

YOUR LIFE AN OFFERING TO GOD

'MOSES drew near unto the thick darkness where God was." In the thick darkness, God will try you. He will draw you through places of trial at times, and you will know wherein your faith stands — whether in feeling, in your leader, in your neighbours, or in God. Your confidence must be in God.

How easy it is for people to lean upon the arm of flesh! But faith steps out alone, and leans upon One you have never seen — perhaps never heard His audible voice speaking to you. You must step out into open space, as it were, and trust God to bring you through. It is a wonderful thing for God to come so near to the human heart as to cause you to trust in Him when you cannot see Him, but you can feel Him; and even when the feeling is removed, faith will leap out into the dark and say, "If I perish, I perish, but I will go in before the King and make my request."

It is a wonderful thing to have unbounded confidence and implicit faith in God, who lets you look beyond the natural and see the spiritual, the things that are eternal. After all, the natural is weak, the arm of flesh often fails. You may prefer to call the best physicians and consult with them in time of sickness, when your child is lying at the point of death, but God has led us into the marvellous Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and taught us to trust the greatest Physician, the One who healed all who came unto Him, and will do the same today. Thank God for the Gospel that brings into the soul the faith and confidence, trust and hope, that nothing can shake.

In the Hands of God

When David, the king of Israel, had sinned against God, and was given the choice of falling into the hands of his enemies or being visited with pestilence, he said: "Let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man." He knew that he could pray and sacrifice to God, and God's mercy would be extended to him.

Thank God, He had a people then, and He has a people today, who choose rather to be in the hand of God than in the hand of man. They belong to the great God of Heaven. Many will lean on the arm of flesh, trust their cases in the hands of man, and expect to get more mercy from that source than from God; but the Word says, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD" (Jeremiah 17:5).

A young man who was saved in the Apostolic Faith had confessions to make that would have caused him to spend his lifetime behind the bars, but he was willing to face the penitentiary wails that he might get right with God. We told him to trust in God, not to look to the judges, the cold steel of law and justice of the world, but to look beyond to the great God of Heaven, and make his confessions according to God's demands upon his life. God went before him and delivered him. They forgave him and he became a free man.

David went up to the mountain, to the place where the Temple afterward was built, to make an offering to God. Ornan offered to give him the threshing floor and the oxen for a burnt offering; but David said, "I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost" (I Chronicles 21:24). So he paid the full price of the floor and of the offering. If you make an offering to God, it must be a sacrifice which costs something. David sacrificed there unto the Lord, and the angel of the Lord put his sword into the sheath, and God answered by fire because of the covenant that David made with Him.

Jacob made a covenant with God at Bethel, where God first appeared unto him. As he lay that night upon a pillow of stone, he saw a ladder from earth to Heaven, and angels ascending and descending upon it. When he awoke he made a vow to God, and promised God that if He would bless him in his

journey, he would give Him a tenth of all he possessed. God knew he would keep his vow, and that is why God blessed him so abundantly.

It means something to keep your sacrifice, your vows to God. It all belongs to Him in the first place. He says, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High" (Psalm 50:10, 14). If you would pay your vows unto God and offer thanksgiving to Him, you would not be able to contain the blessings God would pour into your thirsty soul.

Daily Consecration

Consecrate your life daily to God. The people who have the most love for God in their hearts, the most hunger for the Word of God, are the ones who are consecrating their lives daily. They are praying, "Search my life, try the reins of my heart, make me what You want me to be, make me ready when Jesus comes." If you do not consecrate your life daily, 'you are missing the greatest blessing of your life.' You cannot keep that sweet incense, that love for your brother, that precious, holy anointing all that God Almighty drops down afresh in the morning, at noon, and night, unless you keep your sacrifice on the altar continuously.

God commands you to watch and pray and examine your heart. Your consecration for yesterday is not sufficient for today. You must live right in the bosom of His will. The sweetest, most sacred place on earth is in the centre of the will of God, where you can cry day and night, "To know Thy will is to do it!" If you are truly consecrated to God, only to know His will is to do it gladly.

We must live close to God in order to know His will. It means a close walk with God; but if we will keep consecrated and keep our hearts open to God and in an attitude where God's will can be revealed, He will show us His will.

If you are in doubt, hold still before God until you do know. Do not be running to this one and that one, and asking God for a revelation or a vision; but just be still and let God deal with your heart and He will reveal the matter to you. It is a wonderful thing to be so in the hands of God that He can keep you still as well as lead you on. It was a hard thing for the Children of Israel to stand still and see the salvation of God when the Red Sea was before them and the armies behind them. God commands us to stand still, without murmuring. When you know God's Word, and yet the walls seem mountain high and you are surrounded by turmoil, set your face like a flint and stand true to God, and some day He will cause you to go through.

God Will Have a Tried People

You will never get to the place in your Christian experience where you will be above temptation and trial. Jesus was tempted of the devil. He was a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." We shall always be subject to temptation, but we can be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

You will be tempted and tried. Real Bible salvation will not always keep you on the mountaintop of feeling. Some may wonder why they cannot always feel the blessing. That is not according to God's Word, because the Bride of Christ is in her tribulation today, and the Word says, "The just shall live by faith" (Hebrews 10:38).

The tribulation of the world is coming after the Bride is taken away, but the tribulation of the saints of God is in their lives today. Many times you wonder why you shed tears and go through heart sufferings, your spirit being oppressed. God says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19). His Word declares that afflictions shall come to the child

of God. He wants a people tested and tried, proved and made pure through suffering, through temptation and tribulation. He says, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10).

We are living in the most awful age of the world. There never was a time with such privileges and opportunities; and yet there never was a time when the onslaughts of Satan were so great as today. You may not understand why it is you have times of tests and trials so strange; but we read, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you" (I Peter 4:12).

God would never have a perfect people if He did not try them. He must have a people, "purified, and made white, and tried." It is easy when everything is coming our way and we feel the glory and the smile of Heaven, but that is not what makes a tried-out people. We must endure hardness, walk by faith, and penetrate right through to the Throne of God by faith in Him.

We are going through the humiliation with Jesus Christ. But oh, to think that some day we shall rise with Him, and these vile bodies shall put on incorruption! We shall be like unto His glorious body. Some day the perfection of beauty will be seen on God's children, when "we shall see him as he is."

He may lay you low; He will put you in the dust. But we read in the Word, "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." We have found God's Word to be true. Oh, that we might get our hearts in an attitude before God to say, "I surrender, I lay my life at the foot of the Cross, an empty vessel; do what You will with me, but I will stand, I will be obedient to the 'heavenly vision' "!

It means much to walk this way alone, but we must be faithful to God if we would be "the firstfruits" unto Jesus Christ and have part in the First Resurrection. God is striving to get His people ready to meet Him in the air. We must be tried and purified until the coming of the Lord.

Intercessory Prayer

God wants His children to be a holy priesthood, that our prayers may ascend in behalf of a dying world. He wants intercessors at the Throne of God, that we might beat back the power of sin in the world today and rescue souls. God's people must prevail in prayer if souls are to be delivered from the power of the enemy. He has made us kings and priests unto the eternal God, that we might stand in the gap and make intercession for souls.

If you are born again, your prayers are worth everything — and how much more after you are sanctified! It is then you become a priest of the living God, so separated from your own self and your own desires that you can go into the very presence of God and plead for a lost world. You need not be continually wrestling with God for your own self. You should be praying for others. There is an extreme love for souls that comes into your life at sanctification.

Jesus wept in tender love and pity for the lost, and His Spirit today makes us feel for the lost as He felt. The more you are filled with the Spirit, the more you are like Jesus. Self-enjoyment is lost sight of. You have fellowship with Him in His sufferings and in prayer and labours for souls; your highest enjoyment is seeing some poor sinner brought to the feet of Jesus.

No matter where you are, if you have a pure heart and a pure conscience, you can pray. It may be on the streetcar, at the workbench, or at the washtub; but your soul can breathe a prayer to God, and the incense of praise can be ascending from your heart. God Himself will meet your soul when you lift your heart in prayer before Him. Oh, it is wonderful, the plan God has made for us in these last days! It just ravishes our souls to think that God has revealed these things to babes in Christ and hid them from the wise and prudent.

A Deeper Consecration

He wants His people to be on fire for Him. God is saving sinners, sanctifying believers, baptizing with the Holy Ghost and fire, and healing the sick. This salvation must be preached in all the world and to all nations, and then shall the end come. God grant that His people may be faithful, seeking God and searching and wrestling and praying, paying the whole price and obtaining the prize, so that we shall not have to say in that day, "I would to God I had been faithful!"

The call is for labourers to go out into the harvest field. Oh, may you go down before God and strip for the race! May you say, "God, make me a channel, empty me out, and fill me with the new wine of the Spirit, that I might bear to a dying world the most blessed Gospel message ever on mortal lips."

God has called us to be fishers of men. There is no higher calling in the world than to tell a lost soul that there is a way out of sin. The powers of darkness are raging; but God is working, through the prayers and supplication of His people, to stem the awful tide. May God help every soul to gird on the armour of the Lord and be faithful in prayer and consecration; for truly we know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.