

# THE GOSPEL WOMAN.

PAUL'S PLEA FOR THOSE WHO LABOR-  
ED WITH HIM IN THE WORK.

AS THE "MAN BEHIND THE GUN."

Woman For Centuries Has Borne the  
Greatest Burden of Religious Strife,  
and Rev. Dr. Talmage Thinks the Time  
Has Come for Their Reward and For the  
More Practical Recognition of Their  
Services.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Can-  
ada, in the year 1903, by William Bailey, of To-  
ronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Chicago, August 2.—In this sermon  
the preacher pays a fitting tribute  
to consecrated mothers and daughters  
and pleads for a wider and more  
practical recognition of their ser-  
vices in church and religious work.  
The text is Philippians iv, 3, "Help  
those women who labored with me  
in the gospel."

The conspicuous places in the  
church have always been filled by  
men. The effective, personal work  
of the church, however, has to a  
large extent been done by women.  
Opening the scroll of gospel triumphs  
the names of the greatest preachers  
and organizers have been men; but  
in the ordinary walks of religious  
life the consecrated female workers  
have always outnumbered the con-  
secrated male workers. In the history  
of the Christian church the women  
members, as a class, have rarely  
failed Christ in hours of need.

The part woman has in the gospel  
campaign is that exalted by mili-  
tary historians and poets as that of  
the "man behind the gun."

But, though in military parlance  
we may talk about the "man behind  
the gun," we cannot in the church  
militant. It is the "woman behind  
the gospel gun" who for centuries  
upon centuries has borne the great-  
est burden of religious strife. It is the  
"woman behind the gospel gun" in  
the home, in the church, on the  
street, in the country, in the city  
and in the foreign missions who has  
carried the name of Jesus Christ all  
around the world.

It is the "woman behind the gospel  
gun" who has won the greatest gospel  
victories for our churches in the past.  
Therefore the purpose of this sermon is  
to make a manly plea to the fathers  
and husbands, brothers and sons, of  
the families of our churches to take  
their positions in religious work be-  
side their mothers and wives, sisters  
and daughters. I want to make the  
same kind of a manly plea for the  
men to work for Christ as did Paul  
when he wrote to the men of his  
time to help those women who lab-  
ored with him in the gospel.

Nearly every man in my audience  
to-day is a believer in Jesus Christ.  
It is so with other churches. Infidels  
and agnostics are still numerous, un-  
happily, but they are not in our  
churches, and the voice from the pul-  
pit does not reach their ears. My  
ministry so far as preaches to in-  
fidels and agnostics is practically ended. Theo-  
dore Cuyler, the grand old man of the  
Brooklyn pulpit, lately declared that  
in a ministry of over sixty years  
he had never yet preached a sermon  
upon the divine authenticity of the  
Scriptures. He believed that  
almost every person with whom his  
work came in contact was not only  
a believer in the Bible, but also in  
the divinity of Jesus Christ. I be-  
lieve that Dr. Cuyler is right. I be-  
lieve that every man in church to-  
day is not only a believer in Jesus  
Christ, but that he also expects  
some day to receive Christ as his  
Saviour and to be redeemed from  
sin by the atonement of the cross.

You show the fact involuntarily,  
almost automatically, that you  
are a believer in the saving power  
of a divine Christ. How do you act?  
When do you say in a crisis? When  
we are climbing over the Johns-  
town ruins a few days after the aw-  
ful Conemaugh flood, Rev. Dr. Beale  
told me that during the pandemon-  
ium of death a saloon keeper, as he  
was sweeping by, caught hold of his  
church's steeple. As he hung there  
he was heard again and again to be-  
sech God for his life. Mr. Moody  
said that when he was returning  
from Europe on the last trip of his  
life the steamer for a whole day was  
every moment expected to go to the  
bottom. Then he heard men every-  
where publicly praying to God for  
help—men who, perhaps, had not  
publicly or privately prayed to God  
for years. Their prayers at that

time proved conclusively that most  
men do believe in Jesus Christ; that  
most men do expect some day to be  
saved by the atoning power of the  
cross.

Now, my brother, if you believe in  
Jesus Christ and hope some day to  
be saved by him why is it that your  
belief does not affect your life? Why  
are you not man enough to go and  
work in his vineyard? Your sloth-  
ful, lazy habits, in a spiritual sense,  
ought to make you despise yourself  
and have utter contempt for your  
past actions in reference to your  
church. You know it is ingrained in  
every manly man to despise a shirk.  
If a party of us should go hunting  
next summer we would naturally ex-  
pect every member of that party to  
do his full share of work. If one  
of the men refused to do it we would  
never take him out upon another  
camping trip. We would say to one  
another: "That man is no good. He  
is mean and contemptible. He is a  
lazy, despicable shirk."

You, my brother, believing in Jes-  
us Christ and hoping some day to be  
eternally saved by his blood, ought  
in common honesty to fully realize  
that your actions toward the church  
are just as despicable and contempt-  
ible as the shirking characteristics  
which you despise in others. You are  
practically saying to yourself: "I  
want to some day reach heaven; but  
in the meantime I want my wife, my  
mother, my sister, my daughter, to  
do all my praying and working in  
the church. When I am in my last  
sickness I want their minister to  
come and fix things all up for me in  
a spiritual sense. And when I am

dead I want their minister to state  
over my casket that I have repented  
at the eleventh hour and have been  
saved all right. In other words, I  
want to win every joy and hope of  
the religious faith without lifting a  
hand for Christ, without doing one  
stroke of work in the Master's ser-  
vice." Oh, my brother, such a state-  
ment as that is a lie, and a de-  
spicable I do not believe you have  
ever fully realized what your gospel  
shirking has signified. Come, man,  
and be a true man in the spiritual  
as well as in the temporal way.

Come and take of your coat in holy  
enthusiasm. Do not compel the wo-  
men folk of your families to longer  
bear the brunt of the gospel struggle.  
A strong, robust, manly man com-  
pels the admiration of other men.  
There is a popular theory abroad  
that a manly man can never fasci-  
nate the masculine world as a beau-  
tiful woman can. But I do not  
think that that theory is true. I  
know it is not in my own case. I  
also know it is not true with many  
of my gentlemen friends. I believe  
that the fascination which a strong  
man has upon me is the same fasci-  
nation which has upon all men ex-  
cept those mental weaklings and  
masculine nonentities who think that  
the chief purpose for which a man  
was created was to eat and sleep, to  
dress and undress, and dress again.

If a manly man is to have such a  
great influence upon other men, who  
will be able to do your Christian  
work unless you are willing to do  
it? There are persons and spheres  
which you, and only you, can reach.  
The women who have labored with  
Paul in the gospel cannot do it. Your  
mother, wife, or sister, or  
daughter cannot do it. You know  
that there are to-day down in your  
store some clerks whom no human  
being can touch for Christ as you,  
their employer, can touch, if you will.

Would you not like to be a Chris-  
tian scientist like Henry Drummond?  
Some people are foolish enough to  
suppose that his greatest work was  
in the lectures on natural history,  
which he first delivered before his  
classes in the Free Church College of  
Glasgow. But I tell you that the  
greatest of all his work Henry Drum-  
mond did in his life was done when  
he stood before the young university  
men of Edinburgh, gathered Sunday  
after Sunday within a large hall of  
Edinburgh, and testified to them of  
Jesus Christ. At that time he  
molded men's hearts as well as their  
brains. He molded them, as I be-  
lieve no modern Christian minister  
was ever able to mold them. For  
there, as an undomesticated Christian  
scientist, he stood simply as a manly  
Christian man, appealing to men. If  
I had my own way in the world, and  
had the intellect to do it, I believe  
I could give my Saviour better ser-  
vice outside of the pulpit than in-  
side.

Oh, man sitting before me to-day,  
do not cherish the idea that physical  
courage is the only or the greatest  
element of manliness. I tell you that  
the manliest man the world has  
ever seen have been men who never  
saw a battle field, who never raised

a hand to strike another man. I ap-  
peal to you. Are you ready to tell  
them that the bravest heroes of life  
are not always those who don the  
soldier's uniform and, with un-  
blanched cheek, walk up to the can-  
non's mouth? Are you ready, by the  
example of your own life, to  
teach a sinful world that the nob-  
lest heroes of every generation are  
the moral heroes—these heroes who,  
if necessary, are ready to die for  
Christ, die for the right, die as Paul  
died, who urged his yoke fellows to  
be bold testifiers and workers for  
the cross?

Every true man knows that his  
wife is not as useful and active a  
member of the Christian church when  
she goes to church alone as she  
would be if her husband were ready  
to go by her side and help her in  
her Christian endeavor to spread the  
gospel. The martial ties are very  
sacred. They unify in more ways  
than one the twin who once stood  
in the nuptial altar. After of her  
husband and wife have been living to-  
gether for many, many years they  
not only begin to think alike, but  
also to grow to look alike. I have  
again and again noticed a similarity  
of looks which are seen upon the  
faces of aged husbands and wives  
who have long lived side by side.  
They have unconsciously absorbed  
parts of each other's physical as well  
as mental personalities. So when a  
husband is an irreligious man, a  
nonchurchgoer, a scoffer, a ridiculer,  
his sneers and shortcomings have a  
marked evil effect upon the life of the  
Christian woman, who, the more  
marriage altar has pledged to him, her  
love and her life. She may fight  
against deterioration as she will, but  
in spite of herself she cannot be as  
good a woman as if she had married  
a good Christian man, who has been  
consecrated to the service of the  
Lord Jesus Christ from the day  
that he left his mother's home.

Husbands, in view of this tremen-  
dous fact, are you ready to-day to  
curtail to a greater or less extent  
the spiritual usefulness of your wife?  
Are you ready to curtail her spiri-  
tual influence over the life of her chil-  
dren because her own spiritual life,  
on account of your personal indiffer-  
ence and sin, has been depleted? Are  
you ready for the same sinful mar-  
ital cause to curtail her influence in  
the church and in the neighborhood?  
Because you wish her to be a social  
queen are you more desirous of see-  
ing her surrender the better part of  
herself to the service of the world  
rather than to the service of her Di-  
vine Master?

But I take a step further in this  
thought. Have you thought that you  
may, perhaps, totally destroy your  
wife's faith in Jesus Christ? Many  
men, and many a husband has done  
this before, and perhaps you may be  
doing this now. If you, O man, are  
indifferent to the gospel message,  
and shall be eternally destroyed, per-  
haps your wife may become indiffer-  
ent about her own salvation.

Oh, sinful husband, glorying in the  
intensity of your wife's affection for  
you, have you ever thought of the  
extremity to which that love may  
carry her? What if she should so de-  
sire to be with you that, rather than  
be separated from you after death,  
she should give up Christian useful-  
ness—give up her God and heaven?  
What will be your remorse if you  
have to lament not only the loss of  
your own soul but the eternal woe  
which love of you has brought upon  
her? To-day you may not only be  
deciding not only your own eternal  
destiny, but you may be destroying  
your Christian wife's spiritual wel-  
fare. Side by side you were at the  
altar. Side by side you will be in  
the grave. Side by side you may be  
in eternal despair.

But I would like to speak a word  
before I close to the good, moral,  
Christian man, who believes in God  
and yet is not a church member. You  
are ready to confess him in private  
conversation and yet not willing to  
publicly confess him as a church  
member, though in that way you  
might help the women who are lab-  
oring in the gospel.

That church membership is a  
mighty help to every man in his  
struggle to lead a truer, purer, nob-  
ler Christian life there is no doubt.  
Every true Christian is a better  
Christian when he has a holy pur-  
pose, gives his allegiance to some  
one church and allows his name to  
be placed upon the church roll. You  
may still be a Christian and yet not  
a church member. You may be able  
by the grace of God to be a good,  
moral, upright, Christian man in  
spite of never having taken this im-  
portant step. You may have had a  
gospel bringing up that has helped  
you, but what about that young  
clerk who is watching you? He has  
not yet publicly confessed faith in  
God. He has had no sacred child-  
hood. He is looking at you now and  
saying, "Well, if Mr. So-and-So can  
be a good moral man and not a  
church member I guess I can." Dare  
you, oh, moral man, allow that boy  
to make such an excuse?

Being able by the grace of God to  
persuade a good, moral, upright  
man to publicly profess Jesus Christ  
in a church aisle was the means I  
believe, by which I have accomplish-  
ed my greatest single work for good  
in the gospel ministry. That man  
was one of the leading millionaires  
of Pittsburgh. Every one who knew  
him was ready to testify that he  
was square through and through.  
His word was as good as his bond.  
He was the soul of honor. Yet year  
in and year out he went among the  
business men of the Smoky City as a  
good, moral man and not as a Chris-  
tian man. The young man said:  
"Well, if I can be as straight and  
true as Mr. So-and-So, that is all I  
ask." I guess my chance for heaven  
will be first class. I heard of such  
remarks made by the young men. I  
made up my mind I would carry  
them straight to that millionaire. It  
was morally the bravest act I ever  
did. I was at that time merely a  
boy and therefore it was doubly  
hard. First I prayed over the mat-  
ter. I felt that I had a right, and  
a full right, to go to God and ask  
him for what was on my heart. Then  
I started for that rich man's house. I

When he came down I began to plead  
in the name of my Christ. I said to  
him: "Mr. So-and-So, I know you  
are a Christian. Your Christian mo-  
ther and Christian grandfather, be-  
sides your Christian dead wife, were  
all members of the Old Second  
church. But what about these young  
men who are looking up to you as  
an example? Dare you and will you  
be responsible for their lives? Dare  
you refuse to publicly confess Christ  
and turn these young men's minds  
toward the cross, which is the source  
of all your strength?" Tears began  
to well up out of the great finan-  
cier's eyes. They rolled down upon  
his cheek and his beard. He extend-  
ed his hand and took mine and said,  
"Mr. Talmage, do you think that  
the young men are saying that about  
me?" I answered, "I know they are."  
Then he said, "I will publicly pro-  
fess Christ as my Saviour in the  
church aisle at our next commun-  
ion."

In all the history of the Second  
Presbyterian church there never went  
forth a greater religious influence  
than on that day. In the bank, over  
the counter, on the street and in  
the home hundreds of men were say-  
ing, "Have you heard the news? Mr.  
So-and-So has become a Christian.  
He joined the church last Sunday."  
And from that one moral Christian  
man's action of publicly professing  
Christ in the church I believe hun-  
dreds of young men were brought to  
kneel at the foot of the cross. Oh,  
moral Christian man, do not sup-  
pose that while you are outside of  
church fellowship you can really help  
the women who are laboring in the  
gospel! Be a Christian church mem-  
ber. Place your name in big black  
letters upon the muster roll of the  
church. As a Christian, wearing the  
gospel armor and fighting under the  
gospel standard, throw your whole  
soul and heart into this Christ strug-  
gle against sin.

There is a very common sign upon  
all the board fences to-day, in which  
Henry George stands with uplifted  
hand, saying, "I am for men." To-  
day, as Christ's messenger, I am  
pleading for men. I want Christian  
men for gospel visitation. I want  
Christian men for the prayer meet-  
ing and for the church officers. I  
want the Peters and Lukes and Mat-  
thews, Bartholomews, Johns and  
Pauls and the Timothys of the pres-  
ent generation. In other words, as  
a Christian pastor, I come to-day  
and say, Oh, man, in the name of  
Jesus Christ, we want you to help  
the women who are now laboring in  
our midst! Will you come and give  
to us your gospel help?

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