for prayer and prayer alone, or it may be wiser to have a meeting in the afternoon, part of the time being given to prayer and part to the study of the Word of God. One great reason why our modern evangelistic movements have lacked the old-time power is because the emphasis is not laid upon the prayer meeting that was in former days. In the great revival of 1857, more time and strength was put into prayer meetings than into anything else. In many places the meetings were entirely prayer meetings. We have swung to the other extreme, and in many cases evangelistic

meetings are entirely meetings for preaching and singing. This is a great mistake. Wherever the church becomes lax in united prayer, the meetings will soon lose in power and come to a close as far as any real results are concerned.

The question often rises whether it is wiser to hold the meetings at a church or in a hall. This will depend somewhat upon circumstances. Each method has its advantages. Doubtless many people can be gotten out to a hall or to an opera house who will not enter a church; on the other hand, if people are gotten out to church and converted there, they will be more likely to remain in the church after the special meetings are over than if the meetings are held in a hall or opera house.

The wisest plan in many instances is to begin the meetings in a church and then go to a hall or opera house, and then back to the church before they close, in order that those who have been interested in the opera house may be accustomed to and interested in the church before the special interest is over. As to whether the meetings are held in a church or hall oftentimes too is

dependent upon whether they are meetings of an individual church or a union of several churches.

Here again there are advantages in each plan.

There is likely to be more harmony and united effort and less controversy and suspicion if the meetings are held by an individual church. On the other hand there can be no doubt that a community is moved by a union of all the churches in it, as it is not moved and cannot be moved by revival services held by an individual church. If revival services are held in the summer, oftentimes it is well to hold them in a tent. {280}

5. THE CHILDREN SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN IN TIMES OF SPECIAL INTEREST. Special meetings for the children should be held. As a rule they should be held in the afternoon just at the time the school is closing, so that children can go directly from school to the meeting. They should be held at least five afternoons in the week. More about these children's meetings will be said in the chapter upon children's meetings.

6. OF COURSE THE PREACHING IS OF VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE IN THE CONDUCT OF REVIVAL SERVICES.

(1) WHO SHOULD PREACH?

The first question that arises is as to who should do the preaching. Wherever it is possible, it is well for the pastor of the church to do the preaching himself. It is said that some pastors do not have the evangelistic gift, and this is doubtless in a measure true, but most pastors can, to some extent, cultivate the evangelistic gift, if they only will. There is a great advantage in the pastor himself preaching. There is not such a likelihood that the interest will suddenly die out when the special services are over. When it is not possible for the local pastor to do the preaching, he can often call in the help of some neighboring pastor who does possess the evangelistic gift. Even when the pastor himself is an evangelist, there is an advantage in calling in a fellow pastor for a special series of meetings. His is a new voice, and he is likely to preach the truth from another standpoint from that to which people have become accustomed. Many will go to hear him out of curiosity who might not attend special services conducted by the pastor, thinking they could hear him any Sunday. But we cannot depend altogether upon the local pastor or upon fellow pastors. It is by the ordination of God that there are evangelists in the church, and evangelists as a class have been greatly honored of God in the past history of the church. However clear it is that the pastor is possessed of the evangelistic gift, and however much he may have been used of God in leading the unsaved to Christ, if he is wise he will occasionally call to his help a man whom God has especially appointed to the work of an evangelist. Of course there are evangelists and evangelists. Some evangelists are mere adventurers, others are indiscreet and do much harm, but there are beyond question {281} many men whom God has called to this specific work, and whom He wants in it, and there are indications that God is going to multiply the number of really reliable men who are in evangelistic work.

(2) WHAT TO PREACH.

What shall we preach in times of revival interest?

(1) First of all, we should preach the Gospel, the Gospel that Christ died for our sins, according to

the Scriptures, was buried and rose again. We should never get far from the Cross. We should preach the atonement over and over and over again.

(2) We should also preach the utterly lost and ruined condition of man. (3) We should preach the bitter consequences of sin here and hereafter. We should declare the whole counsel of God regarding the judgment and regarding hell. (4) We should present the truth about conversion, regeneration and justification. (5) We should preach the Divinity of Christ. There is great correcting and converting and saving power in that doctrine. (Acts 2:36-37; 9:20,22; John 20:31.) (6) We should also preach to Christians about the Holy Spirit and His work, about prayer, about the power of the Word of God and the necessity of Bible study. One will find much instruction in regard to what to preach at such a time from the sermons of such men as Moody, Spurgeon and Finney. A study of the texts given in the first division of this volume in connection with the different classes of men with whom we have to deal in personal work will suggest many texts and topics for sermons.

7. IN REVIVAL SERVICES THE MUSIC IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. If possible there should be a large choir of converted men and women. They should have the leadership of a godly chorister. He should be a man who not only knows how to sing himself, but who can get others to sing. If there are in the community, or if there can be secured, men or women who can sing Gospel solos effectively in the power of the Holy Spirit, their services should be obtained. Impress upon the singers that they are to sing not merely to interest the people, but to convert them, and that they need a definite anointing of the Holy Spirit for their work.

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8. THE TESTIMONY OF SAVED PEOPLE TO THE POWER AND BLESSING OF THE GOSPEL IS OF GREAT VALUE IN SPECIAL REVIVAL SERVICES. Especially is the testimony of those recently converted effective.

When men hear one who has recently come out from their ranks tell of what Jesus Christ has done for him, a longing is awakened in their hearts to find the same Savior.

9. WHEN THE MEETINGS ARE HELD IN A CITY OF

CONSIDERABLE SIZE, IT IS WELL TO HAVE A NOON MEETING TO WHICH MEN IN BUSINESS AND OTHERS ARE INVITED. Many can be gotten hold of in this way that can be reached in no other way.

It is well usually in a series of special services to hold meetings for men alone, in which sin is very plainly dealt with, and Christ as the remedy for sin presented. Meetings for women are also desirable. As a rule they should be conducted by women, though there are some men who seem to have a special gift in preaching to women. Generally, however, the men who are most inclined to take such meetings are least qualified to do it.

10. CLASSES TO TRAIN THE WORKERS IN HOW TO DEAL WITH INQUIRERS ARE OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE.

Oftentimes it is well to hold these training classes before the general meetings begin, so that from the very first meeting you can have workers whom you may depend upon to do the work.

11. EVERY MEETING SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY AN AFTER MEETING. Definite instructions as to the conduct of after meetings will be given in a separate chapter.

12. ALL THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE SET TO WORK. They should be so aroused upon the subject of religion that all they will talk about everywhere is Christ and His claims upon men. They should be encouraged to go from house to house and store to store laboring with people and endeavoring to get them to accept Christ. Harm may be done in this way by indiscreet workers, but the harm that is done will be small indeed in comparison with the good that is accomplished. {283}

13. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAKE USE OF GOOD RELIGIOUS LITERATURE IN TIMES OF SPECIAL INTEREST.

Tracts and books should be generously used. The Bible Institute Colportage Association has a very large selection of the most useful literature along these lines that can be secured at a very low cost.

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@14 CHAPTER FOURTEEN
THE AFTER MEETING

I. IMPORTANCE AND ADVANTAGES.

In successful soul-winning work the after meeting

is of the highest importance. Every tent meeting, mission meeting and revival service should be followed by an after meeting. The wise and active pastor will also follow up every Sunday evening service with an after meeting. Many a mighty preacher fails to get the results he might from his preaching because he does not know how to draw the net. He is successful at hooking fish, but does not know how to land them. A friend told me a short time ago that he heard a man one evening preach to a large congregation of men one of the best sermons he ever heard, and continued my friend, "I believe there would have been fifty decisions just then but just at the critical moment the evangelist did not know what to do, and let the meeting slip through his fingers." He asked them to stand up and sing some hymn and the men began to go out in crowds. He tried to get them together again, and there were some inquirers, but nothing like the results there should have been. Much good preaching comes to nothing because it is not driven home to the individual, and the individual brought then and there to an acceptance and confession of Jesus as Savior and Lord.

1. THE FIRST ADVANTAGE OF THE AFTER MEETING IS THAT IT GETS RID OF THAT PORTION OF THE AUDIENCE WHICH IS NOT IN SYMPATHY AND IS A HINDRANCE TO CLOSE WORK. It enables us to get near to the inquirer and meet his immediate need. Many things that it is impossible to do in the general meeting are very easily done in the smaller meeting which follows it. Some workers are very anxious to have every one stay to the after meeting, but frequently it is very fortunate that all do not stay. The smaller gathering is not only easier {285} to handle, on account of its size, but it is also more sympathetic and more in keeping with the purpose of soul saving which is now in view.

2. THE SECOND ADVANTAGE OF THE AFTER MEETING IS THAT MEN ARE BROUGHT TO AN IMMEDIATE DECISION FOR CHRIST. This advantage rises partly out of the first. In almost every wisely conducted evangelistic service there will be some who have not really decided for Christ, but who are on the verge of a decision. Of course some of those, if

allowed to go home, will decide for Christ in the home; but there will be many others, who, unless the impressions are followed up then and there, will lose their interest before another meeting is held. There is great need in all soul-winning work that we strike while the iron is hot. A wise worker and one of much experience recently wrote substantially as follows about a meeting which she had attended in the East: "The sermon was grand, the Holy Spirit was manifestly present in power, and I could not help feeling if some experienced person was only present to conduct an after meeting then and there, we should have had great results, but the benediction was pronounced and the students allowed to go to their rooms. We have been trying to follow up the work since, and many have come out positively, but we could have had much larger results, with much less labor on our part, if an after meeting had been held at once." It would be difficult to put too much emphasis upon the after meeting.

II. HOW TO CONDUCT AN AFTER MEETING.

1. THE FIRST POINT OF IMPORTANCE IN THE CONDUCT OF AN AFTER MEETING IS THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MEETING.

The number who attend the after meeting and the character of those who attend, will depend very much upon the announcement. The announcement should be very clear and definite so there can be no mistaking what is meant. The announcement should also be earnest. If this announcement is indifferent, people will think that the after meeting is of little consequence, and therefore will not stay to it. If the announcement is earnest, the people will think that the minister or evangelist thinks the meeting is of some importance, and will be likely to think so also.

The announcement should be given in a winning and attractive way; it should also be urgent, but in {286} our urgency we should avoid the impression that we think that any Christian who does not stay to the after meeting is necessarily committing some great sin. Many Christians have good reasons why they cannot stay to the after meeting, and if we are indiscreet in our urgency in giving the invitation to it, they will either stay to the after meeting when they ought not, or they will go

away with the morbid sense that they have done something wrong, or worse yet, we shall bring them under the condemnation of the irreligious people who go away, and thus injure the cause of Christ. Sometimes an indiscreet urgency in the invitation to the after meeting keeps people away from the first meeting. The way we put the invitation, even in seemingly insignificant matters, is oftentimes of great consequence. For example, if we say, "Now, if there are any here tonight who are interested, we should be glad to have them stay to the after meeting," this will cause some person who may be interested to think that probably he is the only one in the whole audience who is, and as few people like to be considered singular, he will not be likely to stay. If on the other hand we say, "We hope that every one here tonight with whom the Spirit is working will stay to the after meeting," this will cause those who are somewhat interested to think, "Well, I am not alone, there are others interested besides myself," and so they will be likely to stay to the after meeting.

We do well to put our invitation in such a way that those who are not wanted in the after meeting will not feel at liberty to stay. For example, there are those who crowd after meetings out of mere curiosity, and are a great hindrance. If possible the invitation should be so worded as to shut this class out. There are others who go to oppose the work. The invitation should be so put as to shut this class out. It will not be possible to do it altogether in whatever way the invitation is put, and if the invitation does not succeed in doing it, other means will sometimes have to be taken. There are a third class who are very angry if you deal with them personally, but if the invitation has been wisely put, when any of them get angry when you approach them personally you can call their attention to what was said in the invitation, and show them courteously that, by coming to the after meeting, they expressed a willingness to be dealt with. {287}

2. THE SECOND MATTER OF IMPORTANCE IN THE CONDUCT OF AN AFTER MEETING IS AS TO WHERE IT SHALL BE HELD. As a rule it is better to hold it in another room from that in which the general

meeting is held. If the after meeting is held in the same room as the general service, when the invitation is given for the general audience to withdraw, many that might have stayed to the after meeting are carried out with the tide, whereas if the meeting is held in another room, they see the tide setting in there, and are carried in with it.

Of course oftentimes there is no other room that is available, and the after meeting has to be held in the same room as the general service; and there are times when it is better to hold it in the same room even when another room is available.

If the meeting is to be held in another room, it is very desirable that it should be a room that the people have to pass as they go out. Workers should be posted at every door of this room, to invite and urge the people to go in as they pass. It is exceedingly important that these workers be wise men and women. I have heard workers shouting out invitations to this second meeting as if it were a side show to a circus. Oftentimes the best way to give the invitation is to quietly slip up beside the one that you wish to get into the after meeting, hold out your hand and engage him in a few minutes' conversation, and almost imperceptibly draw him into the meeting.

Gentleness and courtesy and winsomeness in this matter are of great importance.

When the interest is very deep, you can have the second meeting in another building. Have the singing begin at once, just as soon as the people begin to pass the door.

3. MAKE MUCH OF PRAYER IN THE AFTER MEETING. The meeting should be begun with prayer. Wait until every one is in and all is quiet. Insist upon absolute silence, then have all the Christians engage in silent prayer. It is well to suggest to them objects of prayer, as for example, that they pray for those who have gone to their homes undecided, then that they pray for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the meeting, then for the unsaved who are in the room. Two or three or more audible prayers by men and women whom you can trust should follow. Do not take any chances at this point, and let any crank spoil the meeting. Unless you know your people very well, it

is usually best to name those {288} who shall lead in prayer. Of course one can trust the Holy Spirit to take charge of the meeting, and should, but this does not mean that we should not exercise a wise control over the meeting. There will also be places for prayer later in the meeting, but there should certainly be prayer at the opening. If it should turn out in any meeting that there are no unsaved people there, it is oftentimes well to give the entire meeting up to prayer. A few months ago it turned out in an after meeting that there were only two or three unsaved people in the whole audience. These were taken to another room to be dealt with, and then I urged it upon the people that there must be something wrong with us or with the work because there were so few coming to Christ. The Holy Spirit carried the message home, and then we got down on our knees before God in prayer. The next night, largely as an outcome of that season of prayer, we had a meeting of great power.

4. WHEN THE OPENING PRAYERS ARE OVER, IT IS OFTENTIMES WISE TO EXPLAIN THE WAY OF LIFE IN AS PLAIN AND SIMPLE A MANNER AS POSSIBLE. This is especially important if there are few workers present to deal with individuals. After explaining the way of life, and the steps one must take to be saved then and there, an invitation can be given to those who are willing to take these steps at once. They should be asked to rise, hold up their hands, come forward, or in some other definite way express their desire to begin the Christian life.

5. FIND OUT JUST AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN THE MEETING WHERE ALL THE PEOPLE PRESENT STAND. Then you will know what to do next. It is frequently desirable to take some sort of an expression in the general meeting, though this should usually be done in such a way as not to put those who are not Christians in an awkward position. Indeed, as a rule, the moment the last word of the sermon is uttered there should be an opportunity for decision. This opportunity may be given in a variety of ways. You may ask the audience to bow a few moments in silent prayer, insisting courteously but firmly that no one go out for a few moments. If the interest is deep enough, you

can then ask all those who wish to be saved, or all who have made up their minds "now and here" to accept {289} Christ as their personal Savior, to surrender to Him as their Lord and Master, and to begin to confess Him as such before the world, to rise, or to "come forward and give me your hand," or come and kneel at the altar. If the interest hardly warrants that, you can ask all in the audience who are burdened for unsaved friends, or all who are anxious for the salvation of some friend in the audience, to rise, and when they have risen, invite all who wish to be saved "right now" to rise. It is not well usually in the general meeting to ask all Christians to rise, as this makes it awkward for the unsaved, and they may not come back again.

Another good way is to say, "We are going to sing a hymn, and I do not wish any one to go out until it is finished. The Holy Spirit is evidently working in this meeting (don't say this unless it is true), and any one moving about may distract some one who is on the verge of a decision for Christ. Now, while we are singing the second verse, let all who will accept Christ (don't say if any ONE will accept Christ) arise." Stop when the second verse is sung and call for decisions, and then sing the third and fourth in a similar way. If there is an altar in the church where you are preaching, it is often better to have them come to the altar. If there is no altar, you can have the front seats emptied and use them for an altar. A solo may often be used in the place of the congregational hymn, but be sure of your soloist and the solo which has been selected. It is safer as a rule to select the solo yourself. Still another way is to say as you close your sermon, "We are going to have a second meeting, and all those who have been converted here tonight, and who desire to enter the joy of the Christian life, are invited to remain. We also want every one who is interested in his soul's salvation, and all Christians, to stay to that second meeting -- you cannot afford to go away." Once in the second meeting, there are a variety of ways of finding out where the people stand. If the interest is very deep, call at once for those who

wish to accept Christ to rise and come forward. On other occasions ask all who have accepted Christ and know that they are saved, and are walking in fellowship with Him, to rise. Now you and your workers can readily see who the persons are with whom you ought to deal. They are for the most part those who are still seated. Next ask those who wish to become Christians to arise. {290} It may be well to sing one or several verses as this is done. One and then another and then many at once will often rise.

Whenever it is possible, it is well to have now still a third room into which those who have risen and desire to become Christians shall go. Have a wise man in charge of this room until you get there yourself. Have him put one worker, and one only, with each inquirer. These workers should be trained for the work. Every church and mission should have a training class for this purpose.

When you have gotten all you can into the inside room, turn the outside meeting into a meeting for testimony and prayer, which either you or some wise worker manages. It is a great advantage to have a choir leader who can do that. The unconverted ones who have not gone into the inside room can be gotten hold of personally in this testimony meeting or afterward. Do not have any holes anywhere in your net if you can avoid it.

Sometimes it is well in the second meeting to ask all who were converted after they were fifty to rise, and then those who were converted after they were forty, thirty, twenty, ten, before they were ten; then ask all who will accept Jesus "tonight" to rise, and then all who really desire to know the way of life. In other meetings, all who have been Christians fifty years may be asked to stand, and those who have been Christians forty years, thirty, twenty, and so on down. A good method to use occasionally in the second meeting is to ask all who were converted after they were fifty to come forward and gather about the platform, and then those who were converted after they were forty, and so on. This will gradually thin out those who are seated, and the unconverted will begin to feel that they are left in the minority, and it may lead them to desire to be saved also.

Especially will this be true if a man sees his wife leaving him, or a son his mother. Some may say there is too much method or maneuvering in all this, but it wins souls and this is worth maneuvering for. Jesus Himself told us to be wise as serpents (Matthew 10:16), and again we are told that the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Evidently Jesus would have us exercise all honest ingenuity in accomplishing His work, especially the work of soul-winning. The methods suggested will suggest others. The great purpose of all these methods is to get many to commit themselves, and to bring them to a decision to accept Christ. {291}

6. THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE AFTER MEETING IS THE HAND TO HAND DEALING WITH INDIVIDUALS. There

has already been a suggestion as to how this should be done, but the hand to hand work should not be limited to those who go into the third room. Trained personal workers should be scattered all over the meeting, each worker having his own assigned place, and feeling his responsibility for that section of the room. He should be on the lookout for persons with whom he can deal either during the testimony meeting, or after the formal meeting is over. These workers, however, should be instructed to obey at once any suggestion of the leader of the meeting. I have been in meetings where the leader requested absolute silence, but indiscreet workers would go on talking to those with whom they were dealing. I have heard other workers talking with an inquirer when there has been a call for prayer. Such irreverence does much harm.

7. THERE SHOULD ALWAYS BE WORKERS NEAR THE DOOR OF THE MEETING TO FOLLOW OUT ANY ONE WHO GOES BEFORE THE MEETING IS OVER. They should approach such a

one personally and deal with him about his soul. Much of the best work that is done is done with people who have become so deeply interested that they try to run away from the meeting, but are followed out by some wise worker. It may be necessary for the worker to follow the fugitive down the street. I knew of one case where a very successful worker tried to engage a young man in conversation, and he started off on a run. The

worker followed, and having better wind than the runaway, caught him after two or three blocks. The young man was so amazed, and so awakened by the worker's earnestness, and afterwards so instructed by his wisdom, that he accepted Christ then and there on the street. This would probably not be a wise method under ordinary circumstances.

8. A GOOD USE MAY BE MADE OF THE TESTIMONY OF SAVED PEOPLE IN THE AFTER MEETING. As a rule,

however, there should not be a call for testimonies until those who are ripe for hand to hand work are taken into another room. Great caution needs to be exercised in the use of testimony. In almost every community there are men and women who are always willing to give their testimony at the first opportunity, but who kill any meeting where they are allowed {292} to speak. It may be that they have no sense, or it may be that there is something crooked in their lives, and their testimony simply brings reproach on the cause which they pretend to represent. You must manage somehow to keep these people silent. You need to be on your guard, too, that the testimonies are not stereotyped or unreal. They should be short, to the point, real, and, above all, in the power of the Holy Ghost. There is a special power in the testimonies of those who have been recently saved. It is always a great help to the young converts themselves to be trained to give their testimony.

It is well oftentimes to have the Christians testify as to the Scripture which led them to Christ, or into a deeper experience of Christ's saving power. Dr. Dixon gives the following description of what was done and said in an after meeting which he attended:

"As soon as quiet was restored, there was an earnest prayer for guidance. The leader then arose and said: 'We will now hear from as many as can speak in five minutes the Scriptures which God used in showing them the way of life. We want simply the Word of God without comment. Rise and speak distinctly, with a prayer that God will bless others through the truth as He has blessed you.' The first one to respond was a young woman who quoted with a clear voice: 'Him that cometh

unto me I will in no wise cast out.' The leader said: "That invitation is also a promise; it implies that all who come to Christ He will receive, but it says very much more. He will receive and never cast out. There is in it saving and keeping power. It is the Scripture for those of you who are afraid that you may not hold out.' The next witness was a man of middle age, who said: 'He is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him.' The leader: 'God is all-powerful, but you make Him able by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ, and this ability is based upon the fact that He ever liveth to make intercession for us.' Third witness: 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Leader: 'Do you want rest of heart? Come to Jesus for it now.' Fourth witness: 'Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.' Leader: 'Looking is not a long process. You can look as quick as a lightning flash; look this moment and live.' Fifth witness: 'There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.' Leader: 'We who have accepted Christ need not fear the judgment {293} day. Our case has been settled in the court of mercy where Jesus Christ is the Advocate.' Sixth witness: 'To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God.' Leader: 'And if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Will you not accept this rich inheritance through Christ this evening?' Seventh witness: 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' Leader: 'Then do not try to cleanse yourself, and do not divide your trust between the blood and ordinances. The Blood is all-sufficient; accept Jesus Christ and the Blood cleanses at once.

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

"Eighth witness 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' Leader: 'It does not say believe on Jesus, nor believe on Christ, nor believe on the Lord. Jesus means Savior, and a Savior from sin we need. Christ means the anointed

one, the high priest and an intercessor, an advocate we need. Lord means Master, and the Master we need to rule our lives. You cannot accept Him as Savior while you reject Him as Lord, nor can you follow Him as Lord while you reject Him as Savior. His intercession is for those who accept Him as both Savior and Lord. So you see, Paul preached to the jailer the full Gospel when he said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' The little word ON is very important; it does not say believe ABOUT the Lord Jesus Christ; you may believe all ABOUT Him without believing ON Him. I believe much about Washington, Lincoln, and Grant, but I am not conscious of believing on any of them in the sense that I am depending upon them for anything. When your faith ABOUT Christ has been translated into faith ON Christ, you are saved.' The invitation was then given, and a number came forward and gave the leader their hands, confessing Christ as their Savior and Lord, the leader remarking that it was well to begin the Christian life with a handshake and pass it on to others."

9. WHEN ANY ONE HAS CLEARLY AND FULLY ACCEPTED CHRIST, INSIST UPON AN OPEN CONFESSION OF CHRIST.

If it can be done without {294} disturbing other workers, have them stand right up then and there and confess Jesus as their Lord, and their acceptance of Him. If the inquirer has been taken into an inside room, ask him out into the room where the general after meeting is going on, and have him give his confession there. Many a young Christian does not come out into the clear light for many days, if ever, because he is not shown the necessity of a public confession of Christ with his mouth. There is nothing more important for a young Christian's life than a constant confession of the Lord.

10. DO NOT HOLD THE GENERAL AFTER MEETING TOO LONG. Oftentimes it is well to tell the people in the first meeting that the after meeting will only be fifteen or twenty minutes long, or whatever you have decided upon. Many will be encouraged to stay by this, who would not think it possible to stay if it were to be a long meeting. When you have made a promise of this kind, be sure you keep it.

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@15 CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CHILDREN'S MEETINGS

I. IMPORTANCE.

No form of special meetings are of more importance than those which are intended for the purpose of reaching the children, bringing them to Christ, and building them up in Christ.

1. BECAUSE THE CONVERSION OF CHILDREN IS IMPORTANT. The conversion of the children to Christ is of the very first importance.

(1) The conversion of a child is important in the first place because children oftentimes die. Most people in Chicago die in childhood. For every one who dies between twenty and forty there are many who die between birth and twenty. * So with very many of the children at any time upon the earth, they must be converted in childhood or pass into eternity unconverted. In spite of the large number of children's caskets that pass us in hearses, it is hard to bring people to realize how likely children are to die. We look at the white-haired man and say he is likely to die soon, but we look at the little child and think that child has many years before it. That is not at all sure. We have very rude awakenings from this dream. Mothers and fathers, do you realize that your children may die? Up quirk, then, and lead them to Christ before that day comes. If you do not it will be the darkest day you ever knew, but if you have led them to Christ it will not be a dark day. Lonely it will be, but not dark. Nay, it will be glorious with the thought that the voyage is over and the glory land reached quickly by one you love. Sunday School teachers, do you realize that any one of the boys or girls in the class you teach may die any day? Up, then, and win them to Christ as speedily as you may.

* {Today more children live to maturity.} {296}

(2) The conversion of children is important, in the second place, because it is much easier to win a child to Christ than an adult. Dr. E. N. Kirk once said: "If I could live my life over again, I would labor much more among children." Children have no old prejudices to overcome as many grown people have. With the help of the Holy Spirit they

are easily led to feel the great love of Christ in giving Himself to die for them, and when the simple story of His suffering and death is read and explained from God's Word, they believe it, and exercise saving faith, and there and then the Holy Spirit effects a change of heart. Mr. Spurgeon once said: "I could spend days in giving details of young children whom I have known and personally conversed with, who have given evidence of a change of heart," and he added, "I have more confidence in the spiritual life of such children whom I have taken into my church, than I have in the spiritual condition of adults thus received. I will go further and say that I have usually found a clearer knowledge of the Gospel and a warmer love toward Christ in the child convert than in the man convert. I may astonish you by saying that I have sometimes met with a deeper spiritual experience in a child of ten or twelve than in some persons of fifty or sixty. I have known a child who would weep himself to sleep by the month together under a crushing sense of sin. If you would know deep and bitter and awful fear of the wrath of God, let me tell you what I felt as a boy. If you want to know what faith in Christ is, you must not look to those who have been bemuddled by the heretical jargon of the times, but to the dear children who have taken Jesus at His word, and believed on Him, and therefore know and are sure that they are saved."

Every year that passes over our heads unconverted our hearts are less open to holy impressions. Every year away from Christ our hearts become harder in sin. That needs no proof. The practice of sin increases the power of sin in our lives. God and heaven and Christ and holiness lie very near childhood, but if the child remains away from Christ, every year they become farther and farther away. When I see a child walk into the inquiry room of a Sunday evening, I feel quite certain that if a worker of any sense gets hold of that child it is going to be converted; but when I see a man or a woman walk in there I do not feel at all as sure. The adult has become so entangled in sin, the mind has become so {297} darkened by the error and skepticism that arise out of sin,

there are so many complications added by each year, that the case of an adult is very difficult as compared with that of a child. The fact is that, with very many, if they are not converted in childhood, they will never be converted at all. Fathers and mothers, that is true of the children in our homes. Sunday School teachers, that is true of the children in your Sunday School classes. It is now or never.

(3) The conversion of the children is important, in the third place, because converted children are among the most useful workers for Christ. They can reach persons who are inaccessible to every one else. They can reach their schoolmates and playmates, the Jewish children, the Catholic children, the children of worldly parents and infidels. They can bring them to Sunday School or to children's meetings, and to Christ. You and I cannot get close enough to them to show them how beautiful Jesus is, and what joy and blessing He brings. They can. Then they can reach their parents oftentimes when we cannot. They will not listen to us, but they will to their children.

There was a rough, drunken gambler in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He often went by the mission door, but when a worker invited him in he repelled him with rude insults. But his child, about ten years old, was gotten into the Sunday School, and won for Christ. Then she began to work and pray for her drunken papa, and a cottage meeting was at last held in his wretched home. The father took down his overcoat to go to the saloon. Little Annie asked him if he would not stay to the meeting. He roughly answered, "No." "Won't you stay for my sake, papa?" The man hung up his coat. The meeting began, and the man was surly and wished he was out of it. They knelt in prayer while he sat on the end of the sofa. One after another prayed. Then all were silent. Then Annie's little voice was heard in prayer something like this: "God, save my papa." It broke the wicked man's heart, and then and there he accepted Christ. He afterwards became a deacon in my church. When New Year's day came and many had testified for Christ, Annie arose and said: "Papa used to drink and mama used to drink, grandpa used to drink, and grandma used to drink."

But papa is a Christian now, and mama is a Christian now, and grandpa is a Christian now, and grandma is a Christian now, and Uncle Joe is a Christian now, {298} and auntie is a Christian now. I guess we are all Christians down to our house now." But the little girl herself led the way. Wasn't the conversion of that child important? Many a hardened sinner and many a skeptic has been led to Christ by a child.

(4) The conversion of children is important because persons converted in childhood make the best Christians. If one is converted when he is old he has learned many bad tricks of character and life that have to be unlearned, and it is generally a pretty slow process. But when one is converted in childhood character is yet to be formed, and it can be formed from the beginning on right lines. If you wish to train a tree into a thing of beauty and symmetry you had better begin when it is young. If you want to form a character of Christlike symmetry and beauty you would better begin in childhood. That Christlike man of the olden time, Polycarp, who ended his life as a martyr at ninety-five, was converted at nine. That fine young man of the New Testament, Timothy, was brought up on Scripture from a babe. I rejoice with all my heart when an old broken-down drunkard is brought to Christ. It means so much. But it means so much more when a child is brought to Christ.

(5) The conversion of children is important, once more, because there are so many years of possible service before them. If one is to live to eighty, say, if converted at seventy there is a soul saved plus ten years of service. When the boy Polycarp was converted there was a soul saved plus eighty-six years of service. I think enough has been said to show that the conversion of the children is tremendously important, in fact, the most important business of the Church of Christ has on hand. Surely it was well that Jesus said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones."

2. BECAUSE MANY CHILDREN WILL BE BROUGHT TO CHRIST IN SPECIAL MEETINGS HELD IN THEIR INTEREST WHO WILL NOT BE REACHED IN ANY OTHER WAY. It is a

well proven fact that no other kind of meetings bring such definite results in the way of conversions as meetings held for the specific purpose of bringing the children to Christ.

II. WHEN TO HOLD CHILDREN'S MEETINGS.

1. IN SEASONS OF SPECIAL REVIVAL INTEREST. No

revival is what it ought to be if a great deal of attention is not given to the children, {299} and much prayerful effort put for the for their conversion. Whatever other meetings are held or omitted in times of special revival interest, meetings for children should not be omitted under any circumstances. Every pastor and evangelist should lay to heart the warning of our Master, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones" (Matthew 18:10).

2. AT SUMMER CONFERENCES.

At many summer conferences a great deal of attention is given to the children, with the most encouraging results; at other summer conferences the children are almost altogether neglected.

3. AT SUMMER RESORTS.

Children are found in great numbers at summer resorts. Oftentimes they have but little to do. It is frequently a rare opportunity to win them to Christ if wisely conducted meetings are held for their benefit. In England the services which are held upon the beach in summer have yielded remarkably encouraging results. The children gather there in great numbers.

4. REGULARLY EVERY WEEK.

About all that the average church does for the children is to have the Sabbath School services, and perhaps the Junior Endeavor meeting. This is not enough. There should be regular evangelistic services held for the children every week, especially in our city churches. In Newman Hall's church in London a children's meeting was begun which was conducted every week for many years. It began in the special revival services for children held by E. P. Hammond in London years ago. At one of these regular weekly children's meetings I was told that a large share of the best workers in the church at that time had been originally converted during the revival services for children, and I saw from personal observation deep interest among the

children still, and many were being constantly led to Christ.

III. HOW TO CONDUCT CHILDREN'S MEETINGS.

1. THE FIRST MATTER OF IMPORTANCE IS THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE CHILDREN WHEN THEY REACH THE APPOINTED PLACE OF MEETING. They should not be allowed to huddle together at will, but as they come {300} in the door should be met by competent ushers, and seated in classes of four or five, with experienced Christian workers at the end of each class. There should first be a class of boys, then a class of girls. This will do very much toward preventing disorder during the meeting. The object of having a teacher at the end of the class is not merely to keep order, but that the teacher may deal personally with the children at the close of the service.

2. GREAT CARE SHOULD BE BESTOWED UPON THE SINGING.

There should be a great deal of singing, for children love it, and the hymns should be bright and cheerful, and of a character that the children can understand. They should be taught the hymns verse by verse, and the meaning of the words of the hymn should be explained. Hymns setting forth God's love and the atoning death of Christ should be especially used. Children enjoy singing the same verse over and over again more and more heartily, under the conduct of an enthusiastic leader. In this way the truth is deeply impressed upon the heart, and will probably never be forgotten. A priest once said to a lady manager of an orphan asylum in Brooklyn, that they did not object to the religious lessons which they gave the children, but they did object to the hymns they taught them. "For," said he, "when once they have learned one of those hymns, it is very difficult for us to get them to forget it."

3. PRAYER IS VERY IMPORTANT IN THE CHILDREN'S MEETING. The prayer should be of such a character that the children can understand exactly what is meant, and there should often be prayers in which the children follow the leader sentence by sentence as he prays. This of course should not be done formally, but the children should be taught the meaning of the prayer and to offer it from the heart. It is necessary to teach children the

purpose of prayer and to insist upon absolute attention and reverence while it is being offered.

4. THERE SHOULD BE A GOSPEL SERMON WHICH THE CHILDREN CAN UNDERSTAND. This sermon may contain some of the profoundest truths of the Gospel, but these truths should be expressed in words of which the children know the meaning.

(1) The sermon should be short; children were not made to {301} sit still. A wise woman worker once said, "A boy has five hundred muscles to wriggle with, and not one to sit still with."

There are a few rare men and women who can hold the attention of children for half an hour, or even an hour, I have seen it done; but for the average speaker to attempt to hold the attention of children more than fifteen or twenty minutes is positive cruelty.

(2) The sermon should be simple. This does not mean that it should be foolish, but the statements should be of such a character that the child takes in their meaning at once. There should be no long or involved sentences; there should be no complicated figures of speech. But one who would preach to children must be very careful about his illustrations. If some of our speakers to children should question their audiences afterwards as to what they had said, they would be astonished at the remarkable idea which the children had gained. One should be very careful to find out that the children really understand what he has said.

(3) The sermon should be full of illustrations. We do not mean that it should be nothing but a collection of stories; it should be a definite presentation of important truth with clearly stated points, but each one of these points should be illustrated so as to hold the attention of the child and fix it in its mind.

(4) The sermon should emphasize the following great and fundamental truths:

(a) That all men and women and all children are sinners, real sinners. Some people think of children as if they were angels; they are not, but sinners in the presence of a Holy God, and in their inmost heart they know this themselves. I do not know that I have ever seen deeper conviction than that which the Holy Spirit has awakened in

the heart of a child.

(b) That Jesus died in our place. The most successful preachers to children are those who ring the changes on the doctrine of substitution. This truth should be illustrated over and over again in a great variety of ways. It is wonderful how children, whose minds haven't been corrupted by the errors of the day, grasp the great saving doctrine of the atonement.

(c) The need of a new heart. Regeneration is a big word, and a child will not understand it, but a child can understand what is meant by a new heart. Of course this will need explanation. I once asked a boy if he was saved, and he replied that he was. I {302} asked him if he knew that he was, and he said he did. I asked him how he knew it, and he said because he had had a change of heart. I asked him how he knew he had had a change of heart. He said, "The other night when I was praying I felt a pain here" (placing his hand over his stomach). The boy had heard about a change of heart, and really thought that it was the change of the location of the heart from one part of the body to another, and that the pain he felt while praying was occasioned by this change in the location of his heart. The boy really had received a new heart, as he showed by years of devoted and active Christian service, but he had not understood the language used by those who spoke to him.

(d) That a new heart is God's gift in Jesus Christ.

5. AT THE CLOSE OF THE SERVICE THE CHILDREN SHOULD BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO DECIDE FOR CHRIST.

This opportunity may be given by having them stand, or hold up their hands, or in any other way the evangelist thinks wise; but every experienced worker knows that children go in crowds, and that if one child stands up other children are likely to follow, and one cannot safely take it for granted that every child who stands up knows what he is doing. It is well that the call for an expression be preceded by a season of silent prayer, and a very careful explanation made to the children what you propose to do, and what you want them to do. After a time of silent prayer, and also an explanation of what you want them to do in

the time of silent prayer (never forget that children have to be taught line upon line, precept upon precept), go over your instructions again and again in different ways, until you are satisfied that you are understood.

6. _After the expression of a desire to become a Christian, there should be prayer for the children, and prayer in which the children who have taken the stand are instructed to follow._

7. _When you are through dealing with the children in a body, have each teacher deal with her own class individually, making as clear as possible the way of life, and finding out definitely whether each child has accepted Christ, or will accept Christ._ {303} Each child who professes to accept Christ should be prayed with individually.

8. USE CHILDREN'S TRACTS. Tracts can be secured with attractive covers, that the children will like to get. Tell the children beforehand that you are going to give each one who comes to the meeting a tract. Children will come a good way for a bright tract. Be sure that the tracts contain the Gospel. Oftentimes it is well to read the tract to the children and preach upon it before you give it out, and then have them take the tract home, to fix the sermon in their minds.

9. MANY FIND THE BLACKBOARD VERY USEFUL IN CHILDREN'S MEETINGS. Children are oftentimes more easily reached through the eye than through the ear, and words or sentences written upon the board are more deeply impressed upon their hearts than those that are merely uttered to them. A few people have the gift of drawing well, but one can use the blackboard to advantage who cannot draw at all. Children are gifted with imagination, and if you tell them what your pictures are, they will understand, and it will do the work.

10. OBJECTS WHICH THE CHILDREN CAN TOUCH OR EVEN HANDLE, ARE VERY USEFUL AS ILLUSTRATING THE TRUTH. A person of any ingenuity can draw many lessons from a few candles and a tumbler of water, a magnet, and other objects that are easily secured. There are suggestive books upon object teaching for children.

11. THE USE OF THE STEREOPTICON WILL ALWAYS DRAW A

CROWD OF CHILDREN. Children never tire of stereopticon pictures. If you can get children without the stereopticon, there will oftentimes be better results; for sometimes the children will be too much taken up with the pictures, but if you cannot get the children without using it, get the stereopticon. A bright little girl whose father uses a stereopticon a great deal was taken to a meeting for children where it was used. After a time she exclaimed, "I wish papa would show us more pictures and talk less." Nevertheless stereopticon services are oftentimes followed with abundant results in the conversion of children as well as adults. {304}

12. BE SURE TO BEAR IN MIND THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH CHILDREN'S MEETINGS ARE HELD. They are not held simply for the sake of amusing children. It is a poor use of time simply to amuse people. They are held, first, to convert the children, to lead them to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Savior, to surrender themselves to Him as their Lord and Master, and to confess Him as their Lord before the world. Second, they are held in order that the children may be instructed in true Christian living, and in the fundamental truths of the Gospel.

13. _If the work among the children is to be really successful and produce permanent results, our dependence must be upon Bible truth, preached, or sung, or personally taught, in the power of the Holy Spirit._
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@16 CHAPTER SIXTEEN ADVERTISING THE MEETINGS

I. IMPORTANCE.

It is of the utmost importance that whatever meetings are held they be properly advertised. Judicious advertising is important for three reasons:

1. BECAUSE IT GETS PEOPLE OUT TO HEAR THE GOSPEL.

There is no hope of saving people unless they hear the Gospel, and they will not come and hear it unless they are informed that it is being preached. A mere general notice will not arouse their attention, but wise advertising will. The advertisement that gets a man out to hear the

Gospel is just as important in its place as the sermon through which he hears the Gospel. The contempt in which some people hold all advertising is utterly irrational. Experience demonstrates that wise advertising has very much to do with the number of people who are reached and converted by the Gospel. I could tell from personal experience of many remarkable conversions that have resulted from judicious advertising.

2. ADVERTISING IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT SETS PEOPLE TO THINKING.

It is of the very highest importance to get people to thinking upon the subject of religion. The very simple reason why many people are not converted is because they give the subject of the claims of Christ upon them no attention whatever. It never enters their thoughts from one day's end to another. But a wise advertisement will arrest their attention and set them to thinking. It may bring up memories of childhood. It reminds them that there is a God. It tells them that Jesus saves. Some sentence in the advertisement may follow them for days, and result in their conversion to Christ. Instances could be multiplied of those who have never gone near the meeting advertised, but have been set to thinking and thus have been brought to Christ.

3. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE OF ITS DIRECT CONVERTING POWER.

Enough Gospel can be put in a single advertisement to convert anybody who notices it and will believe it. On every invitation card that goes out from the church of which the author is pastor is placed some pointed passage of Scripture, and many are those who have been won to Christ by the power of the truth thus set forth.

II. HOW TO ADVERTISE.

1. IN YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS AIM TO REACH THE NON-CHURCH-GOERS.

The church today is ministering largely to those who are already in attendance. A church that is truly Christian has the missionary spirit, and its first aim is to get hold of those who do not go to hear the Gospel. The church-goers will hear the Gospel anyhow, and our chief responsibility in our advertising work is to get the ear of those who are never found in the house of God. Theatres and saloons make every effort to

get the attention of those who are not already patrons. These institutions do it in order to get their money and destroy their souls. How much more should the church do it in order to save them.

Stores, papers and magazines offer special inducements to those who are not already their patrons; the church of Christ should do the same for a far higher purpose.

2. AIM TO SET PEOPLE TO THINKING. A commonplace advertisement does very little good, but an advertisement so phrased as to awaken the attention of those who see it and set them to thinking, accomplishes great good. Of course one ought not to stoop to anything which is in a true sense undignified, or grossly sensational, to awaken attention; but an advertisement may at the same time have proper dignity, and yet set forth the truth in such a striking way that even the godless cannot help but notice it. For example, a sermon was announced upon "A Converted Infidel's Preaching." This part of the advertisement was in large black letters on a white background. At least one infidel came to find out what this infidel preached about. The converted infidel was Saul of {307} Tarsus. What he preached about is found in Acts 9:20. That verse was the text of the sermon. The infidel mentioned was deeply impressed and went to the inquiry room, and two weeks after looked me up and told me that both he and his wife had accepted Christ. Several years before that a sermon had been preached on "A Bitter and Brilliant Infidel Converted." One of the leading daily papers was deeply interested as to who this converted infidel was, and sent for an outline of the sermon. Of course it was Saul of Tarsus, and the sermon was printed Monday with great letters running clear across the top of the page, "A Bitter and Brilliant Infidel Converted." Another sermon was announced on the subject, "Five Things That No Man Can Do Without." Tickets were scattered all over the city with the announcement of the subject upon them. Even the schools took it up, and the teachers discussed with their scholars what were the five things that no man could do without. The sermon was really a Bible Reading upon such texts as "Without holiness no man can

see the Lord," "Without faith it is impossible to please him."

3. IN YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS, MAKE MUCH USE OF THE SCRIPTURE THAT WILL CONVERT. There are many who will read your advertisements who will not go to the church. Put enough Scripture on the advertisement to convert them.

4. ADVERTISEMENTS OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES SHOULD BE WELL PRINTED. They should be printed so they can be readily seen, and so that they will make an impression upon the mind. It is well oftentimes to have them printed in such a way that people will like to keep them as souvenirs, and thus they will go on doing their work for a long time.

5. USE BULLETIN BOARDS. (1) Every church should have one or more large bulletins standing out in front of the church constantly. On these announcements should be made of the services of the church, regular or special, from time to time. Something should always be upon the bulletin. The notice should be constantly changed so that people will be looking for something new. If there is no special service to be announced, a striking text of Scripture can be put upon the bulletin. It is usually desirable to {308} have these bulletins on feet so that you can move them from place to place.

(2) There should also be large bulletins in conspicuous places throughout the city, places where many cars and people pass. The announcements upon these bulletins should be in such large letters that they can be read easily by people in cars or on foot as they go by. One bulletin in a good place is worth ten in poor places. Make a study of locations for your bulletins.

(3) Secure wherever possible the use of the bulletin boards of theaters. There are oftentimes seasons of the year when the theaters are closed, and many theatrical proprietors will be willing to allow you the use of their bulletins, if not free, for a small compensation. Just the class of people you wish to reach will notice advertisements on these bulletins.

6. USE THE PUBLIC BILLBOARDS OF THE CITY. This is a very successful way of advertising. Have your notices larger and more striking than those of

others. Do not have too many words upon them, but big letters that can be read a block or more away. A very small body of Christians once used all the bulletin boards of Chicago with enormous notices, stated in a very striking way, about the coming of Christ. There was no notice at first as to where their meetings were to be held. Thousands of people in the city wondered what it all meant, and who put these notices up. The whole city was talking about the meaning of it. Reporters were sent here and there to find out who was back of it. When the meetings were held they were attended by large audiences. Unfortunately they had but very little to give the people when they got there, but as an advertisement it was a notable success. Of course these things cost money, but they usually bring in more than they cost. But cost however much they may, if they win souls for Christ, it pays.

7. A LARGE VAN WITH ADVERTISEMENTS ON ALL SIDES, DRIVEN UP AND DOWN THE THICKLY TRAVELED STREETS, IS A VERY USEFUL AND COMPARATIVELY INEXPENSIVE FORM OF ADVERTISEMENT. In connection with evangelistic meetings recently held in Chicago a van eighteen feet long and ten feet high was covered with black cloth, on which {309} was printed in white letters the announcement of the meetings and speaker. This was driven up and down the main thoroughfares and read by thousands. Many may say that this is undignified, but it serves to fill the church and bring men to Christ. It is better to sacrifice your dignity and fill your pews and save souls, than to keep your dignity and have an empty church and allow men to go down to hell.

8. TRANSPARENCIES ARE VERY USEFUL AND INEXPENSIVE AS A MEANS OF ADVERTISING MEETINGS. A transparency consisting of a wooden frame, say eighteen to twenty-four inches in length, and twelve inches high, with white cloth around the four sides on which are printed in black letters announcements of the meetings, can be made by almost anybody for a little cost. To the wooden bottom of the transparency, tallow candles are secured. When the candles are lighted, and the transparencies carried up and down the street,

they will attract more people than the most artistic printed matter. The novelty of the thing is one of the strongest points in its favor. As many as possible of these transparencies should be sent out every evening. Sometimes it is well to organize the whole crowd of transparency bearers into a procession and send them through the more thickly populated part of the city. They may be laughed at, or even stoned, but what matters that if people are brought out to hear the Gospel and saved? I know personally of three conversions in two days from the transparencies that were carried up and down the streets of Chicago.

9. _Cards twelve by eighteen inches printed so that they can be read from the street are very useful, not only for special meetings, but to announce the regular services of the church or mission, and all kinds of special services._

These should be handed around among the members of the church, or mission workers and their friends, to hang up in their windows. A man who placed one of these cards in his window sat behind the curtain of another window and watched results. It seemed as though almost every one who went by, men, women and children of all classes, stopped to read the sign through. Good is often accomplished by placing a pointed text in the window where people will read it. Many have been blessed by these texts. People are very ready to co-operate in {310} this kind of work. A single church found several hundred persons in its membership who were willing to put these cards in their windows. When a large number of cards are noticed on different streets, they at once awaken comment on the part of the passers-by. They wonder what is going on, and go to the church to find out. Still larger cards, or better still, bulletins that are inexpensive, can be furnished to such members of the church as have stores. These bulletins can be placed out in front of the stores. They can be even used to advantage in private houses, where the houses stand in conspicuous places.

10. BANNERS ACROSS THE STREET ATTRACT ATTENTION.

These, however, are very expensive, and should not be used unless it is in a place where very many people pass.

11. ELEVATED CARS AND SURFACE CARS CAN BE USED TO ADVANTAGE FOR ADVERTISING PURPOSES. We all know how many people read the advertisements that are seen in the elevated and other cars. This form of advertising, however, is very expensive, and if the city has been well placarded is unnecessary. If the great billboards are used all over the city it is doubtful if anyone will see the advertisement elsewhere that does not see it on the billboards.

12. SMALL INVITATION CARDS SHOULD BE USED WITHOUT STINT. These should be handed out on the street corners, should be carried into houses, saloons, hotels, stores. It is well for the pastor on prayer-meeting night to have a supply of these tickets present, and before the meeting closes have them handed out to each individual, urging them to take them and give them out. The same method can be employed in other meetings. Very frequently when Mr. Moody was not getting the attendance at his services that he desired, he would have a large supply of tickets at one service, and have them distributed among the people to give out, and at the very next service, there would be a large increase in attendance.

13. IT IS WELL SOMETIMES TO TICKET A MEETING, AND ALLOW NO ONE TO ENTER BEFORE A CERTAIN TIME WITHOUT A TICKET. This puts a premium on admission to the services, and people believe that it is something {311} worth going to. Of course these tickets should be free, but people should be obliged to take some trouble to get them, to send a stamped envelope or call at a certain place to get them. If you do ticket a meeting, be sure to keep faith with the people. Never say no one will be admitted up to a certain hour without a ticket, and then let people in whether they have a ticket or not. The people who have taken the trouble to get a ticket will justly feel that they have been outraged.

14. NO OTHER FORM OF ADVERTISING IS AS GOOD AS PERSONAL INVITATION. Whatever else is done to advertise the meetings, be sure to get individuals to talk about the meetings to individuals, and to urgently invite them to come. There should be a systematic canvass of the entire neighborhood

where meetings are held. The names and addresses of all non-church goers should be secured. Notices should be sent again and again to these non-church goers. They should be followed up by letters and postals. These things cost money, but these are the methods that are used by successful business houses in building up their business, and the church of Christ can afford to be no less active and earnest than a business house.

15. NEVER FORGET THE PAPERS IN YOUR ADVERTISING.

(1) First of all MAKE AS MUCH USE AS POSSIBLE OF THE NEWS COLUMNS OF THE PAPER. Most newspapers are willing to assist to the utmost of their ability in pushing the work of any church that shows it is alive and aggressive. If notices and descriptions of meetings, and outlines of sermons, and other interesting matter is sent to them, they will publish it. They will often send reporters to the meeting if there is anything worth reporting. It is not fair to leave it to the papers to find out what is going on when it is more our interest than theirs that is in hand. If you are not satisfied with the reporting of the newspapers by their own people, usually you can report the meeting yourself and they will accept your report if it is readable. Of course, if the newspapers get the idea that a man is trying to advertise himself, they will despise and ignore him, as they ought to, but if it is a legitimate making public of the work that he is at, the papers appreciate it. Many ministers and churches complain of {312} not getting satisfactory reports from the newspapers, but they are more to blame than the newspapers. They think that the newspapers ought to know that they are alive and important, but newspaper men are very busy men and cannot be expected to know everything. They abuse the newspapers and then wonder why the newspapers do not support them.

(2) MAKE USE OF THE ADVERTISING COLUMNS OF THE NEWSPAPER. This should not be done too generously, as it is not necessary, but an attractive advertisement should now and then be put in the amusement column. I say in the amusement column, for that is the column read by people looking for some place to go, by travelers and commercial men,

by the very class which the church wishes to reach, and oftentimes fails to reach. A very large church that we know, whose audience used to fill only one floor, advertised a special evening service with a special subject, in the amusement column of the paper. The following Sunday evening the church was filled upstairs and down. There were perhaps 800 or 1,000 extra people present. The church kept up this special advertising for only a week or two, but the church has kept full from that day to this, though more than five years have passed.

16. IN YOUR ADVERTISING NEVER FORGET GOD. All your advertising will come to absolutely nothing unless God blesses it. His guidance should be sought as to how to advertise, and His blessing upon the advertisements that are sent out. A minister of the Gospel who found it difficult to get men to go out with the transparencies finally decided to carry them himself. As he went down one of the leading streets of the neighborhood, he did not enjoy the work, but he prayed that God would bless the transparency to the conversion of some one. The next night a man came to another member of the church and told him how he had been brought out to church by seeing the transparency at a certain point, and how he had been converted. This other member called the minister who had carried the transparency, and introduced him. The minister questioned him, and found out that it was undoubtedly by his transparency this young man had been attracted as he stood upon the steps of a hotel. Thus he found that his prayer was answered. A few evenings after another young man told his story, and he {313} had evidently been converted by means of the same transparency as it was carried back up another street. God is willing to bless everything we do, our advertising as well as our preaching, if we do it to His honor and under His guidance, and we should look to Him to thus definitely bless it.

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@17 CHAPTER SEVENTEEN
CONDUCT OF FUNERALS

I. IMPORTANCE OF FUNERAL SERVICES AS A MEANS OF REACHING MEN WITH THE GOSPEL.

Funerals offer an excellent opportunity for getting hold of people and winning them to Christ. Many will attend a funeral service out of regard for the deceased or his family, who will not go to any other religious service. Atheists, skeptics, and utterly irreligious people, are often seen at funeral services. It is a time when peoples' hearts are made tender by sorrow, and when men are solemnized by the presence of death and the nearness of eternity. He is a poor minister of Jesus Christ who does not seize upon such an opportunity for preaching the Gospel and bringing men to Christ. It was once the writer's privilege to conduct the funeral services of a man who up to a short time before his death had been an out and out infidel. His wife was of another faith. A little while before his death I had pointed him to Christ, and he had found forgiveness of sins, and had died rejoicing in the Savior. As I stood by his casket, many of his old infidel friends were gathered around him. The opportunity was seized to preach the Gospel. The hearers were reminded of the long-standing infidelity of their friend, and then of how his infidelity had failed in the trying hour, and how he had found hope in Christ. As the sermon closed, I made an appeal to any who would then and there accept Christ as a Savior. One man stepped forward, and reaching his hand across the coffin said, "I have been an infidel just as my friend who lies here, but I will now take Christ as my Savior," and he gave me his hand upon it then and there. The wife of the man was also converted and united with our church and became a very faithful member. {315}

II. HOW TO CONDUCT A FUNERAL SERVICE.

Very few directions are needed as to the proper conduct of a funeral service. It should be conducted very much as any other Gospel service, with a special reference of course to the circumstances.

1. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE WISELY SELECTED MUSIC, RENDERED IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. One needs to be careful in regard to hymns sung at a funeral service. Some hymns that are supposed to be especially choice for such an occasion are sentimental trash. Hymns that are suitable for the

funeral of a Christian are oftentimes not suitable for the funeral of an unconverted person. A good soloist who can sing effectively in the power of the Holy Spirit is a great help. A song properly rendered at such a time is likely to prove the means of some one's salvation. There is no place where a godless singer is more utterly out of place than at a funeral, and there is no place where a consecrated singer is more likely to be used of God.

2. Great dependence should be placed upon the reading of the Word of God. Passages should be selected full of comfort for the sorrowing, but also passages that drive home to the minds of the unsaved the lesson of the occasion, namely, the nearness of death and the certainty of judgment. The Scriptures should not be read carelessly, but with the purpose of impressing their truth upon the hearts of the hearers. The presence and power of the Holy Spirit is greatly needed to this end.

3. THE PRAYER IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. It should not be, as funeral prayers so often are, a mere attempt to say nice things, a smooth-flowing current of really meaningless words: it should be a real prayer, and a prayer of faith. There should be petition to God for His comfort to those who are in affliction; there should also be prayer that the lesson of the hour should not be forgotten, and direct prayer for the conversion of the unsaved who are present.

4. GREAT WISDOM AND SKILL ARE NECESSARY IN THE SERMON OR ADDRESS. All unwarranted eulogy of the deceased should be renounced {316} utterly. If there have really been things worthy of imitation in the life of the one who has departed, it is well oftentimes to mention these, but to do it not for the sake of glorifying the dead, but for the sake of instructing the living, and leading them to the imitation in these respects of the one who has gone. If the one who lies in the casket has been beyond question a true child of God, it is well to call attention to the fact, and emphasize how it pays at such an hour to have been a Christian. It is well sometimes to drive home the thought, that if some of those who were present were in the casket instead of the one who is

there, there would have been no hope. There should always be a direct appeal to the unconverted to accept Christ then and there.

If the deceased was an unsaved man, there need be no personal reference to him at all. Of course there should be no pronouncement of doom upon him, but there should be a plain declaration of the one way of salvation through Jesus Christ. This truth should not be applied to the deceased, but to those who are still living. They can draw their own inferences as to the application, but experience proves that in such an instance, if the work has been wisely done, the hearers will apply the truth to themselves instead of to the departed.

If there have been any special circumstances in connection with the death, these should be laid hold of as a point of interest that can be made to lead up to the truth. For example, if the deceased was clearly a true child of God, and some of the friends are Roman Catholics, it is well to emphasize the truth, backing it up well by Scripture, that the deceased has not gone to purgatory, but has departed to be with Christ. It was once my privilege to conduct the funeral of an earnest Christian woman, almost all of whose relatives were Roman Catholics. The church was filled with Roman Catholics. I made no reference whatever directly to the Roman Catholic church, but dwelt at considerable length upon the truth that those who have been saved by a living faith in Jesus Christ pass into no purgatory of torment, but pass at once to be with Christ. I did not use the word "purgatory." The Roman Catholic audience listened with great attention, and I have reason to think that the sermon was blessed of God. Of course if direct reference had been made to the fact that the woman had come {317} out of the Roman Catholic Church and become a Protestant there would have been trouble at once and no good accomplished.

ALWAYS FOLLOW UP YOUR FUNERALS BY VISITATION. When you have been invited to conduct the funeral services of any person in a home, you have a right of entree into that home. Use it to the utmost. Take advantage of the circumstances. Deal with the

people while their hearts are still tender with their great grief, and if possible lead them to the Savior. Many an irreligious home has become a Christian home because a wise minister has followed up the advantage that has been given him by his being invited to conduct a funeral service there.