

ages, haunted the places of saints, graves, or saintly rags and bones, or like those ignorant devotees of papal Quebec who are this day seeking nearness to divine favor at the shrine of St. Ann Beaupre. "Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down from above) or who shall descend into the deep? (But the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.)"

Yes, this is the glad tidings of grace. Where you and I are now and just as we now are, by faith we can find God in Christ. Our humanity can find God in God's humanity, and nowhere else.

The truth is, long before we seek God, God has been seeking us. Look at the words which immediately precede that exhortation which we have been considering. It is God who first arrests our attention with the cry, "Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters. Come, ye come." It is God's voice that sends out the exhortation, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found."

Yes, indeed, long before you or I ever dreamt of coming to God, He came to us in this old gospel of grace and truth, in this story of Jesus Christ which lay by our mother's bedside the day we were born, which lay on our father's table through all the days of our infancy and youth. In this gospel God is manifest in the flesh, and standing upon the dead level of our human nature, He graciously invites us, "COME UNTO ME." "No one cometh unto the Father but by ME." Indeed in these days and in this land you and I cannot get out of Christ's influence except by hiding from Him, neglecting that salvation He presses upon our acceptance, refusing His urgent grace, turning our backs on His cross and closing our ears to His voice and telling Him, "Go thy way for this time, in a more convenient season I will call for thee."

To those who have assumed this attitude, allow me to say plainly and solemnly, there is a time when you may seek God successfully, but when that time is past you will seek in vain. This awful doctrine is wrapped up in one word, WHILE. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found." Yes, it is awfully possible to begin seeking the Lord when it is forever too late to find Him. Just read these few passages thoughtfully:—"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door saying, Lord, open unto us; and He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets. But He shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." Then said Jesus again unto them, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come." Some of us may have already provoked the Lord, so that we may be now standing at this critical point—our next refusal our last.

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found." While! What can this word "while" just in this spot mean? It unquestionably means that we can reach a time when, beyond the cry for prayer and the touch of our faith, the God of salvation may be far away, and far away forever.

### Rev. Aaron Cogswell

had his birthday in Kings Co., N. S., on the 26th of May, 1829. He was converted at the age of 18 years, and baptized by the Rev. E. Masters. At this early age he entered upon his life's work in the public ministry. The opportunity for education at this date in these provinces was quite limited, and the demand for intellectual culture not as imperative as at the present day. Our educational institutions at Wolfville were just beginning to supply for the Baptists the needed aid. By the assistance of friends Bro. C. entered upon his studies there. The Baptist church at Hantsport was without a pastor. An invitation was given to the young man to supply. The result was an immediate and extensive revival. Educational plans were abandoned. What need for the time-consuming, soul-drying process of study, when the Holy Spirit said "go preach" to souls perishing, and the "Lo I am with you," was verified by the conversion of the sin-cursed? A call to the pastorate of the Hantsport church was extended and accepted. At the end of two years this connection terminated and the pastorate of what is now known as the Port Lorne and Hampton churches was entered upon. Here Bro. C. was ordained in 1843. Revival influences attended his ministry, but the severe trials of the pastorate, together with the conscious need of larger educational advantages, which were now beyond his reach, led him for a short time to contemplate an abandonment of the ministry. In 1850 he entered upon his labors with the church at Clements as co-pastor with the late Israel Potter, Jr. For more than twenty years he led this people with great success. It was with much reluctance they accepted his resignation that he might enter upon

the pastorate of the church at Beaver River, Yarmouth County. In the first of his labors here a great ingathering was had. More than 80 were baptized. During this pastorate he was very ill with typhoid fever, after which he never enjoyed the vigor of his earlier days, which was of more than ordinary strength. For several years he held the pastorate of the St. Mary's Bay church in Digby County. His closing labors were with the Tusket Lakes and Lake George churches in Yarmouth County. Failing strength compelled him to turn aside from the toils of the pastorate, in which he had been engaged for about half a century. His resignation took effect in April, 1890. From this date he quite slowly settled into the conditions of the second childhood. On the 24th of December, 1896, the hour of his release came. By his request his grave was made in the cemetery at Clements, where so many of his dear people were laid away. At this burial there were not a few aged ones to drop the mourner's tear for the pastor who had led them to Christ in their early years. The ministry of Bro. Cogswell was characterized by intense zeal. His early religious convictions and training were under the old "New light" regime, and his religious experiences and preaching were true to type. The three R's of the gospel supplied the theme of his sermons—Ruin by the fall, Redemption by Jesus Christ and Regeneration by the Holy Spirit. When under the special influences of the Spirit he would give no uncertain sound on these subjects, in his own impassioned manner, with wonderful effect. His ministry was crowned with extensive and powerful revivals, such as are not repeated in these provinces in these days. It was the custom of his day to associate with neighboring pastors in special services, known then as "protracted meetings." These were occasions of great religious awakenings. Bro. C.'s gifts and graces were well suited to these methods of work. No place was given to rationalism, as with sin cursed men it was and is largely of the devil. A cold religious formalism, however elegant, was labeled for the "broad way" and sinners were warned to flee from it. In an old-fashioned and dogmatic style the gospel of the grace of God was proclaimed, the happy experiences of the regenerated was emphasized, these joys of salvation were sought for and found, the new life in Christ Jesus was entered upon and the churches were strengthened by the addition of converts. It is true that high levels of uniform Christian life and work on the part of pastor and people were not attained. As in nature it was high tides and low ebbs. These religious declensions were perplexing, perhaps quite as much so as the cold formal uniformity in our churches today; but in those days of Bro. Cogswell's ministry were born into the Kingdom the very pillars of our Baptist Zion. We cannot afford in our times to undervalue the ministry of our fathers, even if it should appear to us to be impulsive and emotional rather than intellectual. Still waters at high or low levels are not living waters. Vigorous life has its variations. This fact indicates the conditions of our spiritual life.

In the life of Bro. Cogswell we have illustrated the special care God has for his servants. In the first years of his ministry a good wife was given him in the person of Miss Lydia Beckwith, a noble Christian girl. To her ability and devotion to her husband and his work, he was largely indebted for his success in his pastorate. To her children, six of whom are with them in the better land and three are on the way, she was a loving, wise mother. When in March, 1875, the Master called her home, God gave him an efficient wife in Miss Messenger of Bridgetown, N. S., who for twelve years was a wise counsellor and sharer of his toils in his last pastorate. When the closing years of helplessness came, his steps down to the end of the journey were steadied and the way made as smooth as possible by this devoted wife. Surely the blessings of the Lord maketh rich. May these rest abundantly on Sister Cogswell and the children our dear brother leaves this side the river. J. H. S.

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### "Make It So Plain That I Can Get Hold of It."

A TRUE STORY.

On the sixteenth day after the battle of Gettysburg I entered the room where a young wounded colonel was apparently near to death. As I entered he was roused from his stupor, and beckoned me to his bedside, and threw his feeble arms around my neck.

"O my father, how glad I am to see you. I was afraid you would not come till it was too late. I am too feeble to say much, though I have a great many things to say to you; you must do all the talking. Tell me all about dear mother and sister."

I soon perceived by the appearance of those in the house that there was no hope entertained of his recovery. But as I could no longer endure the agony of suspense, I at last inquired of the doctor, "Doctor, how long do you think he can live?"

"Not more than four days. He may drop away at any hour."

"Have you, or has anyone, told him of his real condition?"

"No. We have left that painful duty for you to do, as we have been expecting your arrival for several days."

As I entered the room with the dreaded message of death pressing on my heart, the eyes of my son fastened on me.

"Come, sit by my side, father. Have you been talking with the doctor about me?"

"Yes."

"What did he tell you? Does he think I shall recover?"

There was a painful hesitation for a moment.

"Don't be afraid to tell me just what he said."

"He told me you must die."

"How long does he think I can live?"

"Not to exceed four days, and that you may drop away at any hour."

With great agitation he exclaimed, "Father, is that so? Then I must die! I cannot, I must not die! Oh, I am not prepared to die now! Do tell me how I can get ready. Make it so plain that I can get hold of it. Tell me, in a few words, if you can, so that I can see it plainly. I know you can, father, for I used to hear you explain it to others."

"Twas no time now for tears, but for calmness and light, by which to lead the soul to Christ, and both were given."

"My son, I see you are afraid to die."

"Yes, I am."

"Well, I suppose you feel guilty?"

"Yes, that is it. I have been a wicked young man. You know how it is in the army."

"You want to be forgiven, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, that is what I want. Can I be, father?"

"Certainly."

"Can I know it before I die?"

"Certainly."

"Well, now, father, make it so plain that I can get hold of it."

At once an incident that had occurred during the school days of my son came to my mind. I had not thought of it before for several years. Now it came back to me, fresh with its interest, and just what was wanted to guide the agitated heart of this young inquirer to Jesus.

"Do you remember while at school in—, you came home one day, and I, having occasion to rebuke you, you became very angry, and abused me with harsh language?"

"Yes, father, I was thinking it all over a few days ago, as I thought of your coming to see me, and felt so badly about it that I wanted to see you, and once more ask you to forgive me."

"Do you remember how, after the paroxysm of your anger had subsided, you came in and threw your arms around my neck and said, 'My dear father, I am sorry I abused you so. It was not your loving son that did it. I was very angry. Won't you forgive me?'"

"Yes, I remember it very distinctly."

"Do you remember what I said to you as you wept on my neck?"

"Very well. You said, 'I forgive you with all my heart,' and kissed me. I shall never forget those words."

"Did you believe me?"

"Certainly. I never doubted your words."

"Did you then feel happy again?"

"Yes, perfectly; and since that time I have always loved you more than ever before. I shall never forget how it relieved me when you looked upon me so kindly, and said, 'I forgive you with all my heart.'"

"Well, now, this is just the way to come to Jesus. Tell him 'I am sorry,' just as you told me, and ten thousand times quicker than a father's love forgave you, will he forgive you. He says he will. Then you must take his word for it, just as you did mine."

"Why, father, is this the way to become a Christian?"

"I don't know of any other."

"Why, father, I can get hold of this. I am so glad you have come to tell me how."

He turned his head upon his pillow for rest I sank into my chair and wept freely, for my heart could no longer suppress its emotions. I had done my work, and committed the case to Christ. He, too, I was soon assured, had done his. The broken heart had made its confession, had heard what it had longed for, "I forgive you," and believed it.

I soon felt the nervous hand on my head, and heard the word "father" in such a tone of tenderness and joy, that I knew the change had come.

"Father, my dear father, I don't want you to weep any more, you need not, I am perfectly happy now. Jesus has forgiven me. I know he has, for he says so, and I take his word for it, just as I did yours."

The doctor soon came in, and found him cheerful and happy, looked at him, felt his pulse, which he had been watching with intense anxiety, and said:

"Why, Colonel, you look better."

"I am better, Doctor. I am going to get well. My father has told me how to become a Christian, and I am very happy. I believe I shall recover, for God has heard my prayer. Doctor, I want you to become a Christian, too. My father can tell you how to get hold of it."

The Colonel still lives, a member of the church of Christ.

I was made a better man and better minister by that scene, where this dear son, struggling with his guilt and fear of death, was led to Jesus, and found the pardon of his sins. I there resolved never to forget that charge he made to me in his extremity: "Make it so plain that I can get hold of it."—Evangelist.