Articles by Arthur F. Wilder

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Living Words (November–December 1971)

From Ministry in Focus, November–December 1971.

Editor's note: Arthur Wilder of Gracemount Assembly, Cleveland, Ohio, has given us Living Words which somehow make the Living Word nearer.

"Never Man Spake Like This Man" John 7:46

This tribute by the officers of the Sanhedrin was more eloquent than they realized. No man spoke like Jesus because He was God incarnate and He spoke with the power of God. We can read all of the recorded words of our Lord in about two hours. Yet men have been captivated by His words for over 1900 years, as the Sanhedrim officers were captivated by them. Their unequalled beauty, their unchallenged majesty, their undiminished power have had greater influence on the world than any words spoken by any of the world's greatest thinkers or orators.

Jesus spoke with power when He said, "Lazarus, come forth."

He spoke with authority when He said, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

He spoke with compassion to the widow of Nain, "Weep not."

He spoke words of comfort, "Let not your heart be troubled."

He spoke tenderly, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love."

He spoke prophetically: Matthew chapters 24 and 25.

In all these things that Jesus said, He never made any attempt to be sensational, never sought the acclaim of men. His only aim was to bring glory to His Father's Name.

At the Transfiguration, God said, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." God speaks to us today through His Son. When the voices of materialism, rebellion and confusion clamour for our attention, let us seek a quiet place and listen for our Lord's personal invitation to let Him speak to us. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."

Editorial (January–February 1972)

From Ministry in Focus, January–February 1972.

"Jesus Christ (Is) the same yesterday, and today, and forever" Hebrews 13:8.

As we stand at the threshold of another year, let us consider our relationship to the One for whom the passage of time has no meaning. Yesterday in the existence of God has no beginning, as we reckon time. Today our risen Lord lives daily to make intercession for us. Forever is eternity and has no ending.

In contrast, James reminds us that our life on earth "is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14b). For us, yesterday had a beginning, but it is gone and our failures and mistakes are gone with it. Today we are faced with burdens, trials, and temptations which will not be too much different in 1972 from the ones we faced in 1971.

Today we need a source of strength and wisdom which never varies in times of rebellion, hatred, and turmoil. We need the guiding hand of One who is always the same in His compassion on the ignorant, in the majesty of His Person, and in His fidelity to His promises. We can say with David, "My times are in Thy hand: deliver me from the hand of my enemies, and from them that persecute me" (Psalm 31:15).

The new decade will find the world plagued with the same old problem of man's inhumanity to man. But when our future is in His hand we need not fear the darkness, for He will lead us home to light and glory. Our simple duty is to seek His will, then trust Him and follow where

He leads us. The believer's future is assured by Him whose word never fails, the unchanging Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Temptation (March–April 1972)

From Ministry in Focus, March–April 1972.

Editor's note: This devotional article by Arthur Wilder, a retired business man from Cleveland, Ohio, merits more space in the Christian life than it occupies in this issue of Ministry in Focus.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but 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 of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I Cor. 10:13).

The emphasis in this verse is not on the divine provision of an escape route by which we can flee from temptation. Rather, it is on the promise of God that He will enable us to endure temptation without yielding. We all have the same inclination to sin that is common to man, and Satan has ways of making sin look very attractive to saved and unsaved alike. Paul tells us in Romans 7:18-19 that we do not have the moral equipment in our own strength always to make the correct decision between right and wrong. But the Christian does have the advantage that God will not allow him to be tempted beyond his power to endure. God does this by making the temptation less attractive or increasing our strength to resist it, or both. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we should cultivate the ability to say No when we are face to face with temptation. Many Biblical characters have done this under circumstances such as we meet today, and have been blessed as a result.

Joseph said No when enticed by Potiphar's wife. God blessed him and used him for 80 years as a ruler of Egypt. The Rechabites refused to drink wine when tempted, and God used their example to rebuke Israel for its disobedience (Jer. 35).

The Apostle James says, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him" (1:12).

We have God's promise that we can be victorious over temptation in whatever degree we submit to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Walking With God (September–October 1972)

From Ministry in Focus, September–October 1972.

"And Enoch walked with God." Genesis 5:22

"Enoch had this testimony: that he pleased God." Hebrews 11:5

From these two verses we may infer that God and Enoch were good friends. We don't walk far in company with someone we don't like, and the very thought of a sinner walking with God stirs the imagination. But Enoch, a family man living a normal, active life in an age fully as corrupt as the age we live in, found it possible to please God and walk with Him. Many people are trying to find ways to avoid God, to ignore His very existence, as if He didn't matter, or had no power, but this was not true of Enoch; he "walked with God."

In the midst of our frustrations, confusion, social and economic pressure, what a holy privilege it is to be able to draw aside and meditate on the assurance that "He leads me besides the still waters." And when surrounded by evil and faced with temptation, it is good to know that "He leads me in the paths of righteousness" (Psalm 23:2-3). How often we find ourselves in paths of wickedness and error were it not for the guiding hand of the Good Shepherd.

We don't need to interrupt our proper daily activities to walk with God. We can follow right along with Him as we work, study, play or relax. But we can't walk with God today and go along with Satan tomorrow. Walking

with God must be a full-time thing, twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. The earlier we learn to walk with Him, the sooner we find the answers to the questions about life, love, happiness, eternity, etc., and the less likely we are to stumble and fall when we are older.

Whether we walk with God through life and death and eternity depends on what we do today about His Son, Jesus Christ. It is only by trusting Christ as our Lord and Saviour that we can be sure God leads us along.