

Articles by Samuel Ridout

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F.W. Grant - Remember Your Guides

PREFACE

(Bob Gessner)

Regardless of our age, there are those in our past life whom we greatly admire. In many cases, they become the models that we follow and after which we pattern our lives. In today's world, they might be sport's heroes, TV personalities, family members, school friends, or "successful" people in the endeavors of life. How many of our models are godly men who loved the Bible and lived faithful lives for Christ?

In delivering the address printed below, Samuel Ridout was paying tribute to a godly man who greatly influenced his life and ministry for the Lord. His name was F. W. Grant. He was born in London, England, in 1834. He lived for a time in Toronto, Canada, and then came to the United States, living first in Brooklyn, and then in Plainfield, New Jersey. It was here that he greatly influenced Samuel Ridout. Brother Grant ministered in assemblies all over the United States until his death in 1902. Many of his books are in the libraries of Bible students throughout the land. He greatly influenced Brother Ridout, and he also went on to be a godly teacher and writer, standing firm for the truths of the Word of God.

Almost all of us are too young to remember F. W. Grant, but whom do we remember? Are they men and women of God who will influence us to live for God and give our lives to Him? "Be not slothful, but followers of them who

through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Heb. 6:12).

REMEMBER YOUR GUIDES

by Samuel Ridout

Remember them which have the rule over you (your leaders or your guides), who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (the outcome of their well-spent lives). (Hebrews 13:7)

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we find a whole chapter devoted to human examples of faith. A great cloud of witnesses looks down upon us in the eleventh chapter, and in the closing chapter of the book, the writer speaks of their "guides," or "leaders." They were to remember those who had passed away, and imitate their faith; they were to obey those who remained, realizing that they were charged with weighty responsibilities, and were to salute them in all honor and affection.

Scripture not only warrants but commands the remembrance of those whom God has given as leaders of His people. To forget them means, too often, to forget the truth they brought, and paves the way for that "building the sepulchres of the prophets" by a godless posterity who are indifferent to every warning spoken by those prophets (Lk. 11:47). There is a sober, discriminating way of dwelling upon the ministry of faithful servants which encourages our own faith, quickens conscience, and stirs afresh to follow them as they followed Christ.

Most biographies are written from a human standpoint; the man is before us rather than his message. Such

biographies are not helpful; but who has not been stimulated by the narratives of devotion, self-denial, unrelenting toil of faithful men at home or abroad? We realize on either hand that they were men "of like passions with ourselves" (Ja. 5:17), and that a Power wrought in and with them which is for us too.

The passage we have quoted at the beginning shows us how we can properly "remember our guides." First of all, what makes their remembrance profitable is that they spoke to us the word of God. It was not for special personal excellence of character, either natural or gracious; nor for great activities and results in the Lord's work, considered in themselves. What gives value to the remembrance of the leader is the word of God with which he was identified, the message he brought.

We read of one of David's mighty men, Eleazar the son of Dodo, that he stood alone against a great host of Philistines when "the men of Israel had gone away." He smote them "till his hand was weary and his hand clave unto the sword; and the Lord wrought a great victory" (2 Sam. 23:9,10). His very name, "God is help," turns from the man to God. What could he do single-handed against the host of the enemy? His arm grows weary, but the weary hand cleaves to the good sword, and we see no longer the feeble arm of man, but the power of God behind that weary arm, hewing out victory with that sword. The man has become identified with the sword, and God can use such an one.

So are all God's mighty men; feeble, and with weary arms, they cling to that "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). Their very weariness and feebleness makes them cling like Jacob who, his thigh

out of joint, can no more wrestle, but cling (Gen. 32:24-26). Such men God can use, for they are identified with their sword, with the word of God. To remember such is to remember the sword, the Word which they brought. There can be no higher honor to a servant of Christ than to merge him, as it were, in the truth he ministered; in thinking of him, to think of the sword he held in his feebleness. The world may honor its soldiers, its men of wealth, its benefactors, and build them monuments. They are its departed great men. Believers recall the memory of those who have left their greatness in our hands, the Word of God. To do this is simply to have mind refreshed and heart stirred by that which abides forever.

We are also to consider the issue, or outcome, of their walk. What has their life ended in? It has now ceased. A rich man's life ends, so far as what he leaves behind is concerned, in wealth; a statesman's, in power and influence. In what shall we say the life of Christ's servant has ended? What has he left as the sum of that life? Is it not suggestive that the very next clause gives what is really the answer, while closely connected, as we shall see, with the following clause? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). The issue of their life is the abiding Christ. They have passed off the scene, but Christ, the object of their ministry, abides. With Paul they could say, "To me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Christ is the end, the goal of their life. To depart and be with Him is far better. Happy indeed are those who are called to lay down their burden and enter into His rest. They loved and served Him here; they enjoy unclouded peace and rest as they wait with Him there. The outcome, the end, of all their

life's work, toil, testimony, is Christ. They enjoy Him to the full now; they have, as it were, left Him as a priceless legacy to us here.

And their life was a life of faith - the refusal at once both of creature righteousness and creature strength. They had learned to "rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3). We are not called to do, in detail, their work. God calls and fits each of His servants for some special work, peculiarly suited to the special gift with which he is endowed. We are not to be imitators of one another, but ever to be imitators of the faith that casts the feeble upon the Mighty.

Lastly, we note the warning not to be "carried about with divers and strange doctrines" (Heb. 13:9). The servant of Christ ever stands for His truth against all opposition of error. His ministry, in so far as it was under the guidance and in the power of the Holy Spirit, brought home to heart and conscience the truth of God and the Person of the Lord.

Do we not need, as has already been said, to be specially on our guard in these days against the subtile inroads of error? The Person of the Son of God, His atoning work, His Church, the destiny of man - are all objects of the enemy's attacks. Let us hold fast the truth, and Him who is the truth, and His Word of truth.

We have, then, four characteristics of a proper memorial of departed leaders - (1) The word of God ministered by them; (2) the outcome or issue of their life, Christ for them and for us ever the same; (3) the faith which occupied them with this blessed Person; and (4) the warning against error. If we ever have these features

before us, there will be only profit in remembering those who have gone on before us.

Promises to the Overcomer

It may serve us to dwell briefly on the various promises to the overcomer in Rev. 2 and 3, as indicating the circumstances and the responsibilities of the Church in view of "that coming day".

1. Ephesus: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). This is a precious promise wherever there is overcoming in a day of coldness and apathy - may we not say in these very days in which we live. Christ is the Tree of Life, and there can be no higher reward than to partake of His fullness in the Home of God. And this is the prize awaiting all who have the fire of first love—a present heartfelt appreciation of His preciousness in this life.

2. Smyrna: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Here are words of cheer for any who endure hardness for His sake; who bear reproach, scorn, suffering, in the path of obedience. Here still in closing days is there opportunity to suffer for the truth and for Him who is the Truth. "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17).

3. Pergamos: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Rev. 2:17). What a promise to those who resist settling down at home where our Lord was rejected. Are we feeding now and here on the manna, God's perfect provision for a

wilderness path? For those who turn away from the dainties of earthly pleasure and worldly conformity there is a feast and a white stone in the Home prepared.

4. Thyatira: "He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations... and I will give him the morning star" (Rev. 2:26-28). In Thyatira we see the church established as a world power, and its place here instead of where the Lord is. As we look about us today, we can see the same spirit working. Corruption follows in spite of varied activities and faithfulness on the part of some. For the overcomer the Morning Star of hope sheds its holy light in the heart, and the coming of the Lord is nigh.

5. Sardis: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3:5). Sardis, with its boasted light has but a name to live. Cold, lifeless formality, and even doctrinal accuracy, cannot take the place of a living heart of affection and devotedness to Christ. How cheering to the overcomers is this promise. "With Thee in garments white, Lord Jesus, we shall walk; and spotless in that heavenly light, of all Thy sufferings talk".

6. Philadelphia: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.....I will write upon him my new name" (Rev. 3:12). A true Philadelphian will not think lightly of any part of that Word, much less of that which has to do with the nature of the church, its government, ministry, and testimony. Are we sharers in His patience, not looking

for great things here, but holding fast what He has given? What will it be to be a pillar in the temple of God!

7. Laodicea: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). May the Lord make us true Philadelphians, and keep us from approaching the pride and self-satisfaction of poor, wretched, blind Laodicea. Difficulties may increase; nothing can stand the test but what is of God. Our whole resource must be Christ alone. May there be a true revival ere He come; not necessarily in numbers, but in soul, in true-hearted devotion to Him who gave us His all.

These blessed promises give the hints of the holy joys that await the overcomer in these evil days. May we ponder them, and live in the expectation of soon entering that bright home. Let us individually and unitedly pray for the Church which He has purchased with His own blood.

Second Generation Christians

The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua.....and there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel (Judges 2:7,10).

Joshua was a man that lived in the holy presence of God. He was a man whose soul was completely taken possession of for God, and therefore it was a simple thing for him to take possession of what was his. Let God capture my soul and I will want to capture everything for Him.

Joshua represents not only the energy of the Spirit of God making Christ our leader, but the man of faith, too, who takes hold for God in living faith. The elders and Joshua who knew God, who followed Him, held the whole nation together as long as they lived. It is a mercy when God has such persons to hold fast His saints in allegiance. But we have no Joshuas now. We see that Joshua had no successors. I believe he represented the apostolic spirit in the Church. Look at the time of the apostles; Paul and the other apostles held the saints together, and the Church was prevented from open and public failure by the apostolic power that was in their midst.

But the apostles all died and left no successors. The second generation of any movement is a time of failure. Israel under Joshua and the elders was faithful, outwardly at least, and living in the fear of God. But a second generation came in - people who had not seen the works of the Lord, who had got the truths from the

elders at second-hand. They had not come right down to them from God, but they had learned them in an indirect way, and I might add, in an intellectual way, rather than in their hearts.

How easy it is for the second generation of any movement to have truth in the head, but not in the heart. You have all these truths on your bookshelves. You can buy them for a few dollars, but it is one thing to pay for a thing out of your pocket, and another thing to pay for it out of your soul. It is one thing to get it into your head, and another to get it into your heart And it was one thing for Joshua, and the elders, men of living personal faith, to take hold of things, and quite another for the generation that followed them to do the same thing. Ah, brethren, there was a time when the Spirit of God sounded the midnight cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh." With what power it took hold of souls and brought them out to meet the bridegroom. How near was the glory! how dear the Lord! and how small the world!

Think what blessings the Spirit of God has revealed. A glorious Christ at God's right hand, a heavenly Church, and all the precious truths that flow from and are connected with it. It is one thing for us to talk about these precious truths, but it is quite a different thing to have them brought home, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. The elders have gone; the first generation of this movement has passed away, and we are risen in the room of our fathers, and I ask you, and I ask myself: Has it been merely something handed down to us from faithful men, or have we had to do with God about these things? Is it between us and God? Have we been alone with Him about them? Or have we learned them because

this or that one has held and taught them? Beloved brethren, leaders are God-given. We can bless God for them. But we cannot follow leaders save as they follow Christ. We must follow a living Christ in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Some Aspects of the Lords Supper

With those who rightly appreciate it, the Lord's supper occupies a place absolutely unique. Its holy, tender memories recalling the Person and work of our blessed Lord; its reminder of the fullness of blessing that is ours, and the place of nearness that we occupy through His death; the bright outlook into eternity that is opened up in connection with it: -- these and much more make its celebration an expression of the fullest communion, the most absorbing love, the most triumphant worship. Words fail to convey, to this who do not understand these things, the precious privilege of remembering the Lord in the breaking of bread. There is a charm, an attractiveness about it, that is divine. It is dependent upon no externals of place or form -- these would but mar its simple perfections -- for its proper observance. Ministry, no matter how gifted, is not necessary. The Lord's people come together, in dependence upon Himself alone, to meet and to remember Him. If gifted ministry be present, its place is in the back-ground. Officialism of any kind would be an intrusion, and a check upon the free, gracious ministry of the Holy Ghost, whose delight it is to occupy us with Christ alone. But let us for a little examine the character of this feast, so wondrous in its simplicity.

Rome has laid her unholy hands upon it, divided it in twain, and turned an unrecognizable half into a blasphemous piece of idolatry -- the perpetual sacrifice of the mass, in which the "body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ" are formed by a few words from the priest. The soul shrinks with horror from such blasphemy, and

burns with indignation against a system which professes to give salvation through such a perversion of truth.

In Protestantism, through the mercy of God, all this has been changed, and much of the simplicity that marked the institution of the supper has been restored. And yet, while it is not regarded as a means of salvation, it is still disfigured in some most important particulars. It is regarded as a "means of grace;" and is first "consecrated" and then "administered" by some ordained man. We would affectionately inquire, Where is there in the New Testament a hint that this supper should be in the hands of an individual, no matter how gifted, to act as host or dispenser? The giving of thanks and breaking the bread require nothing more than the worthily partaking also requires.

Again, so far from the supper being a means of grace, that thought would be a hindrance to its proper observance. We are, alas, so selfish that we would make all things, spiritual and temporal, minister to us, and value them as they did. But the Lord's Supper is a memorial of Him, and He is the object of worship in it. True, we can never be occupied with Him without receiving blessing in our souls; but that must never be the object, it is only a result.

We come then to get a simple definition of the Lord's supper, and what is required that it should be worthily partaken of. It is a memorial feast instituted by our Lord, "the same night in which He was betrayed," where the bread and wine recall His body given and His blood shed for us. Not only did He then give directions for its observance, but these are repeated to the apostle Paul (1 Cor. 11) from His place in the glory. Thus we have

fittingly linked together Christ in His humiliation and His glory, which suggests the words: "Ye show the Lord's death, till He come."

For partaking worthily of the supper there must be, first of all, in the recipient, the assurance of salvation. We say assurance, for if there remain in the mind questions still unanswered as to one's personal interest in the work of Christ, these intrude into the place He alone should occupy, and the supper becomes either a meaningless form, deadening to conscience and heart, or a torture to the sensitive soul, rather than a joyous act of worship. It is the greatest unkindness to press the unestablished soul to "break bread."

Next, after assurance, there must be a state of communion in the partaker, which is produced by the judgment of self, and of the work. Where this is lacking, the very knowledge of grace will but harden the heart and grieve the Holy Spirit. Sin is judged, self is abhorred, and then in the sweet assurance of grace, the feast is kept.

We have thus, in barest outline, reached that which is the subject before us -- the corporate features of the Lord's supper. We cannot emphasize too strongly the need of being right individually, as the indispensable basis of being right ecclesiastically. What could be more repulsive to a spiritual mind than to make the memorial of dying love, which stands alone through all eternity, a question of theological and ecclesiastical views? We would challenge ourselves and our readers to preserve ever fresh in our souls the memory of that love, which ever melts us into tenderest worship.

But we would, for this very reason, approach our subject with confidence. It is because of the preciousness of the theme, the holiness of the act, that it should be hedged about by those divine barriers which, in blessed contrast with those of Sinai, to exclude the people, serve as a place of shelter for them from all that would defile, or hinder the freest exercise of worship, without the raising of disturbing questions. This at once shows the importance of the matter, and we might say furnishes the distinguishing mark of difference between the observance of the Lord's supper scripturally and unscripturally.

We will begin by quoting a scripture which we believe shows the place the Lord's supper holds in the order of the Church. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread (loaf) and one body: for we are all partakers of that one loaf -- Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils" (1 Cor. 10:16,17,21). There are three prominent features in these verses: communion in the body and blood of Christ (His work), the recognition of His Lordship, and the unity of the Church. We could not omit one of these features and retain a scriptural observance of the Lord's supper. Let us not be misunderstood. We have not quoted the latter portion of this scripture to intimate that an unscriptural observance of the Lord's supper makes a "table of devils." There may be much, very much, that is unscriptural, and yet if Christ be confessed, and His death shown in the bread and cup, we would not dare to apply such a term. The "table of devils" is the idol altar, where sacrifices to devils are

offered, and those who partake of these are linked with the devils.

But while disavowing the applicability of the term to any Christian table, we would call attention to the other expression "table of the Lord," and press that it suggests obedience and subjection to Him in all things. Most inconsistent is it therefore that anything not according to His will should be connected with that table. With this we trust all will agree.

Equally essential, impossible to be severed from His lordship, is the exhibition of the atoning work of Christ. That which fails to emphasize His death, not merely His life, and His death as an atoning sacrifice for sins -- His blood "shed for many, for the remission of sins" -- would fail to exhibit what is truly the Lord's supper.

Less clear perhaps to many will be the third point, that the Lord's supper exhibits the unity of the Church. And yet who that reads the passage we have quoted, can fail to see that this is prominent? The loaf symbolizes the body of Christ. But we believe there is divine fitness in its being but one loaf. In the twelve loaves of shew-bread, we have Christ also, presented before God, but the number reminds us of Israel's unity -- the twelve tribes presented in Christ before God. In like manner the one loaf on the Lord's table suggests not merely Christ, but the unity of His church, His body.

Even those who question this will at once admit that another clause distinctly links the unity of the Church with the one loaf -- "for we are all partakers of that one loaf." Here we have a solemn fact to face. Any celebration of the Lord's supper which ignores the unity of the body of Christ, is so far unscriptural. The divisions

at Corinth are given as a reason why it was impossible to celebrate it (1 Cor. 11:18-21).

We next turn to another familiar passage in the same epistle: "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast... with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." "Do not ye judge them that are within?" (1 Cor. 5:6-13).

It may be said that partaking of the Lord's supper is not alluded to in this passage; but it gives us really a most important feature of the whole subject. Here it is Christian fellowship, and an evil doer is to be put away from the company of the Lord's people. But the supper is the highest expression of fellowship; there is nothing in Christianity so expressive of communion. To put away from their company would include, first of all, exclusion from the Lord's table; unquestionably that would be followed by exclusion from the company of the saints until repentance was manifest. But it would be impossible to think of one put away from among the saints and still permitted to break bread. Thus the passage we have quoted emphasizes the need of holiness in those partaking of the Lord's supper. This holiness, we must remember, is not left to the judgment of the individual, but is here put in the hands of the assembly, which is corporately responsible for the walk, so far as manifest, of all those received at the Lord's table. Cain might ask in defiance, "Am I my brother's keeper?" but for the Lord's people there is but one answer. We are members of one another, and should have the same care one for another. We are as responsible to judge evil in our brother as in ourselves, and this not alone for his sake, but for the honor of our Lord. The entire assembly, and the testimony of Christ in

it, are linked with what is allowed in the individuals composing it. Necessarily this does not refer to what has received the censure of the assembly, but which does not warrant the extreme of discipline. But it is a solemn thought that Christ's holy name is linked with all worldliness, disobedience, unholy alliance with false doctrine and practice which the assembly permits. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump," becomes thus not an abstract doctrine, but a pungent and practical truth.

We have thus found four distinguishing features of a scriptural celebration of the Lord's supper: His atoning death, His Lordship, holiness, and the unity of His Church, and all these are centered in His own blessed Person. Our responsibility is to judge both ourselves and those whom we receive by these divine principles. Let us apply them.

The basis of all our peace is the atoning death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Anyone denying that in any way, whether as to the value of the work or the nature of the Person who performed it, would be unfit to partake, and it would be disloyalty to our Lord to receive such. Closely connected with this, anyone personally clear, who yet maintained fellowship with one holding unsound views as to these fundamental points would be equally, if not more, unworthy to remember the Lord. In the one case it might be ignorance, or a heart blinded by Satan, but in the other it would be open and deliberate condoning that which dishonored our Lord. We would earnestly press this upon those to whom the name of our Lord is dear, who are identified with congregations where unscriptural views of the atonement and other fundamental views are taught. How can they go on

where our Lord is wounded afresh in the house of His professed friends? We greatly fear that the number of false teachers is increasing, and more and more is there need of exercise as to this.

Passing to the next feature, how wide a field for self-examination is opened by that word, "Lord." Is He indeed Lord and Master, and is His will absolute? How, then, can a disobedient walk be connected with His table? We make amplest allowance for weakness and ignorance, but we feel the great importance of this matter. The Lord's table is surely to be marked by subjection to Him, and while patience may be had for ignorance in individual cases, obedience to Him is surely to be expected from all. In moral questions, none would dispute this, but many would interpose serious objections to what follows.

Each time the Lord's supper is scripturally celebrated, the unity of the Church is also set forth. There can be no question that the divided state of Christendom is a blot on our Lord's honor here. To be indifferent to this state of ruin shows most assuredly either a sad lack of heart for Christ, or dense ignorance of what is due to Him. So for persons to exhibit this indifference as to what so nearly concerns Him would, on its face, argue an incapacity for truly keeping the feast. Here, however, we must carefully guard against a narrowness that would make mere intelligence the exclusive test. There will always be some who, while they have ardent love to the Lord, fail to realize their responsibilities as to testimony. Surely, grace would meet such according to their light. But these cases are exceptional, and it is not for these we speak. We refer to those capable of understanding the importance of maintaining a testimony for Christ;

and here we believe there should be the greatest care in reception. The whole character of a meeting may be altered by the reception of one or two not clear as to their responsibility in this matter.

To remember the Lord, then, in the breaking of bread is a corporate act, involving the gravest responsibilities as to Church discipline and order. The very fact that it is not done by one individual, but always by "two or three" at least, would show this. There must be a clean place, spiritually speaking, where we meet, according to the holiness of God's house; there must be the recognition of Christ's Lordship, and an endeavor to maintain the principles of the unity of the Church of God. This involves exercise and care in reception, and the maintenance of godly order in the local gathering, and a recognition only of such other gatherings, as we may be sure exercise similar care. How much prayerfulness, firmness and patience all this requires -- only those who have endeavored to carry it out can appreciate. Often may the question arise, "Is it worth the care and trouble?" And as often can the answer be given, "Hold fast that which thou hast that no man can take thy crown."

If it were a question of personal ease, we would advise any one to avoid this path of lonely and often misunderstood faithfulness; but if to please Christ be our object, to seek to carry out His will, to exhibit, even in the midst of the ruins of the professing Church, a little testimony to what His Church should be, we can only seek to pray for and encourage one another.

Returning now to the individual side of our subject, we can enjoy all the sweet fellowship with our Lord implied

in the feast, coupled with a sense of His approval of our weak efforts to honor Him, and intensified by the "fellowship of kindred minds," who, like ourselves, have sought to keep His word and not deny His name.

May He, the Lord of His Church, awaken in us all more love and devotedness to Himself, more true love to His people, shown in obeying His will (2 John 6), and greater humility in seeking to carry out that will!

The Gift of Teaching in the Church of God

It need hardly be said that this gift is one of greatest importance in the Church, and a rapid glance at its characteristics will be helpful. The gift of teacher is closely connected with that of pastor; both have to do more specifically with the saints, though all the gifts are "knit together". And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11). The tender, firm heart and aptness to teach are most helpful in the evangelist. But his is necessarily the initial work, followed by the pastor and teacher in the care for and upbuilding of the flock of God.

I. The teacher must be born again.

Men are undertaking to teach who are not born again. God forbid that we should speak harshly, but is it not too clearly manifest that many of the teachers in the universities are strangers to God in Christ. Bible study and teaching have been taken up as a profession. Men are experts in language, archaeology, history, and other branches of learning, and take up the Word of God as another department of knowledge. They approach it with little or no thought of having to do with a holy, heart-searching God, to whom they can only approach through the atoning sacrifice of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. No wonder that they neither understand nor value the great foundation truths of the "common salvation". But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually

discerned (1 Cor. 2:14). The teacher, therefore, must be identified with the Truth by life - he must be "born of God," united with Christ, sealed and anointed by the Spirit.

II. The teacher must have the faculty of reception of truth.

The teacher must have an ear for the truth, a mental grasp capable of taking in, and a judgment capable of coordinating and holding in proper proportion all revealed truth. Hence it is absolutely essential that he whom God has called to be a teacher of His people, should have a clear grasp of the contents of Scripture. Further, the teacher must rightly divide the word of truth. He must understand the dispensations of God. Especially must he be a diligent student of the truths of Christianity, as unfolded in the Epistles. One of the responsibilities of the teacher is to meet error in its countless forms, to protect the beloved sheep of Christ.

III. The teacher must have the faculty of imparting knowledge to others.

One could not rightly be a teacher unless he could share his knowledge with others. Let us then look at some of the requisites for this.

1. The teacher must have simplicity. It is a great mistake to think obscurity means depth. Usually, when one clearly understands a subject he is able to explain it to others. The true teacher will utter "words easy to be understood".

2. The teacher must have adaptability. We must not feed "strong meat" to babes. It is the mark of a good teacher that he can adapt himself, both in matter and language,

to those he is seeking to instruct. Should he do this, he will be enabled to make his teaching progressive. The learners will not stand still, they will pass from class to class, until they can largely do without their teacher, who indeed has been learning with them, and so is a companion as well as a guide.

3. The teacher must have thorough subjection to the Word of God. We must beware of allowing ourselves to indulge in mere speculation. There must be the assurance of certainty in what the teacher seeks to impart. The teaching should be well-rounded and in due proportion. Thus the even balance of the truth will be preserved.

4. The teacher must have enthusiasm. If a teacher is not commanded by his subject, how can he expect to interest others? How it misrepresents the great theme if he has an air of indifference, or speaks in a hesitating or apologetic way.

For those who are seeking to use the gift of teaching, may we suggest that fresh manna should be given, not truth that has become dull in our minds. For this reason, the teacher should never cease to be a student.

The Washing of Feet

So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you (John 13:12-15).

This washing of the feet is for the cleansing from any defilement that we may have gathered in our walk through this world. There may be no outward failure; it may be only inward, or even the lack of that spiritual vigor that would keep us in spirit unspotted from the world. The priest was not necessarily indicating personal sin when he washed his hands and feet before offering the sacrifices or entering the tabernacle. But it reminded him that he was in a scene where the dust and defilement gathered imperceptibly and so he had constantly to apply the water. Thus the scene in John 13 does not mean some glaring failure, but that which comes in to hinder full communion with our Lord. Just as the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, or the lust of other things can choke the Word, so in the believer, household cares, daily duties, business affairs, yes, even Christian service, may be allowed to practically mar communion with the Lord. What a world it is, where we can gather defilement even in service.

There is one contrast between the cleansing at the laver and the action of John 13. The priests were to wash their hands as well as their feet at the laver, but our Lord

washed only the disciples' feet. It is the feet, our ways, which need constantly to be cleansed by the word of God, through the advocacy of Christ our Lord and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Who is it that can minister to the saints, that can wash his brother's feet, that can minister as Christ ministered? It is he who knows the action of the Word in practical cleansing for himself.

In Galatians 6:1 this is applied to our mutual relationships, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted". Here we have to do with one another in brotherly love and care. Our business is not to talk to others about his fault, nor in self-satisfaction to thank God that we have not fallen into it. "Many times when we want to straighten out an erring brother or sister and so wash their feet, we have the water boiling hot, or at least we are boiling hot. There needs to be a prayerful concern as to how we should go about the task of washing feet" (Laurence Chambers). In the spirit of lowliness, realizing that we too may be tempted, and if in his position might have done the same thing, go and seek to restore him to his Lord that he may have it all out between his soul and the Lord. Then we may be sure that communion is restored. This is true washing of one another's feet.

There is a beautiful example of this washing of the saints' feet in James. He says: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (Jas. 5:16). This is not to be busybodies in other men's matters, nor to take up things which do not

concern us, but a godly concern to secure communion with the Lord for His people. It is not demanding confession, as the priest, that others confess to him; but in brotherly and mutual confidence, confessing your faults to one another, and praying for one another.

The water then is the word of God; that is, the word that applies, the word spoken in due season. It is not the whole Bible we are to bring to the brother, but the needed word applying to his actual condition. This needs wisdom and the Spirit's guidance to bring the right word, that it may cleanse and help.

In this connection, how important it is that we should read the Word and feed upon it. How shall the Spirit of God use it for our cleansing and upbuilding, or how can we use it to the help and blessing of others, if we are not really acquainted with it? If we are to know the word of God, there must be a systematic way in which we read it, just as there is in the way we take our ordinary food. Mere haphazard reading of favorite passages, skipping from point to point, while helpful in some ways, will not thoroughly furnish us. Let not a day pass without careful, prayerful reading of our regular portion. Let us become thoroughly acquainted with the entire contents of Scripture. Thus, we shall have put at the disposal of the Lord an abundance of water to cleanse our ways.

Wanted: Shepherds for the Sheep

Where are the pastors today? No time for visiting? Too busy? The wolves are busy scattering the sheep; divisions and worldliness press on every hand.

Compromise, neglect of Christ's interests, disregard of His honor - all these are present; where are the pastors today? The Church has all the gifts; there are brilliant orators, scholarly teachers; good men and true. There are schools and colleges; education can be gained by any desiring it. Surely the Lord has not forgotten the need of His people, nor is He indifferent when He sees them scattered as sheep without a shepherd. Where are the pastors today?

Feeding the sheep

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (First Peter 5: 1-4). Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28). Words fail to express the solemnity of such a trust. Those who cost the precious blood of the Son of God, are committed into the hands of men! What an honor, what responsibility to be in any way permitted to feed the lambs, to shepherd the sheep of Christ. And ministry it is, of the most delicate and important character. Nothing but companionship with the Good Shepherd, with a sense of

the value, the need of the sheep, can qualify one to walk in His steps.

The shepherd's life is largely a quiet one. The flock cannot be over-driven or frightened. The main duty of the shepherd is to love the sheep. The rest will follow. He will feed them, causing them to lie down in green pastures; he will lead them beside waters of quietness. Brutal harshness may pass for firmness, but the shepherd never mistakes force and cruelty for strength. Love is firmer than wrath; it can "exhort, reprove, rebuke;" but it has previously gained the right to do this by showing patient love, and winning the confidence of the saints. There is an authority which appeals to the conscience; a firmness which weeps as it smites.

Let us hear the word of the Lord to His shepherds in a former dispensation. Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed; but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered because there is no shepherd....(Ezekiel 34:2-5).

Guarding the sheep

He that is an hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep....I am the good Shepherd and

know my sheep and am known of mine" (John 10:12,14). Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you (Hebrews 13:17). Rule, if it be truly that, is shepherd care. The model shepherd was familiar with the sheep; indeed, his kingship was but an exalted shepherd care. He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands (Psalm 78:70-72). David looked on the people as a flock: These sheep, what have they done? (2 Samuel 24:17).

How beautiful it is to see a caretaker visiting in the homes of the saints. Danger threatens. The father has met one who has brought strange and deadly doctrines to his attention. He is interested; the specious (erroneous) teaching of the pamphlets attracts him. But he has a friend in whose judgment he confides; he will lay the matter before him, and the pastor is enabled to point out the error, to warn, even to admonish. What a work, what a privilege! He loves the sheep, and does the work.