# Making Proper Use of Means for God's Blessing

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I want to read a passage that mean preachers, mean preachers, irked preachers, preachers that are striking at people often read and use it as a shillelagh on the heads of defenseless congregations. But the very fact that I know that, and I'm willing to admit it, ought to indicate that I'm not going to use it that way. It is the third chapter of Revelation, beginning with verse 14.

Under the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things saith the amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot.

So then, because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. And knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked? I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear. And anoint thine eyes with thy salve, that thou mayest see.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him and will sup with him and he with me. 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. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

Now, verses 19 and 20 particularly, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

And if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him and will sup with him and he with me. You see, you can't separate those two verses. They're there and there is no punctuation that separates them except that which is arbitrarily introduced.

They're one passage, organically one, and they cannot be torn apart without loss of life. I love, I rebuke, I chasten, I stand. If you open the door, I will come in, provided you be zealous, therefore, and repent.

Now, the favors of God are of two kinds. There are the usual favors that everybody's familiar with. He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Those are the common favors of God. And these are gifts of pure grace.

This is where I differ a little with some teachers. They make salvation to be a gift of God's grace, only. I claim that everything we get from God is a gift of God's grace.

If God treated the fallen human race the way we deserve, He wouldn't waste five minutes on us. He would say, depart from me ye that work iniquity, and that would be the end. And God would create a new people more to His heart's desire.

But grace prolongs our lives, keeps the sun shining in the heavens, the rain falling from the skies above, keeps the hens laying and the cows giving milk, and the beasts providing food, and the earth giving forth its bud.

And this is as much grace as the gift of Jesus Christ for our salvation, for we don't deserve any of it. And these gifts of God's grace, the common gifts of God's grace, are for everybody. And even the world recognizes that, more or less, at least once a year.

And sometimes even the newspapers and magazines and radio men have a kind word to say about a good God who gives us everything richly to enjoy. One of America's great poets, not a Christian, but a great poet, wrote a lovely little child song that they used to sing in school. I haven't heard it now for many, many long years.

I don't know that I can quote it verbatim, but it runs something like this. For flowers that bloom around our feet, for tender grass so soft and sweet, Father in heaven we thank thee. For beauty of the blooming trees, for blue sky and blue seas, Father in heaven we thank thee.

Now this was a pagan praying his thanks to the God that he knew gave him all these things. Those are the common benefits bestowed upon gangsters and harlots and crooked politicians and communists and Democrats and Republicans and Tories and socialists and liberals and those who have no political affiliation, people of all colors and tribes around the whole world. Our heavenly Father gives us the skies of blue and the seas of blue-green and causes the rivers to flow down through the valleys.

Now there's another class of blessing or favor, and that is what I would call the special or unusual. Now these may be of three kinds. The unusual favors of God may be of the same kind as those mentioned before, as for instance where a man has a field and he prays and God makes that field unusually fruitful.

Or where God blesses Israel because they obey and makes their cattle to never lose their young and promises that if they will obey the sun will always shine, the rain will always fall. Now those are usual blessings, but they are usual blessings given in an unusual way and at an intense degree. Those are special favors given by God, I say.

And then these additional favors may be of a different kind as when God sent the ravens to feed Elijah. Now there were ravens and there was water and there was meat and all these common benefits were there, but for God to put them together providentially so that a raven got a piece of meat and took it to a specific prophet at the proper time, that was taking the usual and making an unusual situation out of it. That is the unusual favors of God.

And then there are the additional favors of a superior kind that haven't anything to do with blue skies and blue seas and flowing rivers and laying hens and lowing cattle and all the things of the earth, but they are of a superior kind. They have to do with spiritual things and they are eternal. And these are the unusual gifts and they are reserved for and given to those alone who sustain toward God the relation of some and who meet certain clear terms which God has laid down. All the laws of God are as real and as discernible as the laws of mathematics.

There's a lot of wooziness and fog and uncertainty that gathers around the church, but there needn't be because God's laws are as clear and as discoverable as the laws that govern the world, I repeat. And if we only were willing to realize it and meet terms, we would find that we could command heaven just as well as a scientist can command earth.

The scientist, by taking very great care to follow humbly the laws of nature, has succeeded in harnessing the sun and in unlocking the very atom and causing the very winds and waves and electric impulses to work for mankind. They have done it not by creating, but by submitting. They have done it by yielding and surrendering to the extant laws of God in nature.

And there's no miracle about it. The A-bomb is not a miracle. The electric generator is not a miracle. They are simply the regular laws of nature, harnessed and obeyed for our use. We harness them by obeying them.

Now it's the same in the kingdom of God. God has His spiritual laws and He's laid them down. He hasn't changed them since Adam ran out of the garden before the flaming sword of an angry God. And therefore, everybody, everywhere, all denominations and colors and races and all times and dispensations, we get benefits by obeying them and we harness them by obedience. By submitting to them, we put them to work.

Now I've been petitioning God over the last times for unusual favors upon our people here in this church. And I have felt lately that God was saying some things.

Now I don't want to say that God said this in the sense that He spoke to the prophets. Because I know the human heart and I know sometimes our own anxieties and fears and our own overheated spirit can make us think God's talking when actually God isn't actually speaking. And it may be so.

But I think I'm hearing God saying, your people are receiving all of the usual benefits which I give to mankind. My sun shines on them and my rain falls upon them and they stand up by the strength of their physical frames and they walk within the framework of my laws and I send upon them all the usual benefits. And then I am also giving them the special benefits that come through belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

They have received certain additional benefits which the world doesn't know anything about, reserved for those who sustain the relation of sonship. But I have not been satisfied and I have been petitioning God and God would be saying to me, now you've been petitioning me for unusual benefits, not enjoyed by the commonality of Christians even. You are eager and zealous to see your people, a better people than the average, a

people apart, a people above, and not conscious of it but meekly above, and says God to us, I'm perfectly willing to do all this for you.

Remember that nobody ever had an ambition that God frowned at. A rich man says to a preacher, says Reverend, I'm a man of some means and I believe in your work and I want you to just, anytime you wish, I want you to come to me if you're in a financial strait. And the innocent-eyed preacher who knows more about the laws of Moses than he does about the laws of economics, takes the fellow at his word.

He's building a church and he goes to him and says, I want five thousand dollars, we need it for a down payment right away. And the man blanches and looks at him and says, five thousand dollars, why Reverend, how would you ask, would you ask me? Eell, didn't you tell me that you had almost unlimited means and that I could ask for what I need. Well, he said, I never had anything like that in mind. I thought maybe that if you were maybe a hundred dollars behind or fifty dollars sometime you might call on me, but I never, I couldn't think of a thing like this. A poor embarrassed preacher, his face is red as a beet, walks out of the presence of the moneyed man. He has had too much faith in the wrong man.

But my brethren, when God Almighty says, call unto me and I'll answer you, you never go away embarrassed. For remember, nobody ever had too much faith in God. Nobody expected too much and got turned down. Nobody ever pushed his way into the holy presence of God and said, God, I want this for my people.

And God said, why son, you don't understand me. When I made those promises, I didn't have a big thing like this in mind. I only meant maybe that if you had a little need occasionally, ask me and I'd help you.

But you have over-stepped yourself. I never meant this. Nobody ever walked out of God's presence with a red face saying, I had too much faith. Never. God says, I'm perfectly willing to do anything you want Me to do and ask Mand I'll give it to you. And He's committed Himself.

His holy name is there, sealed by the blood of His son and baptized with the tears and blood of His prophets and apostles. And it's all here. Nobody ever needs to say, I asked God too much.

I'm awfully sorry. I felt so embarrassed when I had overthought on this and was too optimistic and believed that God meant to help more than He did. Nobody ever, I say, had such an experience. God says He did not tell the sons of men to believe in Him in vain.

Now, my friends, I'm expecting better things for us. And I am warning about one little thing, and that is this. I believe with Wesley, who defined once what a fanatic was. He said that a fanatic was one who looked for desired ends, but ignored the necessary means of attaining those ends. Now let's kick that around a little bit until we get hold of it.

A Christian is one who believes in and wants certain ends, but who is wise enough to look for the means God has laid down for the attaining of those ends. But when a man steadfastly fixes his eyes upon the ends and neglects the means, he is a fanatic. That's Wesley's definition of a fanatic, and I think it is a very sound one.

It is not a man who loves too much, not a man who prays too much, not a man who is too spiritual, not a man who is too separated from the world. That's what the world says a fanatic is. The man doesn't smoke an old, gurgly, stinking pipe. They say he's a fanatic on religion. And if he doesn't gamble or attend theaters or go to nightclubs, they say he's a fanatic on religion. But I think that Wesley's definition is better.

A fanatic is not a person who's too good, that's impossible, there aren't any. A fanatic is one who seeks desired ends, but who will not meet the means and conditions laid down for the discovering and realizing of those ends.

Now my friends, God Almighty is perfectly ready to help us, there's no question about that. He's perfectly ready to help us.

Now let us look at some of the ends and some of the means to those ends and see why in one sense we can be a very fanatical people when we pray. Now says God, you petition me that your people be deeply instructed in the Scriptures.

And I do pray that way. I pray long and often that way. When I go on a train like a trip to New York where I have hours to spend in a roomette, I take an old pair of praying trousers with me, change out of my good clothes, and shut that door and spend my time, most of it there, a lot of it at any rate, on my knees. And I wait on God for you, and I ask God that you might be a people instructed very deeply in the Scriptures.

All right, something is saying to my heart this morning, how can you have anything but a false hope, a fanatical hope, when you're praying that your people be deeply instructed in the Scriptures, and they read other things, fifty to one? For every verse of My Word, they read, they read fifty times that much of other material.

How many of you have read the Bible through in the last year? How many have read the Bible through in the last five years? How many of you Christians have ever read your Bible through? How many of you do more than a chapter a day or a card that tells you where to read?

I recommend throw all such cards away, get rid of them, get rid of them, all of these little cards that say now on Wednesday morning at nine o'clock read thus and thus, and on Thursday read thus and thus. Throw them away and get on your knees and read your Bible. And it's wonderful how the Word of God will bless you and you'll come through all right.

But anyway, we say God instruct our people, make us wise in the Scriptures. Brethren, you might just as well get on your knees and ask God to teach your son chemistry, and then have your son refuse to go to the classes or read the books. A man wants to get learned in chemistry; he's going to have to study chemistry. He's going to have to give himself to it.

He can't take his chemistry book and put it down to gather dust and read something else. He's going to have to read his book, and he's going to have to listen to lectures, and he's going to have to do some research, and he's going to have to take it seriously. If he wants anything more than a smattering of chemistry, he's going to have to use the means toward the end. And all the praying grandmothers and all the sentimental praying saints that live in the world can't teach a boy chemistry if he won't study.

And so, when the Word of God says that we ought to be instructed in the Scriptures and following the word, I pray God instruct my people, teach them deeply in the Bible. And we ignore the Bible, read it only occasionally, live on tracts and capsule bits of information we get here and there in cheap religious magazines.

How can we ever hope that God will answer that prayer? God says, I'm willing, son. It's not my fault. I'm perfectly willing to give illumination and light and instruction, but I can't enlighten Scripture in the mind of the man who hasn't got Scripture in his mind.

If we want to know the word of God, we're going to have to take this book seriously, brethren. And we're going to have to do more and take courses. That's the lazy man's way out.

Whenever a fellow runs to take a course, I know he's too lazy to read. He's too lazy to study. He won't discipline himself and get down to the Book. Go to the Book and it's wonderful what the Holy Ghost will teach you, my brethren. But we're going to have to cooperate with the Holy Ghost.

So, I say, something in my heart tells me, what's the use of praying for your people that they might be instructed in Scripture when they're not a Bible-loving people? Now, certainly that's not true of all. And certainly, the ones who I'm talking to know who I mean. And I don't know your name and couldn't go to your house. So this is not a personal attack. It's simply what God's saying to my heart, that He can't force instruction upon us. We're going to have to cooperate with Him. We're going to have to take this Book and love it to death and read it and search it and wait on it and keep it by us and read it constantly.

And something says, you request Me that your people be the best living, holiest people in all the world. And says God, I can only make them as good as they want to be. I can't make them any better than they desire to be. And so you're wasting a lot of prayer, praying that your people might be the best living people in Chicago when they will not meet My conditions.

Everybody's as good as he wants to be. You can set that down, my brethren. All of this self-pity that gets us crying on our own shoulders. Oh, I want to be a better man. I want to be a better man.

You are as good a man as you want to be. Put that down. You're as pure a man as you want to be. Put that down. Because real spiritual desire brings fullness. They that hunger and thirst shall be filled. And the man stands up and says with trembling voice,

oh, I'm hungry and thirsting after God, but I'm getting nowhere. He's deceiving himself. He's got as much of God as he wants. And every man has as much of God as he wants.

So let us not imagine we can become good people by saying, God, make me a good man. There are conditions to be met in terms. And those terms are that we must cooperate with God in repentance and in self-searching.

We must seek correction and cease to do evil and learn to do good and practice virtue; discipline ourselves and bring ourselves down meekly before God in obedience. And then we'll become good. Then God will make us a good people. And the prayers will be answered that our people will be the best people in the world. But they'll only be so if we cooperate with God.

For it is fanatical praying to get down and ask God to come in arbitrarily and push goodness on people. It doesn't work that way, brethren. There must be cooperation on the part of the people.

Sometimes we have prayer meetings, and we get down and there's some real intense praying for God's blessing and for revival. Nothing happens. And then those on the borders of the church, and the church always has its borders, they shrug and laugh and say, oh, they've been doing that for twenty years. They've been doing that for twenty years, always praying for something and never getting anything.

Well, God is registering those prayers, brethren. And the honest-hearted soul that begs God in tears for the people, he's not losing his prayers, even if they're never answered for you. God's hearing them and He'll pour them out on somebody somewhere sometime. But we can thwart the plan of God for us by not meeting the conditions.

No man can be made any better than he wants to be. No man can be holier than he wants to be. But every man is as holy as he wants to be.

Let's keep on praying, but let's remember that if our prayers are going to bring the desired results to us, we're going to have to cooperate with God. And I hear God saying, you petition me to dwell among you as a pillar of cloud, and how often I pray that prayer, God dwell among us.

Mr. McAfee has heard me pray, and I suppose until he's weary of it, I want you to dwell among us, God, as a cloud by day and a fire by night, and lead us through the wilderness home. And yet, you know that Israel had come out of Egypt before that cloud and fire appeared. Israel was on her way out of Egypt, and Egypt was behind her when that prayer was realized.

The fire and cloud doesn't come to Egypt, it only comes to the edge of Egypt to lead the people out. Shekinah never visits Egypt, gentlemen, or if it does, only for a brief moment to lead the people out, I repeat. It is when we're on our way to Canaan that the cloud and the fire lead.

Oh, I want more than I want anything else in the world, I want the presence of God in this place. I want that more than I want to live, that everybody that ever steps in our

church will go away and say, well, the church isn't big, and they don't have vast throngs, but I tell you, there was something there. There was something there, and I'd rather have it than to have riches. I would rather have it than to have the biggest church in the world. I would rather have it that when people come in here, they go away and say, well, it was all pretty good, but the big thing was, there was an essence there.

But then remember this, we can't keep that Shekinah long if we turn our faces back toward Egypt. That Shekinah was with a people that were on their way toward the promised land, and it went on with them into the promised land and dwelt finally between the wings of the cherubim, but it never went to Egypt. And if Israel had turned as some of them counseled and gone back into Egypt, they'd have left the Shekinah glory hovering in the wilderness. He'd never have gone back to Egypt.

Now, if we want that presence here, we're going to have to meet the conditions. We're going to have to stop grieving Him and hurting Him and opposing Him and quenching Him and resisting Him, and we're going to have to cultivate Him as we would a guest.

If the Queen, the lovely little Mother Queen of England were to come. Why, you'd hire all the neighbors you could to fix your house and make it spotless. You'd turn the place over to make it the best you could. You wouldn't know how quite to do when royalty's around because you're a democratic type of person, but you'd do the best you could.

You'd say, well, for the history's sake, for the relation we have with that great empire and for all the ties we have and for all this, I want to give honor to whom honors due. You'd do that, and you'd be careful not to say anything unkind.

I'm sure you wouldn't call George III a tramp. I'm sure you wouldn't make an attack on Churchill. I'm sure you wouldn't insult Parliament, when smiley little Queen Elizabeth was present. You'd want her to be at home, and you'd want her to feel that she was welcome. Ah, we haven't a queen here. No queens of heaven or earth do we love. We have a King here. Ah, we have a King, and we don't want to hurt Him, and we don't want to grieve Him.

And then, God is saying to my heart, you ask power for your people. I can't give power to a building. I can only give power to people. I can only give power to vessels that are open and clean and ready.

And remember, your people have as much power as they want. Any more would embarrass them in their present state of heart. The Holy Ghost were to come and fall on some people, it would embarrass others.

We have as much of the Holy Ghost as we can stand in our present state of heart, our present moral condition. If we want more of the Holy Ghost, we're going to have to prepare for the Holy Ghost. God says you want numbers to increase, and yet your people are religiously contended and drive their way back and forth.

A car could go without being driven, almost, from house to church. Never a detour to bring in a sinner. Never a telephone call to bring in the lost. And yet how can it be possible that it will increase when your people are winning souls by proxy?

During the Civil War, it didn't work that way in the Second and First World Wars, but in the Civil War they had a little scheme. Here was a man, John, young John, received a notification from the government that he had been drafted. John had old parents, or he wanted to go to school, or he just plain didn't like to go to the Army.

So, he walked down two miles to Jim's place and said, Jim, you're about my age and you're in good health, and I've got a summons to come. I'm drafted into the Army. I don't want to go. I'll give you $200 if you will go. Jim says, $200? You want to think I want to get shot at for $200? Make it $500 and I'll go. All right, $500, I'll get it somewhere.

So, he digs up $500 and buys a proxy. Now that was actually done during the Civil War. If you didn't want to go and you could dig around, find a proxy and buy him, you could send him.

Many a fellow had his head shot off who'd been paid for going, and the fellow whose head should have been shot off was back home taking it easy. They stopped that in the First and Second Wars in Korea, but that's the way they did it, I repeat, in the Civil War. So Jim goes and wears the uniform and charges and retreats and shoots and marches and obeys and loves the sergeant, and after a couple of years he returns. He has served by proxy, or the other man has served by this proxy.

Now I don't want to hurt anybody. God help me, I want to be nice and kind, and sometimes when you say everything that ought to be said, you feel as if you'd been butchered. You feel you want to go home and bathe and get the blood off your hands.

But you know what I find? I find we Alliance people are buying by proxy other people to do our soul-winning force. We're proud of how big per capita giving we make and have, but we're not doing very much. We buy, we give heavily, and we get a summons, go and tell my people, go tell the world, and we say, I don't want to go, so I'll buy somebody, and by money we buy the work done.

Oh, my friends, do you want to live and die that way? I hope you don't. I don't want to. I give too. I give to the commission. I give to the church. I give. But God help me if I ever think that I can buy the job done that I ought to be doing.

There's no such thing as proxies in the kingdom of God. God never sent another man when He'd called the first man, until the first man proved he was no good. He never, never did He say, all right, John, if you don't want to go, I'll send Jim. You pay Jim, and it'll count as if it's been you. Never. But I'm afraid there's too much of that in our circles.

How big is the offering this year? Well, $50,000 for missions. Isn't that wonderful? But how many souls have your people won? Well, hardly anybody. They've been buying somebody else, paying somebody else to go do their work for them.

These things should you have done, but not left the other undone. If God has so honored you, that you can give $1,000 a year to missions, thank God for that. But that does not in any wise release you from your sacred obligation to try to get all the relatives you can and all the sinners you can and all the neighbors you can into the sound of the gospel.

Well, then, God says, you want great peace to be upon your people. And God says, I'm ready, I'm willing. I love to bestow peace. How can I bestow peace upon people who hold grudges, whisper, oppose and criticize and blame and pout and gossip and find fault and drag their feet?

God bless some of our lovely people. You have to wear out two pairs of shoes a year dragging their feet because they don't like something I do or don't like something McAfee does or don't like something the board does. Dragging their feet. Well, watch your corns, brother, because you can only drag your feet so often.

But how can we have peace when there are some folks dragging their feet? How can we have peace when all you have to do is split an infinitive and somebody's on your neck? All you have to do is to misname a date, call it 27 when it ought to be 28, and folks smile and say, see, the guy's a bum.

Well, brethren, how can we hope to have the will of God when we're just not cooperating?

I had an experience recently. I might as well admit it was among the Alliance people. They weren't Nazarenes. They were Alliance people, not in our church. And I came away saying to myself, now hold on here, Brother Tozer, how is this? How can we be so emotionally moved by a text and so completely unmoved when it comes to practical living? Go to a camp meeting and shout and beat the bench and weep and pray and walk around shaking hands with everybody and crying and go right back out to violate the Word of God in our private lives, in our business, in our home. How can it be?

We must cooperate with God, brethren. God's willing, but He can't. The omnipotent arm of God is tied. We tie it with our failures, with our dispositional sins.

Now, lastly, you ask, says God, would this be a New Testament church, a real New Testament church, free from all the modern trinkets and claptrap and cotcheries that have been invented in evangelical circles? Yeah. We're relatively free from that.

But I think I know partly why we're free, perhaps mostly why we're free. We're free because a hard-jawed fellow who'll settle for fewer people if he can get good ones has been around so long nobody dares run over him.

And if I drop over or move to Miami, how long would it be before this would be only one more half-saved evangelical church, admitting all of the God-dishonoring and Spirit-grieving importations that are strangling the church of Christ in our day? Why?

Because a lot of people's hearts have never been converted from Egypt. They're here, and there's no leeks and no garlic here, but they still sniff into the wind when they pass the garlic patch. They haven't been converted from leeks and garlics, though for certain reasons they're with us. And they don't get any diet of leek or garlic here, but oh, how they'd enjoy just one good meal. And old Father Tozer says, no, we're going to keep clean, and we're going to keep this church clean. I wonder how long, when Father Tozer

joins yesterday's 7,000 years, how long it'll be before those whose hearts have never been converted from Egypt take us back to Egypt again.

How tragic. The very bricks would cry out. The very bricks would cry out. Cry out with the eloquent voice of Mrs. Deeds, and Walter Gillespie, and old brother Wood, and saints that have prayed and wept and made this church what it is, and built it what it was, and kept it clean, and insisted it be clean. And if it ever starts back to Egypt, the stones in the walls will cry out, shame, shame, shame. But we've got to get our hearts converted, brethren.

The old philosopher said this, or was it was an Indian holy man, said this, and he was right when he said it. He said, some of you abstain from wrongdoing, but you carry your desires along with you. And I count no man free who still wants to do wrong, even if he can't, and isn't permitted to.

He's perfectly right, I don't care who he is, he's right. We can take that text and baptize it into the New Testament and make it real, for it's real here today. A man is only as good as he wants to be, and if he's only marking time until he gets his leeks and garlics, he's a garlic eater and a leek lover, and he can't call himself anything else.

Now, what does the Holy Ghost say? I'm done in two minutes. What does the Holy Ghost say? The Holy Ghost says, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasen. Be zealous, therefore, and repent. For behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Oh, friends, I hear the knuckles, the knock of a wonderful one who wants to come into this church and wants to come into our individual lives, but He can't come in until He's rebuked and chastened, for there are things He can't approve.

Oh, that we could individually clean up our lives, that we could have individually humbled ourselves, that we could have individually bring ourselves low before Him, and meekly kneel at the open door and say, Enter, enter, Lord, enter. I count myself honored. Enter, Lord Jesus.

Oh, then should thy righteousness break forth as the morning, and thy fruit should be as Lebanon, if only we would obey. Shan't we? Don't you feel the way I do about it this morning, dear people? I believe you do. I believe you do.

I have good hopes. I've been severe, but I don't apologize. I meant to be. I intended to be. But it's only for Christ's sake, and your sake, and the sake of a blazing white testimony on this corner in the midst of moral darkness, that we will be able to don't you want God to do something for you?

Won't you this morning take a vow before him? Don't wait and get all sentimental New Year's Eve, go all out and make vows you can't keep. Let's think about it while we're still calm and collected.

Don't you want now to enter a new place and say to yourself and say to God, Father, I've been foolish, praying for things and then not taking the means that lead me to them. I've

been asking for purity, but I haven't been trying to be pure. I've been asking for light and haven't sought it. Asking for Thy presence, but I haven't cleaned up so He could come. Asking for the church, but I haven't done things to help the church. Asking for sinners to be converted, but never brought anybody.

Oh, I'm ashamed of it, Father. I'm ashamed of it. Forgive me, Lord. I repent. And we shall see the quiet feet of Jesus walk across the threshold of our hearts into our fellowship. I say I want that more than I want millions of dollars.

Let others have gold and silver and give us Jesus and God.