

SOME OF THE EVIDENCES OF CONSECRATION

*Text: "From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body
the marks of the Lord Jesus." (Gal. 6:17)*

We are all aware of the fact that in the Bible times slavery was an almost universal custom, and we know that it was not only customary in those days to own slaves, but it was a very frequent custom to brand their slaves – somewhat after the fashion of branding cattle today. Some masters who were very cruel would brand their slaves in the forehead, indicative of the fact they were slaves. Some men would brand their slaves in the hand, some on the arm, and some were still more thoughtful and they would say to themselves, Possibly this slave may render me an invaluable service some day, he may save my life, or save the life of one of the members of my family, and in return for his service I may wish to grant him liberty, and I do not want him to always bear about in his body the evidence that he was a slave. And so that man would brand that slave on the back some place where it would not be so conspicuous and could be easily covered from sight. And thus it was that every slave bore about in his body the marks of his master. Not only was this the custom, but history gives us to understand that in ancient days slaves were treated with almost unbelievable cruelty. History informs us that the slaves even of the Gauls and the Grecians were treated in very inhuman ways. Very little rights were recognized or cared about the slaves in those ancient days, and the consequence was their lot was a very hard one. Frequently the slaves would be running along the road and would pass a building in process of construction, and the owner of the building would call them and say, "Come over here and help me put this timber upstairs." The slave would say, "I can not, my master's business requires haste."

"I don't care anything about your master's business, help me get this timber upstairs or I will knock you down."

The poor slave would have to neglect his master's business and after that threat would assist the man with his building and possibly when he arrived home his master would give him a beating, too, because he was so slack about the performance of his duty. But sometimes the man who attempted to thus interfere with the duty of the slave met with a sharp surprise. The slave would be going along the road and the man would intercept him and say, "Help me get this timber up in my building," and the slave would say, "I can not, my master's business is too important, I can not neglect it."

"I do not care anything about your master's business, I will strike you if you do not help me. Do not answer me back."

And the slave would say, "I can not."

Then the man would step over and go to strike him, and the slave would roll up his sleeves and say, "Look here, don't trouble me, I bear about in my body the marks of the Emperor; I am the Emperor's slave; don't you dare interfere with the Emperor's business." And the man would step back.

The Apostle Paul makes use of that as an illustration of his own position. He says, From henceforth let no man trouble me because I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. I am his slave, not the slave of some ordinary emperor. Oh, no, the great King of Kings and Lord of Lords is my master. Don't you observe the marks in my body? Don't interfere with me, I am not your slave, I am His slave.

You know how often the Apostle Paul designated himself a servant of Jesus Christ. It is far stronger in the Greek than we have it in the English. Those who may refer to the Revised Version or the Diaglott will notice reading there, "Paul a bond slave of Jesus Christ." Paul was not merely the servant, he wanted everybody to know that he was a servant in the most absolute sense; he was a bond-servant, he was a slave. Dear friends, I trust that you and I like Paul of old, bear about in our bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus. These marks are among the evidences that we are not our own, that we belong to Him; that we have made the consecration that has been discussed so largely in the services of today. And now this afternoon we are going to have a little self-examination and see what these marks are, and then we are going to examine and see whether or not we have these marks. I am not going to examine you to find out whether you have these marks, and you could not examine me, but let us look into our own hearts and measure our own selves and see whether we bear in our body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

What would the markings of the Lord Jesus be? We might give this in two ways: In the first place there were certain marks that Jesus gave us

to understand would enable his disciples, his servants, to be recognized. These were the marks of the Lord Jesus. If you read what Jesus says about those things which he expected in His followers, in His servants, then these are the marks of the Lord Jesus. In the second place we find that Jesus bore certain marks. First of all, there were certain character marks, certain things that marked Jesus as different from other men, a peculiar kind of a man, a strange man. Those were the marks of the Lord Jesus. And additionally Jesus not only bore certain character marks but His life was marked with certain peculiar experiences, experiences that had not fallen to the lot of other men in that way. Those also were among the marks of the Lord Jesus. So then from these two standpoints we can view our own selves.

First, we want to recognize that we have in our bodies the marks that Jesus told us His servants would have. Then in the second place, we want to have in our bodies the marks He had – some of the character-marks He had, some of the experience-marks He had. We want to have a character that will resemble His, and we want to have a share in His experiences, and if that is the case then we have in our body, too, the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Now our Redeemer has given us a list of those marks and we are going to consider them. He has told us of eight of them; they are all found together in the fifth chapter of Matthew from the third to the eleventh verses. Let us take the first one. These are the words of Jesus: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Jesus did not mean, Blessed are those who are poor in the Holy Spirit; nor, Blessed are those who are poor in the spirit of God; nor, Blessed are those who are poor in the spirit of zeal and devotion and consecration to God’s will. Oh, no! what Jesus meant was, Blessed are those who are poor in the spirit of this world, poor in the spirit of the flesh, poor in the spirit of selfishness and pride. In other words, poverty of spirit here is synonymous with humility – lowliness of mind and heart.

We recognize that if there was one single thing which seemed to mark Jesus more than anything else it was His transcendent humility. How wonderfully humble he was! We realize His humility in the willingness to lay aside His heavenly glory and come down to this earth and become a member of this race. What a wonderful step that was! That was not the step that redeemed us. Jesus did not redeem us by coming down here. It was by His death we were redeemed. He did not bring us into harmony with the Father by coming down here, but yet we recognize that was a humiliating step which was essential in order that Jesus might become a partaker of the nature that would make possible the redemption of the

race. Though He was rich, for our sakes He became so poor. I know it takes considerable knowledge and large faith to believe that there was anything very wonderful in that step. That is, it takes some knowledge of what the Bible teaches respecting the great difference between the heavenly and earthly conditions and it takes faith in respect to those things as well to grasp what that meant to Jesus. Some people would say today, Oh, I do not think there was anything wonderful about that; it seems to me this is a pretty good kind of an earth to live on, I don't see what Jesus had to complain about. Maybe it was not as good as heaven but it was good enough; He could have been satisfied. If you and I had ever been up there once and had a glimpse of the glory of heaven we would feel differently about that.

I sometimes think it is like it would have been, just for the sake of illustration, with some of the lower animals. We will say the roaches had sinned and had to be redeemed, and the only way for them to be redeemed would be for you and I to go down there and become a roach and crawl around with them in the dark and dirty places under the floor between the joists for thirty-three and a half years. Would it take a great deal of humility to agree to take that step? Certainly; and yet you do not think the roaches would appreciate the humility you manifested in taking that step. I presume if you had spoken to them about what such a step of humiliation was, they would have said, I do not see what you have to complain about in your present condition as a roach. It is pretty good; you think you are better off as a man, but I think you ought to be thankful; see what a nice dark place under the floor. See that nice pile of dirt under the joists; who would want a nicer pile of dirt to crawl through? They would not appreciate your step. So with the members of the race today; they cannot realize what it meant when Jesus laid aside the glory and came down to the earth and became a man.

I believe humility is one of the graces that is much misunderstood. Many people seem to have the idea that humility is something like this: "It is humility that says, I am the meanest person there is on all this earth. I do not believe there is a person on earth whose heart is in a worse condition than mine is." That is not humility at all. The fact is, a person might realize like our Heavenly Father his greatness and yet at the same time be humble. Is God not humble? Yes, dear friends, but His humility is of the right kind. When Satan rebelled against God, and led Adam and Eve into sin, God did not have the so-called humility that led Him to say, "Well, I don't know, maybe Satan could run things as well as I could. I may have gotten too exalted an opinion of myself. I hope Satan will make a grand success of his efforts to run the earth, and I will be real glad. He

may be as capable and able as I think I am.” Do you think that would have been humility if God had said that? Why, certainly not. It would have indicated that something was wrong with our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father knows that He is the greatest being in this universe. He knows this universe could not get along for one moment without Him. He knows all the wisdom and goodness of this universe centers in Him. He knows it is only in proportion as the rest of this universe imitate and copy Him, and reflect His likeness, that they will be able to succeed. And do you suppose it is pride that makes our Heavenly Father feel and talk that way through the Prophets? Not at all. Our Heavenly Father has the most wonderful humility which is seen in the fact that He is willing to take you and me and adopt us into His family and call us sons and daughters. You know it says, “For thus sayeth the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite one.” Humility does not speak in a sentimental way – Oh, you are mean, and poor, and nothing, etc., because if that is the case then God never had humility and God never felt that way, and Jesus never felt that way, and none of the angels who remained holy ever had that feeling. They know God made them something, and they have remained something. But we find the humility of our Heavenly Father was shown in the way He was willing to stoop down to the recognition of us, and deal with us. The same with Jesus. Think of the humility that would lay aside Heavenly glory, come to this earth and was found in fashion as a man. But that was merely the first step in a process of humbling which lasted for so many years with our dear Redeemer. Think of the humility Jesus manifested here on the earth. I have sometimes thought how in order to provide a living for His mother our Redeemer had to work as a carpenter. So many have noted how Joseph was a carpenter but they fail to see how the Bible calls Jesus a carpenter. They said, “Is not this the carpenter?” I am quite confident that our Lord Jesus as a carpenter could not have had a very high class of work; He was not of sufficient prominence from the worldly standpoint. His mother and Joseph were poor people. We know that must have been a desperately poor family, and I presume all of Jesus’ carpenter work consisted in repairing chicken coops, and barns, and patching fences, and things of that kind. Just imagine the being that made the stars down here doing such work as that! The being that had helped in the creation of the angels as the Father’s great instrument, doing that work! The being that had, as the Father’s great chief representative, done everything so well, imagine Him stooping to such work as that! If our Redeemer had the

spirit of pride He would have thrown his hatchet and saw away and said, Why, I was made for something higher than this; it is beneath my dignity to stoop to such work as this. But no, there was his humility. Every time He made a chicken coop He was just as careful and conscientious of the work as if making wings for the angels. Every time he patched that barn He did it with just the same accuracy and the same careful design to do everything right that He must have observed when He hung the stars up there.

The lesson for us is, If we are going to bear about in our body the marks of the Lord Jesus we must bear that humility. No one can say he is a servant of Jesus Christ if he has not received the mark of humility in his body. We recognize it takes humility in the first place to make a consecration. If we are not willing to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, we cannot enter into the straight gate Jesus spoke about when He said, "Straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." We find a great many are unwilling to make that consecration simply because they do not like to humble themselves to the degree necessary to go through that straight gate to get into the narrow way. Sometimes you will find a brother arriving at the straight gate and narrow way in an automobile. He gets there and says, "Lord, I cannot get through with my machine."

"No, I do not intend you shall."

"What shall I do, Lord?"

"Well, you have to leave your automobile outside."

"Oh, Lord, I cannot do that. Are you not going to widen the gate?"

"No."

"Well, you are behind the times, Lord; you know everybody makes gates wider these days; I cannot get my machine through."

"I do not intend you ever shall."

"Well, Lord, I will take a spin around the country, maybe in a few days you will change your mind and it will be wide enough for an automobile to come in."

Another man comes, pulling his grocery store after him. He says, "Lord, I cannot get through there."

"No, you must leave it outside."

"I cannot do that."

And another man comes along pulling his hundred acre farm after him. Another man comes pulling his reputation after him, or something of that kind. They cannot get through.

When I say the Lord means they shall leave these things outside, I do not mean that the Lord says they shall chop the automobile up and throw

it away, but the Lord means they shall leave it outside in the way of putting their affections on those things. In other words, one has to humble himself to such a degree that he is willing to lay his pride aside and say, "Lord, I resign all this to you; I want to do your will at any cost at all times and under all circumstances." We know that even after we enter the narrow way it seems as though it keeps on getting narrower and narrower. You have started and gone a little piece and it got so narrow you have just stuck; the walls crowd you on each side and you say, I don't know how I will get any farther, what shall I do? There is just one thing to do: You will have to take a slice off of yourself and make yourself a little thinner. That enables you to go a little farther along. I do not mean actually cutting a literal slice off of the body; I mean like our Redeemer meant it, that you had better enter the Kingdom with one arm than having two arms to be cast into *gehenna*. In other words, though the pleasure and gratification is as precious as an arm, better cut it off than to hold back.

You go a little farther in the narrow way and it is still getting narrower, and you have to take a slice off the other side. You go a little farther and take off another slice. You go so far and then say, Well, Lord, I have gotten to the place where I am about as small as I mean to be. I won't go any farther; I am going to stop here; I will not take off anything more. And he stays there until finally the Lord puts a stick of dynamite under him and blows him out of the course. But the thing to do is to continue in this narrow way. How long will it continue getting narrower? It will keep on getting narrower until by and by the two walls will come together just like that. How will we get through when it gets that narrow? We will have to be nothing if we want to get through at all; like we sing, "Oh, to be nothing, nothing!"

Now, dear friends, this is our experience along the lines of humility. I am so glad in God's providence we are living in a day when so many means and so many aids in the development of humility are within our reach. I have been so thankful for the privilege of tract distribution on trains, and things like that. It seems to me nothing ever could have been invented or thought of that would develop humility quite as effectively as this means. I hope you are all making use of this means of grace, not waiting until the Lord will find some easier way to give us humility. But we thus see the moment we get sufficient humility that we are willing to lay ourselves on the altar of sacrifice, or to be laid on the altar of sacrifice, that is the moment we become bond-slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the moment the marks of the Lord Jesus begin to be impressed on our body. And while we realize that these marks are not as sharp and not as

deep as they will be after a few years, or perhaps a few months, as the case may be, yet we are glad that the moment of our consecration means a time when humility has received such a definite form in our case that we have been ready to be offered up in sacrifice.

Now we come to the next one of these marks. Our Saviour in the fourth verse says, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Jesus did not mean, Blessed are those that mourn from the worldly standpoint, any more than he meant, Blessed are those that are poor in spirit from a worldly standpoint. There are two ways of being poor in spirit; there is the world's way and God's way. For instance, somebody mistreats you and you do not stand up for your rights; the world says, That man is poor in spirit. But Jesus did not mean it that way. And so the same way with this word "mourning." Our Redeemer did not mean, Blessed are those that mourn because they cannot own a finer house. Blessed are those who mourn because they cannot buy an automobile. Blessed are those who mourn because they cannot buy the diamond they saw in the jeweler's window. Blessed are they that mourn because their head aches so badly. No, no, He meant, blessed are those who mourned like He mourned. How different His mourning was from that of other people. There was something so unselfish about His mourning. You remember when He went to the tomb of Lazarus it was not for himself He was weeping. When He wept over Jerusalem He was not mourning for himself but for them. He wept as He thought how unwilling they were to praise and glorify God as they should, and what they were bringing on themselves because of their disobedience. Then there was another occasion when He mourned in the garden of Gethsemane. You remember His tears, His strong crying. There again there was something unselfish; it was not because He had to die that He wept; He came into the world for that very purpose. He wept because of that cup He was drinking then. What was that? The cup of expectation of death? No. The Lord Jesus was so desirous that the Father should be pleased in every little point, and He realized that His ability to accomplish the work the Father entrusted to Him, the redemption of the race, depended upon His actual perfection; He realized there was no advocate to make up for His deficiencies; and it was along this line He mourned. There was nothing selfish about it. So we way, Blessed are we if we mourn like Jesus mourned, if our mourning is unselfish. Do you mourn because you want the Lord glorified to a larger degree than people seem to want you to glorify Him? Do you mourn because you want more of the joy and peace which comes from a closer acquaintance with God and a better understanding of His Plan? Oh, that is the right mourning!

I remember a good brother in the northeast said this to me a year or so ago: Many years ago I lost a child and I thought I never would get over it. I cried and cried until I thought I would not have any sight left; and when it was all over I made up my mind I would never cry again. Another child died, but I did not weep. My wife died but I never cried. I had a great deal of trouble on various lines and I have always been able to restrain my feelings so it was not shown outwardly. But, he said, I go to bed at night and as I think of all my weaknesses and imperfections and my inability to serve God better than I do, I cry and cry until the pillow is wet with my tears.

Oh, that was mourning like Jesus wanted us to mourn. That is the right kind of mourning. That is more in imitation of Jesus. If you mourn because you say so many things you don't want to say, you mourn like Him. If you mourn because your hands do so many things you do not want them to do, you mourn like Jesus. If you mourn because your feet go so many places you don't want them to go, you are mourning like Jesus. That is the way with Him. He mourned as His tongue and lips said so many things He did not want them to say. He mourned as His hands would engage in so many works He did not want them to do. He mourned as His feet would go so many places He did not want them to go. Yes, dear friends, Jesus was continually mourning because of those things.

Why, you say, that astounds me! Do you mean to tell me that Jesus was imperfect? I thought He was perfect, I thought He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. I thought He never did anything wrong, and now you say His lips said so many things they ought not to have said, and His hands did so many things they ought not to have done, and His feet went so many places they ought not to have gone. Is that really so?

Yes, friends, it is so. But Jesus was perfect in spite of all this. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. He never sinned.

Then how do you account for that seemingly inconsistent statement you have made?

Well, here it is. You know we have trouble with our lips, hands and feet, but in our case it is with our physical members in this physical body. Jesus did not have any trouble with the physical members in His physical body, but it was with His spiritual members in His mystical body. These were the members that gave Him trouble. You remember that while the Body of Christ was not organized in a certain sense until the day of Pentecost, yet in a rather preparatory sense we might speak of the apostles as composing the Body of Christ during even our Lord's lifetime.

How much these members of His Body tried the Lord Jesus! You and I have only one tongue to give us trouble, and He used to have twelve tongues that gave him trouble. There was James', and then Peter's, and Judas', and then Andrew's tongue – Oh, how much trouble He had with His twelve tongues! It is bad enough for us to have the one. We know how much trouble it gives us. I have sometimes thought of a verse that says, "O, for a thousand tongues, to sing my great Redeemer's praise!" I am so thankful in God's providence He has not inflicted a thousand tongues on me; yet if they would all sing my great Redeemer's praise it would be all right. I would not mind it; but I am afraid that while about three of them would be singing the praise, the other nine hundred and ninety-seven would be in some kind of mischief. But we see Jesus had twelve tongues to give Him trouble, and those twelve pairs of hands that would not always do His will, and those twelve pairs of feet that wandered so frequently. Think what that must have meant to Him. You see in a certain sense He had a similar experience to ours, only with Him it was with members of His mystical body.

But we see this must be the character of our mourning. How are we mourning? Look back over your life. You made a consecration of yourself to the Lord and what worries you to the largest degree? Is it because you are not able to buy that new piece of furniture? Or is it because you cannot be more patient under the test? Are you troubled to a larger degree because you are not able to do financially what some other people can do from the worldly standpoint? Or is your greatest trouble because you want to glorify God better? If you can answer that and say, I know it is a thousand times easier for me to bear the ordinary trials of life from a natural standpoint, it is a thousand time easier for me to miss a natural meal than to have to miss a spiritual meal; it is a great deal easier for me to be deprived of some little worldly advantage than some spiritual advantage, then you have another one of the marks of the Lord Jesus, another one of the evidences that you are one of His bond slaves. "Blessed are they that mourn."

But then Jesus gave us another one of those marks. He said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." We remember our Redeemer's meekness and it will not be possible for us to be very close followers of our dear Redeemer unless we imitate His meekness in some degree also. Now meekness is usually confused with humility. We find very few who seem to properly distinguish between the two terms. Jesus was not representing the same thought when He said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, and, Blessed are the meek. He was bringing to our attention two different ideas. We understand that while humility has reference to that

humble state of heart, to that lowly condition of the heart, we find on the other hand that meekness rather refers to gentleness—the spirit of submissive resignation in the midst of unpleasant experiences. For instance, you remember how Jesus said, “I am meek and lowly of heart.” We find often in the Bible a Christian is compared to a little child—“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” In another place the Christian is compared to a sheep—“My sheep hear My voice.” A Christian is compared to a little child because of the child’s humility but a Christian is compared to a sheep because of the sheep’s meekness. You know there is nothing meek about many little children. A little child will probably cry all night and keep everybody else awake. There is nothing meek in that. Meekness would mean remaining very quiet, gentle and disturbing nobody. You would not think of using a little child as an illustration of meekness, but how humble that child is! It is not wondering whether people do not think it is prettier than other babies, or wondering how much praise it is getting from man. There is none of that; it is so humble. On the other hand, you would not think of using a sheep as a symbol of humility, but it is a correct symbol of meekness. If a sheep is to be slain, how submissive it is! Like it is said of Jesus, “He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, He opened not His mouth.” Now you and I want to be meek, and we want to be humble; we want to have both of these qualities; for a person might be humble and not meek, and vice versa. There might be a case like this: I imagine a brother being much mistreated and as a Christian was being abused by others. I imagine some man in his anger even struck him and knocked him down; and I imagine that brother never said one unkind word to those who injured him; he never resented it. He just bore it all so patiently and quietly; that was meekness. But if you could look into his heart and read his thoughts you would find no humility there. Probably what he was thinking about is something like this: He would be thinking about himself; I am a grand Christian; I do not believe there is another Christian that could stand this trial better than I can. I am glad these brethren around here see how I am doing it, so they can tell everybody how grand a Christian I am. I suppose when history is written it will have my name in it, and they will tell about what a grand example of a believer I was. I tell you I have done nobly today. There is no humility there, but there was meekness. And there might be some brother who was humble and not meek at all. He would say, I expect when I get into the body of Christ I will have the very lowest place in the body, I feel so undeserving of God’s favor, and I am ready for anything, no matter how I have to humble myself I am ready to do it if

thereby I can glorify and praise our Lord. He is so humble, and yet might not be meek. When he gets into conversation with a man who disagrees with him, he says, The trouble with you is you are in darkness; you do not understand the teachings of the Bible. Listen to me and I will tell you.

He is not meek at all, just the other way; but if you could look into his heart you would find him so humble. Now we want both humility and meekness. Think of the meekness of the Redeemer – how meekly He bore His trials; how meekly He endured on the night He was betrayed and on the day He was crucified. You may not have as much meekness today as you want, but you must have more than when you started. There must be some progress, and I trust this mark will keep on becoming stronger and deeper in our nature as we go along in the narrow way.

Now our Lord mentioned the next one. He said, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” To hunger and thirst after a thing means so much; it means such a determined desire for righteousness in thought and word and deed; it means not being make-believe in the matter. The question is whether we just make-believe that we love righteousness, whether we are interested in it in a measure, or whether we actually hunger and thirst after righteousness that we may be filled. The Apostle brought this to our attention in Phil. 3:2-3: “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are of the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” The word “concision” means a cut. We might say incision; if you just made a cut that would be an incision. But the word “concision” means much more; it means around about; it means cutting around about. Now, dear friends, there is a lesson. Paul said, Brethren, there are some who do a little cutting as it were, but they do not really do anything thoroughly; it is just a sort of formal matter with them. But we are not of those. We are of the circumcision, those who want the cutting to be thorough and complete, no matter in what direction this may be. We find sometimes a danger along this line with respect to some of the harvest work. Possibly going home from the convention some brother or sister might think about this, Well, I believe I had better get some tracts and when I get onto the train I think I will have to distribute some to the people and do a little missionary work that way. And yet it is possible to have the thought in your heart, Well I will say that of course, and I will get the tracts, but I hope I will find somebody else on the train who will do it for me so I won’t have to do it.

That is concision; it is not circumcision. It is not hungering and thirsting for opportunities of service; it is a sort of make-believe kind of spirit in that respect. We really would like to think we were in earnest

and meant it, and yet say, I am hoping I will find some way I won't have to do it. We want to learn to overcome that spirit. We want to have the spirit that is full-hearted in this matter.

When Jesus was on the cross the centurion came there with that spear and thrust it into His side, and you remember He did not make a scratch on the skin, it went right through and there came out blood and water. I imagine it penetrated His heart. Now have you that mark in your side, too? Can you say, Yes, that hungering and thirsting after righteousness has penetrated my very heart, too? Do I bear that mark of the Lord Jesus?

Let me give you an illustration of a case I know about: There was a young man and lady who had been acquainted with each other several years, and engaged to be married, and they got hold of the literature and became much interested. It brought joy and peace and happiness to their hearts as they found how grand, good and glorious God's plans and purposes are. They made a consecration of themselves to Him. They decided they were going to serve Him, but that if they married as they had all along expected it would interfere to some extent with their usefulness in the Lord's service. They both wanted to go into the colporteur work but now they said, If we marry we might have to go to some other work in a year or so and it is better for us to be more free. So it was agreeable to both, and they decided to give up all thought of marrying. That was not enough: in order to make sure they would not fail in their decision they separated, the sister went into the colporteur work in one direction and the brother in the opposite direction. They are nearly four thousand miles apart. They continued in the work, and they are still true to their determination to be free. They were in earnest. If they had not been so much in earnest they would have said, We will give it up; we won't marry but we will just consider that matter is settled, and that brother would have taken the sister home after the meetings two or three nights a week, and after about six months their determination would have weakened, and they would have said, Well, I guess we had better marry anyhow. I am not bringing that up to indicate that it would have been wrong for them to marry – Oh, no, that does not mean we think marriage is wrong, or anything of that kind, but the thought is, it showed how earnest they were. We recognize that one may be so much in earnest that he will sacrifice things that are right and legitimate. But, Oh, how the Lord must have loved them when they showed their zeal as they did, and it was not merely concision, was it? It was circumcision; it was not merely a scratch. You could see the spear went right into their hearts. Now I hope we have this mark of the Lord Jesus. I hope we can say, Oh, yes, I see that love for righteousness is growing in me until today what is there that I would not

be willing to neglect for my Lord's sake, and what experience would I not be willing to submit to if thereby I could come out a little more like my Master!

The next statement was, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." How wonderful the mercy shining out in the character of our dear Lord and Redeemer! Think how merciful He was even to the servant of the High Priest who came out to take Him. His ear was cut off and in mercy Jesus healed it. How merciful He was to the Apostle Peter when Peter denied Him. After He arose from the dead one of the first things Jesus said when He met Mary was, "Go and tell my disciples, *and Peter!*" One would suppose that Jesus would have said, "Tell my disciples but don't you tell Peter after the way he denied me that night; I don't want him to know about my resurrection. Keep this from him; do not tell him." No, but He thought of Peter. Peter's heart was almost broken by what he had done; Oh, tell him especially! And, dear friends, you and I must have more of the spirit of mercy if we are going to bear the marks of the Lord Jesus. Remember our Saviour has emphasized this so much, and the Apostles as well. Jesus taught us we ought to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses even as we forgive those who trespass against us." That means, be merciful to me just in proportion as I am merciful to others. That is like saying, "Lord, do not forgive me my trespasses because I do not forgive those who trespass against us!" Or, it is like saying, "Lord only make-believe about forgiving me my trespasses, because I only make-believe about forgiving those who trespass against me." Or, it is like saying, "Lord, forgive me my trespasses today, and tomorrow, and the next day bring it up against me again because that is the way I generally do." Oh, how merciful we should be in our judgment of others! How merciful we would be if we could always realize that as we judge we shall be judged. We would think very much like David expressed it. I love to remember his statement when he said, I am like a bottle in the smoke. You know if you had a bottle full of milk and if it was in the smoke until it got all smoky on the outside you would not think there was any milk in there, would you? It would look like paint or dirty water, or something of that kind. And it is like David said, That is the way it is with me. I have such good intentions in my heart, but I am covered with smoke on the outside and people cannot see my good intentions; I have lots of smoke on the outside of my bottle and I am sure you have some on the outside of yours, too. Let us try to forget about the smoke and look forward to the grand day when God will wipe all the smoke off the bottles and the bottles will be clean.

But we see thus the necessity for mercy. We find indeed that the degree

of our mercy illustrated the degree of entire likeness to the Master, frequently, because mercy is almost invariably accompanied and built upon the other grand qualities. The lack or excuse for mercy was well illustrated to me by an experience. The brother I am going to refer to is a very good brother in many respects. I would not judge him one moment in the matter, but I could not help realizing there was something wrong in the brother's case to some degree. We were at a certain place and the friends had a testimony meeting. At this place the regular elder of the class conducted the testimony meeting. We might call him Brother "A." After the song and prayer he announced what the text for the night would be, doing like most of the classes, using the text from the Manna for the preceding Thursday. The brother said, Now the text for tonight's meeting will be so and so, and we would suggest that all the friends try to speak along the lines of the text; give testimonies that would have a bearing on the thought of the text. They had a very nice testimony meeting but after the meeting was over I was going along the street with a brother and we had not gone very far until he said, "Well, Brother 'A' did not treat me very nice tonight." I said I thought he treated everybody splendidly. The brother said, "He treated me real shamefully; he had the whole class talking about me tonight." I said, "I am sure, brother, you are wrong." "No," he said. "I know what I am talking about. They were all talking about me. He just held me up before the whole class." "Why," I said, "I am positive that you are mistaken. How did he do that? How was it possible?" He said, "You heard him give out the text. He knew that it would just fit me and make me look bad before the whole class." I said, "You do not go to the testimony meetings very often do you?" He said, "I have only been to one before this, and he did the same thing that night." I said, "Now, brother, let me explain it to you. That brother had nothing to do with the selection of that text, it really had been selected by the Lord, if anyone, and I am afraid that you are not viewing it from the right standpoint, because Brother 'A' did not have a thing to do with it." I told him to look up a copy of his Manna and he would find it is just as it was given out that night on the preceding Thursday.

The lesson is, have more mercy; it is one of the marks of the Lord Jesus; and we want to say like the Apostle, "Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." And we must remember that mercy is one of the very important marks.

For lack of time we had best not try to cover the remaining points.

We trust in the Lord's providence every one of us will seek to cultivate more and more these marks of the Lord Jesus. What a glorious privilege to be one of the bond slaves of the Lord Jesus, to bear about His marks in

our body! How wonderful are His bonds! I often think we are living in a time in which so many people have mania for investing in bonds – some in railroad bonds, and they talk about Pennsylvania Railroad bonds, and Illinois Central bonds, and other men invest in municipal bonds, but I want to tell you that the best investment is to invest everything in the bonds of the Lord Jesus Christ. When all of these other bonds have lost their value, when they are no longer worth the paper they are written on, then you and I will still be drawing interest of glory, honor and immortality on this investment we have made, and we will never regret the fact that we bear about in our bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus. We can say, From henceforth let no man trouble me as to how I ought to dip a little more deeply in politics, or take more interest in many of the pleasures and light things of this earth. Don't criticize or trouble me because I do not have my heart set to a larger degree on the wealth of this world – from henceforth let no man trouble me for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus, I am his slave, and I am glad for it.

