

Isaiah 28:7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong

drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

9 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand

doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.



Growing in Your Experience

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The Evening Time Apostasy

The essence of our text of Scripture is simply this: they erred through wine. Wine is a type of the Spirit of God. This lets us know they erred through the Spirit. In other words, they did not allow the Holy Spirit to lead them. The results were that they erred in spiritual vision. The people's appetites were killed because their tables were full of filthiness. The condition that the world is seeing among some people who call themselves saints of God and ministers of the Gospel is absolutely sickening.

If you are not careful, you will limit what you call the ministry to a half dozen people and then find fault with them. In reality, the ministry are only those whom God has called, not those who have been cranked out of theological seminar-

ies like wieners out of a meat packing house. The reason conditions are so sickening is that there are many so-called sinning Christians.

We see and hear much talk about churches becoming more worldly. The reason they are becoming worldly is that they want to draw in crowds. They are not concerned about the body of Christ. Because of this, they bring in rock bands to play music, have spas for sore muscles, and form bowling leagues for those who need exercise. They do all these things under the heading of a church. Some churches even have resting places for the weary in the malls.

Today carrying a Bible is obsolete. Many people say they do not want to hear anything about God. Nevertheless, God's Word has never changed. If you are going to see God, you need to get back to the

old-time Gospel. You need to get back to what the Word of God teaches and walk in the light. If you do not, you will not make Heaven your home, despite your profession.

Backsliding and falling away have been more prevalent since the day of apostasy. The Word of God tells us that as it was in the morning time, so shall it be in the evening time. The apostasy in the morning time happened because people left their first love. The reason we are seeing an apostasy in the evening time is that people have left their first love. If you love God's eternal Truth, you will stand for the Truth, defend the Truth, and live the Truth. You will have more than a mere profession.

The devil would like to get people to believe that it would not mean much or have much effect if they were to backslide, but that is not

true. The world is watching the church. The Bible says we are living epistles, known and read of all men.

Drunk on Worldly Pleasures

The Scripture text states in verse 8 that all their tables were defiled. Literal tables have food on them for consumption. The food one eats becomes a part of him; what one eats is exactly what he is. Now, spiritually speaking, there was no clean place because their tables were defiled, yet they claimed to be God's people.

Today people are acting as they do because their tables are defiled. The Apostle Paul wrote in Titus 2:2-3: "That the aged men be sober The aged women likewise." Friend, he was not talking about being drunk but about one's need to control himself. Backsliding begins when one fails to let God have control of his life. The Bible also speaks of being drunk on pleasures. There has never been a time that I know of when people have been so pleasure mad as in the day and age in which we are living. People love pleasure more than they love being on fire for God, standing for God, and letting Him be their all in all.

Too often when it comes to wanting a boyfriend or a girlfriend or the pleasures of this old world, individuals put God on the shelf, so to speak. After they get what they want, then they hope to go back and pick Him up again. Consequently, they lose all the zeal they had in their experience. The Word of God talks about things that cause people to become spiritually drunk on the pleasures of this world and the cares of life. It is not talking about being drunk on wine, but about getting too wrapped up in the things of life. The cares of life are crowding in on people so much that they spend little time reading the Bible, praying, or assembling at the house of God. The very first thing that happens when people get wrapped up in worldly things is that they leave

God out. They have time for everything else, but they do not have time for God. Serving Him is the most important thing in life. When people crowd God out, they have lost their first love and they have gone into spiritual darkness.

I want you to realize that you must put God first in your heart and life. You must not neglect your prayer life, your Bible study, and your assembling at the house of God. Someone may say, "I can listen to tapes of the services." That is not God's plan. He said to assemble yourself because He has called a pastor to feed you. To grow spiritually, you must sit under a pastor and obey what he has to say.

Romans 10:14 tells you, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" You cannot hear without a preacher. That is the reason God calls men away from secular jobs and says, "Son, I want you to quit your job and feed the saints of God." If you listen, to tapes simply because you have no desire to get to the house of God, you have lost something.

You need to see the things that defile men and make them unable to be taught so that you do not stumble over the same things. All you have to do is look at their countenances and consider what they talk about, and you will find out whether they are spiritual.

Failing of the Grace of God

Another thing that defiles people, according to the Word of God, is their tongues. We read in James 3:5-8: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents,

and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."

Friend, we have seen all kinds of animals tamed. The only reason they can train the animals is that God placed something within them to cause them to fear man. Genesis 9:2 says, "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered."

Although man can tame animals, no man has ever tamed that little member called the tongue. It has defiled many people, and it is defiling more every day. The Bible says the tongue is full of deadly poison. It is destroying more people all the time, because people cannot keep their mouths shut. What is the answer? They need to get God in their hearts. He can give them the power to control their tongues and keep their mouths shut. The reason people who claim to be saints run off at the mouth is that they do not have enough of God.

The Word of God lets you know that when you fail of the grace of God, or do not have enough grace to take you through temptations or trials, many will become defiled. Hebrews 12:14 says, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." If you do not follow peace, you are not going to see God. Also, if you do not follow peace and holiness, others will not see their need of God.

Verse 15 reads, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God [in other words, be mighty careful that you do not fail of the grace of God]; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."

When people become troubled, they are miserable. The only way they can soothe that misery is to find someone who will listen to them who is in the same condition. When

one becomes crossways and cold in his experience, he usually does not go to someone who is on fire for God. Often he looks around to find others who will sympathize with him, and soon you see them together all the time. They visit one another's houses frequently because misery loves company.

If people who get in that miserable condition would get down on their knees and pray and obtain godly counsel from their pastor or another godly saint and confess it to God, He would put them back on track again, but too many are not willing to do that. They would rather cause division and cause other souls to go to a lost hell because they cannot control their tongues. Some may not say anything wrong, but they leave people with a false impression.

Friend, it takes the power of God to control the flesh. If you get away from the power of God, the first thing you will lose control of will be your tongue. We need to get in a prayer vigil when people start using their tongues to destroy others and lift up themselves. We need to get down on our knees and pray that God will break that thing up if He has to carry them out feet first, because they are doing a destructive work.

Corruption of the Heart

Hebrews 12:16 says, "Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." What was he saying? Many people sell their birthrights to satisfy the flesh. When God shows people how to walk and how to conduct themselves and what to do, some are disobeying for a little earthly pleasure. It may be to listen to something, to run their mouths, or to go somewhere that they have no business going.

Some are selling their birthrights just as cheaply as Esau did. Afterward, he sought it carefully with tears, but he never regained it. Why? Because he willfully sold it. People

who have walked off and left their first love have found something else to love more. They have lost something that they may never regain. Why? Because they did it willfully. When God shows you something, and you do something contrary to that, you are selling your birthright, possibly never to regain it. Very few have ever regained it, because they knew what they were doing. They had already been warned about where to go and where not to go by the preaching of the Gospel, yet they were stubborn and did something that cost them their birthright. They may have a profession of religion, but they do not possess the Spirit of God.

Today many folks are living as if there were no God, no Heaven, and no hell. For example, once filthy magazines were not on the newsstands. People would rise against that. What are they doing today? They are putting them right out in front of everyone. Filthiness is being shown on television and on the Internet. People are accepting these things today when at one time they would not have.

Psalm 53:1-3 reads: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Also, Psalm 14:1 states, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works."

Adam Clarke's commentary states this: "The corruption of their heart extends itself through the actions of their lives." In other words, when filthiness gets in the heart, it extends through people's lives and is put into action. People say, "There is no God." When the corruption of people's hearts extends itself through the actions of their lives, they are plagued with the most

deadly propagation; it presents nothing but destruction.

Losing the fear of God from one's heart is dangerous. What is the fear of God? Proverbs 8:13 says, "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil." Today many have lost the fear of God out of their hearts because they do not fear evil as they once did. As a result, it is showing up in people's Christian experiences.

When do people say there is no God? Very few people actually say that, but when they take matters into their own hands instead of letting God work them out, in reality, they are saying there is no God.

Cast Your Care Upon the Lord

God can take care of every situation. He is the answer to the world's problems, and He can work out your problems. If God cannot work out problems, they cannot be worked out. God created the universe. He spoke the Word, and this world came into existence. He spoke the Word, and the waters came into a heap, and then He leveled them out. He spoke the Word and created a man.

Today many feel that God cannot work out little problems. These same people will not tell you that they do not believe in God. However, if you take things into your own hands and try to work them out, you are telling the world there is no God. On the contrary, there is a God. God has worked many miracles, and He is still working miracles. He will work miracles for you if you will turn your life over to Him and let Him work. I have needed help often, and I learned a long time ago to turn my problems over to God. First Peter 5:7 instructs, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." Do not try to work them out; cast them upon the Lord. When God works out situations, everything will be as smooth as it can be.

Many times down through life I have faced difficult situations, and there was no way under the sun that

they could be worked out; but when I pleaded my case before God, He worked them out and everything was fine. God is still the same today. When people take matters into their own hands instead of letting God work them out, in essence, they are saying, "There is no God." However, that is not the end of it. When they do this, it leads to corruption, and then it will lead to a nasty, rotten spirit. This is far from what God has in mind.

The flesh wants to have the pre-eminence. We read in 2 Peter 2:10, "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities [or the elders]." We are seeing this very thing when God does not have the preeminence.

Many people despise the standard of God's Word. We could fill all the church buildings today if we did not preach the standard. Jesus let us know that only a few choose to walk this narrow way. Jesus preached to the multitudes. He even got in a boat and went out into the water and taught the people who were on the shore. Multitudes followed Him, but what happened when He preached the standard? They all left and walked no more with Him. Today when God does some separating to get the dead branches off, people blame the preacher for it. If Jesus could not hold people, then a preacher cannot hold them. Those who love the Truth will be there, and they will rejoice in the Truth. They are the Church of the Living God.

Failing to Keep the Covenant of God

Another thing that defiles people is moral corruption. Micah 6:10-12 reads: "Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceit-

ful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth."

This lets us know that the rich man is full of violence, but God's people are full of peace. When Micah talked about the scant measures, he was simply speaking of people living as close to the world as they possibly can. God is saying, "Can I bear this?" The answer is definitely no. God does not want His people to live close to the world. He wants us to measure to the fullness of His Word. If you are not doing that, God is displeased.

Hosea made it plainer when he spoke about Ephraim. Who was Ephraim? According to the Word of God, Ephraim was a people who had turned their backs on God. Psalm 78:9-10 tells us: "The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law." Everything was fine until they had to go to battle, and then they turned their backs and would not keep the covenant of God.

What were the results? Jeremiah 7:15 tells us that God cast out the whole seed of Ephraim: "And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim." Those people turned their backs on the work of God and what God wanted them to do.

What were the results of their being cast out? Hosea wrote in Hosea 12:1, "Ephraim feedeth on wind [she was puffed up], and followeth after the east wind [if you follow the east wind, it goes west, and that is toward darkness]: he daily increaseth lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians, and oil is carried into Egypt."

They tried to make an alliance among themselves. This happened in Christ's day when the Pharisees and the Sadducees were against each other. They hated the Truth and wanted to do away with it, so

they got together because they had one thing in mind, and that was to crucify Christ.

Today we are seeing alliances made. Protestantism once protested Catholicism, but today they are making an allegiance with Catholicism. Many are lukewarm who once were on fire for God and against lukewarmness, but now they are embracing it and working against the Truth. The only thing they have in mind is to destroy the Truth.

"Their Nobles Shall Be of Themselves"

Friend, the Word of God will point out where you stand today. The thing that took place in the morning time is taking place in the evening time. The eighth beast is forming, and you will believe it when they start putting the pressure on you.

Jeremiah 30:21 says, "And their nobles [or high-ranking officials] shall be of themselves . . ." When God saves a man, He puts him on a higher plane; but when God calls a minister, He puts him on an even higher plane. However, He never made one minister any higher than any of the other ministers. He said, the noble men made themselves, or lifted themselves up. I have not found any place in the Word of God where God sets men above other ministers. Also, I have never seen in the Word of God where God has taken one church and made it a headquarters here on earth.

Jeremiah said their nobles made themselves. In other words, they lifted themselves up to where they could come in and tell others what to do. Jeremiah 30:21 states, "And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them . . ." In other words, they set their own standard.

Daniel said that a stone would be cut out of the mountain without hands. Isaiah said in Isaiah 9:6-7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government

shall be upon his shoulder: . . . Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Those nobles spoken of in our Scripture text made their own government. They did not depend on Christ or God's leadership. By their actions, they said, "There is no God, so we have to be in leadership."

The answer to why all of this was taking place is found in Romans 1:28-30: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge [in other words, they did not want to be obedient to God], God gave them over to a reprobate mind [one who has a reprobate mind is void of understanding], to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, [One thing that causes so many problems today is that people have envy in them. They cannot control it, and as a result, they move onto the next step.] murder [riot physical murder, but spiritual murder] debate, deceit, malignity [it grows like a cancer and continually gets worse]; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents."

"Without Natural Affection"

Romans 1:31 states, "Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." I have never seen the time when there were so many unnatural affections as there are today. The men want to look like women, and the women want to look like men. They wear things that are not becoming to saints of God. Another unnatural affection is what they call an "alternate lifestyle." I could name many other unnatural affections. The natural affection for the wife is to be in subjection to her own husband. When she does not want to be in subjection, she has an unnatural affection. Often the reason God cannot bless many homes today is that the women do not want to

submit to their husbands.

God said in the very beginning that the natural affection for the wife is to want her husband to be the head. In other words, he should be the leader, or the guide. Today many people do not want that. Nevertheless, God said the women are to be in obedience to their own husbands. Then He also said, "Husbands, love your wives." When these things are not being carried out, they are simply unnatural affections.

Years ago, when I was in school, if someone called a man a sissy, he had a fight on his hands, but today more men are becoming effeminate all the time. Some men walk effeminately, and some women walk as men do. Also, many women cut their hair as men do and talk as men do. The reason many conditions are coming upon our nation is that the people in general are without natural affection, implacable (in other words, they are relentless, harsh, or pitiless), and unmerciful. Some people today have no pity at all. That is what the Word of God said would happen to them. The reason they are that way is that they act as if there is no God. They may not say it in words, but they put it in practice when they take things into their own hands. Romans 1:32 continues, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

Romans 1:21 tells us, "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful . . ." We ought to praise God for men who will preach the Truth and live the Truth. Also, we ought to praise God for people who will dress as saints of God, for the Church of God, and for what God has done for us. We should not murmur or complain, but live for God and defend the Gospel.

Whenever I hear that someone has run down a man of God, it stirs me. Too many people have lost their appreciation for men of God. We ought to lift them up in prayer and

be thankful for them. You may not like how they wear their clothes, how they comb their hair, or the grammar they use; but it is the spirit they have that counts.

If you are a pastor, God wants you to preach the Word of God after you have measured to it. He will talk to you, and then after you have measured to the message, you are to bring it to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you the overseer. Why? So you can feed the Church of God something that will cause them to grow. Often children do not want something that will cause them to grow. No one is going to grow strong spiritually unless he partakes of the strong meat in the Word of God. The devil hops on the preacher's back and says, "People will not like you very well," but men of God are not in the ministry to please people. They are to please God. The main reason for the lack of spiritual growth is that folks become satisfied when they get careless in their Christian experience. People who have a burden will be in the prayer services praying.

Forbearing One Another in Love

Salvation removes the guilt of sin, breaks the powers of it, and sets one free from bondage. All these things are for our benefit. God also gives us something for the benefit of others. We each need to feel our obligation to God and the church. He gave us something for fellowship to help others. The Bible tells us that we should forbear, be forgiving, and have charity (or love).

We must learn to forbear one another in our homes. We are living in a day and age when people do not even bother getting married. They look at getting a companion as one would buy an automobile: "If I don't like her, I'll get rid of her." That is not according to God's ordained plan. He meant for a man to find a wife and stay married to her.

My wife and I have been married for fifty-six years. Over the years, we have worked through

many problems. I am sure that if you have been married any length of time, you have had problems arise in your home, but you did not pack up your clothes and leave. No, you learned to work them out and to forbear.

In congregations today, just because the preacher does not smile the right way or do things just as certain people think he should, they are ready to leave. Too many come with the attitude, "If I don't like it, I'll go somewhere else." That is the reason they leave. You need to unpack and get your feet under God's table and stand for the Truth, stand for the church, and stand behind the pastor. Do not let anyone lead you astray by whispering in your ear. Many people will try to fill your ears. You need to watch out for whisperers and backbiters. They do not have the nerve to tell a person to his face, but they will go behind one's back and run that saint down. Colossians 3:13 reads, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

Second Corinthians 7:10-12 says: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you [when you get a genuine experience of salvation, you will be careful of how you walk, of how you talk, and of your actions], yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear [Proverbs says the fear of God is to hate evil], yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter [you will want to revenge the devil and uncover him, and you will want to show the world what he has done to you and what he has set out to do to others]. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong,

but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you."

You must continually grow in your Christian experience. Verse 10 of our Scripture text says, "For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." Sinner friend, before you get saved, the first thing you need to do is to come in and hear the preacher preach under the anointing of God's Spirit. You should sit up with your ears open, and then the Spirit of God can move upon you and put you under conviction. Next, you must accept it and ask God to forgive you.

"Giving All Diligence"

Second Peter 1:1-4 reads: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature [God's nature, or His Spirit], having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

Ezekiel 36:26-27 states: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." When you see people breaking God's laws, you know they do not have the Spirit of God in them. When they do not do things God's way, they do not have the Spirit of God. Those who have the Spirit of God will do these things God's way.

Second Peter 1:5-8 states: "And

beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [or love]. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

How can you become a partaker of the divine nature? You get it and add to it by giving all diligence, or careful effort, and by adding to your faith virtue, or effective power to influence or affect people in the right way. Today many people influence or affect people the wrong way. Do you influence people the right way? Are you working on the way you walk, the way you talk, and the way you conduct yourself? Are you working in a way to influence others to do the right thing?

Again, verse 6 says, "And to knowledge temperance [or self control]; and to temperance patience . . ." Peter said if you will do these things, you will never be idle, but you will always be fruitful. You will always be fruitful if you will keep growing in your Christian experience.

Filling Your Obligation to God

Today people are so busy with the cares of life. The cares of life are pressing in on the people of God and robbing them of their time. Many are busy on themselves and idle in the things of God. Many people go to an altar because they fail to read their Bibles and pray as they ought. We are living in a time when people who have to be at work by eight o'clock think they can sleep until five minutes of eight, jump up and eat some cereal with one hand and talk with God in between bites or on the way down the road. The Bible instructs you to take time to be holy. It takes time and effort to serve God. Too many saints are crowding Him out of their lives. They have

cooled off in their experiences because they have failed to pray and read and study the Bible.

Christian friend, you need to make sure that you find a secret place at home where you can get away from the world and get hold of God. The Scriptures instruct you to go into your secret closet and shut the door. This is not speaking of your clothes closet, but simply shutting out the world and talking to God. You must pour out your heart to God and tell Him what you stand in need of. Then, do not just jump up and run off. Ask God, "What would You have me to do, Lord?"

Because of the lack of time being spent with God, souls are not being helped and encouraged. Do you send letters or cards to encourage dear ones? Do you call the one who is discouraged and say, "I am praying for you" or do you just go on and forget them? Friend, this is what serving God is all about. When God saved you, He had a work for you to do, and you must give an account to God concerning whether you did that work. He saved you as a vessel that He could work through to reach other people.

The Lord wants us to encourage one another. Hebrews 3:13 says, "But exhort one another daily." What does the word exhort mean? It means to encourage. Whenever the church doors are open, you should be at your place of duty to encourage your pastor. He needs encouragement. The devil will not encourage him any. You should encourage your Sunday school teacher, the choir director, and the song leader. How? One way to encourage them is by being at your post of duty. You should open your songbook, if you are able, and sing.

Carefully read Matthew 25:40: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." In other words, if you do not do this for the brethren, you are not doing it for Him. There is a work for you to do. Someone may say, "I'm getting old, so I can't do much." I am getting old too, but God has given me added strength and I am going to use it for Him. Friend, how long has it been since you have written a little note to your pastor to encourage him?

We are facing a hostile world, and the very powers of hell are working to kill the influence of God's eternal Truth. If you have been a little lax along any line, you ought to confess it to God and ask Him to help you. Why not have a little talk with God and make a covenant with Him? God has given you something to benefit others. God moves upon the singers, and He has given them voices with which to sing. Why? So they can sing to themselves? No, to benefit others. He has given the instrument players a knowledge of how to play for our benefit. He has called preachers, given them the Holy Spirit and sent them out to preach the Gospel. Was it for his own benefit? No, it is for the benefit of others. Are you filling your obligation to God and the church? Are you grateful enough to be at your post of duty to show others that you really appreciate them: Friend, if you have lost something, you ought to ask God to forgive you.

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