Address of Dr. J. Layton Mauzé to Congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Huntington, West Virginia, Sunday Morning, Sept. 9, 1928 / Farewell Sermon, Dr. J. Layton Mauzé to Congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Huntington, West Virginia, Sunday Evening, Sept. 9, 1928

Joseph Layton Mauze

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Dr. J. Layton Mauzé
ADDRESS

of

DR. J. LAYTON MAUZÉ

to

Congregation of First Presbyterian Church
Huntington, West Virginia
Sunday Morning, Sept. 9, 1928
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FAREWELL SERMON

DR. J. LAYTON MAUZÉ

to

Congregation of First Presbyterian Church
Huntington, West Virginia
Sunday Evening, Sept. 9, 1928
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APPROACH this hour with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. Of joy, because it affords me the privilege of once again looking into your faces, faces which, in other days, as they have been upturned to me as your minister, have ever proven an inspiration; joy, because once again I am to have the thrill of the pleasure of your warm, friendly hands; and joy, because it affords me the opportunity once again of ministering to you in holy things in an official capacity. Sorrow, because the time of my departure is at hand; sorrow, because, by the action of the Presbytery, at midnight last night my official connection with you was terminated. But my spiritual connection with you I defy any ecclesiastical court to sever. Sorrow, because it will not be my privilege, in the providence of God, of continuing my ministry among you.

I know that you are expecting a sermon from me today, and I had prepared a special sermon for this occasion; but as the day and the hour drew nearer I found that that sermon was slipping from me, until last evening I had absolutely no heart in me to preach that sermon to you this morning; nor have I in my heart any power to preach to you at all this morning. On the contrary, it is in my heart, rather, to be less formal, and perhaps more familiar, than would be possible in a set sermon. And some-

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how I have the feeling that when a minister is about to bid farewell to his children—and are you not my children in the Lord? Some of you by adoption, to be sure, but many of you by a spiritual travail of soul—it should not be in his heart to do any preachment, but, rather, to take advantage of the right that is his growing out of their years of comradeship together.

We at times see inscribed on dials, sundials and watches, the Latin phrase, “Tempus fugit.” And how true it is, that old Latin phrase, “Time flies.” It seems almost like yesterday to me since I came among you as a perfect stranger, and little did I think or realize at that time that eleven years would fly by so quickly, or even that it would be my joy and my privilege to be associated with you over such a long stretch of time. During those eleven years, as we have walked together and with the Lord, we have enjoyed many tokens of the divine favor. Perhaps we scarce realize how rich are the blessings that have been ours, unless we shall remember that during those years over one thousand nine hundred souls have been admitted to the membership of this church, to such an extent, indeed, that the congregation is in large measure an entirely different congregation from what it was eleven years ago. There are some precious fragments and remnants of those years that are an asset to this church that

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we can not estimate the value of; but by and large the congregation is a new congregation.

And then, in these years your devotion to the Lord and Master has been evidenced in so many ways. May I mention how that inside of three years your offerings for Christian service have grown from fifteen thousand dollars a year to seventy-five thousand dollars a year, so that during the eleven years we have given close onto a million dollars for the glory of your Lord and for the advancement of His cause and Kingdom at home and abroad?

In the meantime, your holdings in real estate have been multiplied. Of course we have come short of what we might have been and what we might have done. As memory goes back over these years we can see, you and I, the many opportunities that we let slip through our fingers; we can discover many doors of opportunity that we failed to enter, or, if we entered them, it was with an uncertain tread. We have not attained to that which we might have attained; we have not done what we might have done. And the trouble is not with God, I am sure. In so far as we have fallen short, we can not lay the blame upon Him. Inexhaustible resources He has set at our disposal, and we have not tapped them, we have not drawn upon them as we might have done. And I am sure that the fault has not been yours as a congregation. A more appreciative or a more co-operative body of people I am sure I
could never hope to have anywhere, and I doubt very much if a more appreciative or more co-operative people could be found anywhere in this country than you have been. So I am driven, with no false modesty whatsoever, to say that the blame lies at my door rather than at the door of any other.

I have sought to be your leader, and I have sought to stand in the fore, but oftentimes you have run ahead of me; you have had a larger faith than I, you have had a deeper consecration than I, and you have oftentimes given a devotion that has been a rebuke to me.

It has been said that I could not be satisfied. I fear that I have been too satisfied, and have been too easy to satisfy. But I hope that I may profit by these years and learn enough to be satisfied in the work of the Master. We need to ever have our eyes lifted upon the summit; we need ever to forget the things of the past, and to press on to higher and holier and nobler things, to wider visions and broader horizons.

May I say a word to you by way of admonition? First, I pray that you will stand fast in the faith. There are so many false faiths that are occurring today; and during these days of the interim you will be attracted by some of them, perhaps, as otherwise you might not. Take a leaf out of my diary as a pastor, will you, and profit by it? If you could only

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listen to some of the distressing stories that parishioners have given to me, how by neglecting the Bible, neglecting their throne of prayer, neglecting faithful attendance upon the services of the church, they fell a prey to this ism and that ism, and thought that verily in these other faiths they would discover a peace and a rest that they were longing for, but how that they had all failed and with a broken heart they had turned back to the faith of their fathers. Beloved, the church and this old Book, your old traditional faith, the faith of your fathers, is a faith that contains everything that is worth while, that contains all that any of these isms contain, and it is only the faith of your fathers which they in measure have that makes them of any service whatsoever. Abandon not, then, the faith of the fathers, but stand fast for the faith at all times and under all circumstances.

Then I pray that you will keep the unity of the spirit in the palm of peace. The curse of the church at Corinth, that prominent church, that great church, that opulent church, was that its membership fell into factions, one saying that “I am of Paul,” another that “I am of Apollos,” and another, “I am of Cephas.” Shun, I pray you, the playing of politics in the House of God, and especially when you come to consider another shepherd. You have been characterized by a modest spirit of unanimity; you have acted as a single man in most matters (I was about to say in
regard to all matters), and the desire and prayer of
my heart is that in the coming days you will con-
tinue to act with that same spirit of co-operation
and unanimity that has characterized you in the past.
To do that you will need to forego some things. You
will need to think not only in the personal way, but
the impersonal. You will need to consider, not your
own interests, personally, but the interests of the
body as a whole. You will need, above all
things, to know the way to the throne of God in prayer, and
to be much with God in prayer, seeking through
prayer to know His will and to have the grace to do
it, whatever it may be.

You have a committee of investigation. It is
incumbent upon that committee that it should in-
vestigate far and wide, in order that it may submit
to you its findings and the findings of the official
body. But over and above all of the work of that
committee, you need to be guided by the Spirit in
answer to your own personal obligations. Form
prayer bands, won't you, you men and you women
of congenial spirits, you who know the power of
prayer, you who know how to pray, and pray as you
never did before? I am confident that God has in
store for you great and rich things for the days that
lie ahead.

Then I pray that you will place a premium on
the membership of the church. I pray that you shall
not cheapen in any way membership in this congre-
gation, and that you will not, by any failure on your part, lower the standard. Some of you officers, you who are as dear to me as a brother in the flesh, and even dearer, need to check up on your lives, for you are samples of the flock, and what the congregation is to be in the eyes of the world is largely judged by what you are, by the life that you live, by the testimony that you give. And above all others in the congregation, it is imperative, you elders and you deacons, that you shall walk close to your Lord and Master, and that you shall ever pray that you can not divorce, in the thought of the congregation, in the thought, in a large measure, of the community, yourself from the official position that you hold in the church. And for Jesus' sake, and for the good of the church of which you are a representative official, I ask, in the name of God, that you will forego many things in order that His name may not be despised among the Gentiles. And certainly it is important, too, that there shall be a close living to God on the part, not only of the officers, but on the part of every member of the church. May I charge you one and all to be loyal to the church during the interim? These are going to be days that will try the spirits of men. No doubt the time shall come when to more than one there shall have to be put the question, "Shall I also go away?" I remember that before Trafalgar Lord Nelson issued the proclamation to all of his men, "England expects every
man to do his duty today.” So it seems to me that I might say to one and all of you, “The Captain of our salvation, the great Head of the church, expects every one of you who is a member of this church to do your duty today, in these days of stress and of strain.”

Now, having said this word of reminiscence and this word of admonition, may I take the privilege of making a personal request of you? Huntington has been mighty good to me. I remember that when I was being inducted into this pastorate my good brother, Dr. Thompson, of Charleston, standing in this place giving me a charge, said, “My brother, after you have been here ten years, as long as I have been serving in West Virginia, in Charleston, your hair will be as white as mine now is.” Well, it scared the life out of me; but after eleven years I don’t know that I have any more gray hairs than I had when I came. It may be the First Church of Huntington treats its pastor better than the First Church of Charleston, but, anyway, Huntington has been mighty good to me. And you have been marvelously kind unto me. And again I want to say to you, my beloved people, I leave by no will of mine, by no choice of mine. I leave simply in obedience to duty growing out of my ordination vows. Had I had my own way, had I had my own desire, I should never have been willing to leave you. I had hoped, I had dreamed about the day
when we would have our completed new structure on the other side. What a credit and what a pride it would be, not only to us, but to the city and to the service of the Master! This dream, apparently, is not to be realized, unless, indeed, later on you should ask me to come back. I remember when leaving my first congregation, a country church over in the Valley of Virginia, before preaching I said to the congregation, "You were my first love, and it has been the hope of my heart that I might have the privilege of closing my ministerial career where I began it, here with you." I thought I had said something mighty good and clever. At the close of the sermon a woman in the congregation, who had a mind of her own and did not mind expressing it, came up and said, "Now, look here, young fellow, if you are willing to stay here now we will be very glad to have you, but I want you to distinctly understand we are not going to have any old superannuated preacher on our hands." (Laughter) Well, if you make your call soon enough, maybe I won’t be superannuated.

I am going, my brethren, to a very difficult task. I am not going blindfolded. I think I have some realization of the uncertainties of it all, from the human viewpoint. I know full well that in myself I am not sufficient unto it. My only hope of attaining any degree of success in trying to solve the difficult problem there in the city and in the Presbytery

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is in God. If He has not called, then it is foolhardy for me to go. If He has called, as I believe He has, I can in no impious way look up into His face and say, "O God, it is up to you." Unless He works with us, then we are foredoomed to failure. I need your sympathy. I crave your prayers. I am simply going as a contribution that you are making. I am going as your representative on the frontier—for it is a frontier as far as our general interests are concerned. Standing there on the frontier I shall be conscious of the fact that I am representing you and what you represent, and I pray that as I endeavor to stand for the faith there, and to render the service that is so sorely needed, that you will regard me as your representative, and that you will continue to sympathize with me and give me the benefit of your prayers. I remember that on one occasion Napoleon commissioned one of his men to a very hazardous and arduous task, and the man to whom he had given the commission demurred for a while about undertaking it, and then he looked into the face of his superior and said, "Sire, if you will give me one clasp of your hand I will go, for with the sense of that clasp there will come strength." So as I go forth upon this task I wish to have ever conscious with me the strength of the clasp of your hand, as you shall support me with your sympathy and with your prayers. I do not have to tell you that my heart is here, my interests are here, and I shall ever share

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with you in whatever life has in store for you as individuals and as a congregation. If at any time I can be of service, I am yours to command. Let us pray.

O Father, our Father, we are Thy children, and in these hours we need help and strength. Thou hast never failed us in all the days of the past; and that which Thou hast been Thou wilt ever continue to be.

Change and decay all around we see;
But Thou who changeth not, abide with me.

Such is the prayer of our hearts today as we come to Thee, gratefully rendering praise and thanks for all Thy manifold mercies unto us. As individuals and as a congregation of Thy people we know that we have been unworthy of the least of these favors. Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast not regarded us because of our merit, because of any service that there was in us, but we thank Thee that Thou hast looked upon us and Thou hast revealed Thyself to us in Jesus Christ, Thy Son, the All-sufficient. We ask today that Thou wilt pardon the poor returns we have made for Thy love, Thy manifold blessings, unto us; and continue, we beseech Thee, to let Thy peace be our portion.

We ask Thy blessing to be upon this vine of Thy planting. Water it, we beseech Thee, continuously with the dews of Heavenly grace. Oh, grant that it may ever be as a city set upon the hills, whose
light can not be hid. Lengthen her cords, strengthen her stakes, add to her numbers, but, above all things, we pray Thou wilt add to her spiritual life and power, that in this community, and in this commonwealth and nation and the world her testimony shall be unslumbering for Jesus Christ: that her many sons and daughters may be born into Thy Kingdom, her many troubled hearts shall find rest and peace, that her many minds, that are perplexed and troubled, shall have light unerring to guide them; that many things that are crooked may be made straight; that many paths that are rough shall be made smooth. And ever, we ask, give unto this people a leadership in a pastoral relation that shall stand true to Christ Jesus, never for a moment taking a single star from His diadem, but casting all credits at His pierced feet, and enthroning Him in this pulpit as Lord of Lords and Kings of Kings. Bless, our Father, these hearts, these Thy children; gather them unto Thy great loving arms; give unto every one a conscious realization of Thy love and of Thy keeping power, and when on earth we have fought the fight, when we have kept the faith and run the course, may we have an abundant interest granted unto us in Thy better Kingdom.

Now may grace, mercy and peace from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, abide with you, now and forevermore. Amen.
FAREWELL SERMON

Our text you will find in the sixteenth verse of the first chapter of Romans:

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

These words are from the greatest epistle of the greatest man that ever lived. The brilliant French skeptic, Renan, once said that when Phoebe carried this letter from Corinth to Rome she bore within the folds of her robe the whole future of Christian theology; and I am persuaded that Renan has not overstated the importance of this document. We do not know the name of the vessel on which she sailed; nor do we know the captain of the vessel or what cargo was aboard. We only know, after these nineteen hundred years, that never a vessel carried so precious a cargo as did that vessel carrying Phoebe, with her entrusted message to the church at Rome.

The occasion of the Apostle writing this letter to Rome was the fact that Christianity having reached Rome before him, he had preached the Gospel in all of the great cities of Asia Minor and Greece, but he had never ventured into the metropolis of the world. There were those outside the Christian fold and there were those within the

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Christian fold that were imputing to the Apostle some motives for his shunning coming to the great city. Was it, indeed, because he had no desire to preach the Gospel in Rome? In the preceding verses he disabuses their minds of any such erroneous idea. He affirms that he had repeatedly desired and purposed to come, but in the providence of God he had been hindered. Was it, then, because he had no sense of duty for that great metropolis? By no means. For he affirms that he was a debtor to the Jew and the Greek alike—a debtor to even Rome; not because he had received anything at the hands of the Romans for which in return he was to render some service, but rather a debt that grew out of the fact that he possessed from God a truth which he was under duty bound to impart to all men everywhere. There were those, no doubt, who said, "No, Paul, you have not come to Rome because of cowardice." I fancy that the spirit of the man smarted under that stinging, biting indictment. And he says, "Not at all. I have not shunned to declare the Holy Gospel to the City of Athens. Why should I shun to declare the Gospel to the City of Rome? If I have preached this Gospel in the home of Plato and Seneca, why should I shun to preach it in the home of Caesar and of Augustus?" No, he affirms that he was willing to preach the Gospel in Rome as he had preached it in the City of Athens. So he says in our text, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel
of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." That is a very striking expression of the Apostle's: "I am not ashamed of the Gospel." It is a remarkable statement, because there were those in his day who were professed followers of Jesus Christ who were ashamed of the Gospel. There are those today who, under certain circumstances, are ashamed of the Gospel. But not so with the Apostle Paul.

There were some things of which Paul was ashamed. He was ashamed of the manner of life that he had lived prior to his conversion. He was ashamed of the manner of life of some of his associates in the Christian ranks of his day. But there was one thing of which he was never ashamed, and that was the Gospel of Christ.

And what did he mean by the Gospel of Christ? What was the irreducible minimum of truth, which, in his stating, was essential to the Gospel? He answers that question in the early verses of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, in which he enunciates that the Gospel consists of these great cardinal facts: the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the vicarious coming of Christ on the Cross, the glorious resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the yet more glorious fact of the triumph of Christ in His ascension. No one can hold to a full Gospel who does not hold to all of those great essential facts of the Gospel as preached by Paul—not by Paul alone,

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but by James, and Peter, and John— for all of these New Testament writers agree when it comes to dealing with these great basic, fundamental facts of Christianity; not alone these New Testament writers, but those great leaders of the church from the days of the Apostles down to the present time. The great mystics and the great martyrs, the great sages and the great saints of the church have all been absolutely committed to these great facts of Christianity.

You might ask, "Why should Paul have ever been ashamed of the Gospel of Christ?" It is hard for us in this twentieth century, with the centuries of achievements of the Gospel lying behind us, to understand how it would be possible for any intelligent man or woman who had ever tasted of the good things of the Lord to be ashamed thereof. But I pray you, if possible, in your imagination to project yourselves back into the day of the great Apostle, and face, if you can, the situation as he saw it. Remember the Jew was a despised man, and the Gospel that Paul preached had as its founder the Jew. Remember, furthermore, that this Gospel had a very humble origin, and its teachings were strange, running counter to human nature. This Gospel did not come from a prince of the realm, but from a peasant. This Gospel came not from the wealthy sources, but from a carpenter shop. This Gospel had to do not with things that were naturally pleasing to men, but the things that irritated and exas-

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perated the human heart. Remember, furthermore, that Rome was a center of great pride and pomp. Remember that as Paul was dictating to his amanuensis there was a pause in his dictation of this letter, and his eyes were fixed yonder in the distance, and in his imagination he saw imperial Rome, mistress of the world, the center of culture, the center of wealth, the center of pride. Paul had moved about in the provinces of Rome, and everywhere that he had gone he had felt the power and the might of mighty Rome. Then he thought of who he was; then he thought of what he had, as he faced that mighty center, and he said, "Nay, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ even in the presence of Rome, even on the streets of Rome." Not only was he not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, but, writing to the church at Galatia, he said, "I glory in the Cross of Christ. I not only am not ashamed of it, but the Cross of Christ is my great glory in life." Paul had many things of which he justly might have been proud, and in which he justly might have gloried. He was royally born. There was noble blood coursing through his veins. He had attained unto great distinction as a scholar. He had his foot upon the steps leading to positions of preeminence in the scholastic world and in the realm of Ecclesiastical affairs. But he says, "All these things I count but as refuse, if indeed I may know Christ and the power of his resurrection."
It takes courage for even you and me, in this latter day, to follow Paul at this point. It is hard to stand against the crowd. It is difficult to swim up the stream. And it is all the more difficult to sing and mean it,

"In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the rocks of time."

for while there are many things that you and I might take pride in, it is hard for us to say, "All these I count as nothing as compared with the Cross of Christ." In other words, it is harder to bear disgrace for Christ than it is to endure physical danger. It is more difficult for you and me today to endure scorn than it is to endure slaughter. Otherwise, why do oftentimes those who wear the Cross fail the Cross even in the pulpit itself? The world can never be conquered with a crossless Christianity; and whenever the Cross of Christ is hid then is there impotence to the church of the living God. You observe that here the Apostle presents not only a striking affirmation, but a strong argument. "I," says he, "am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation."

Paul always emphasized that aspect of the Gospel that would make a peculiar appeal to the people to whom he was speaking or writing, just as in speaking or writing to the Jew he emphasized the sacrificial aspect of the Gospel, in writing or speaking to the Greek he emphasized the ethical aspect
of the Gospel, and now, in speaking to imperial Rome, he would lay the emphasis upon the power of the Gospel.

The Greek word which he here uses for the power of the Gospel is the one from which we get our word, "dynamics." "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," says he, "for it is the dynamic—the dynamo of God himself."

There is a great difference between a dynamic and mechanics. Mechanics are external; dynamics are internal. Ofttimes the things that appear to be the weakest have in them powers that are limitless. That zephyr that you can scarce feel blowing upon your cheeks, under certain conditions will fell a forest, it will uproot your stoutest buildings, and it will lash the mighty sea into fury. We can not understand it. It is vain for you or me to endeavor to explain it. But as it is in the physical world so it is in the moral and the spiritual realm. This Gospel seems to be very weak, very ordinary, but in it there is resident a dynamic. It has not only power, but it has divine power. It has the power of God. We see something of the power and the wisdom of God all around about us in the physical world; but we must believe in the Gospel of His Son and manifestation of God in His power and in His wisdom. Beloved, there can never be any conflict between God’s power and wisdom in the physical sciences and God’s power and wisdom in the moral and
spiritual sciences. So far as there has ever been any conflict between God as He reveals Himself in nature and God as He reveals Himself in revelation, it is due to the ignorance either of the teacher in natural science or the teacher in moral and spiritual science.

The theologian and the teacher of natural sciences in Great Britain are at least fifty years ahead of their brothers in America. Long since the theologian and the professor in Great Britain have come to an understanding that neither of them has all the truth, and that the man in the professor's chair is not competent to speak authoritatively about religion any more than the theologian, the preacher, is an authority in the teaching of natural sciences, and that when the two have aright interpreted their respective spheres they will find that there is no conflict, for the ear-mark, the trade-mark, of God is there in the natural sciences and it is here in the revealed religion, and God cannot contradict Himself as He reveals Himself in the one or in the other. Otherwise, we cannot account for the manifestation of the power of God in this Gospel.

This Gospel has done extraordinary things as it has taken hold of the lives of individual men and women and has transfigured those lives, as it has gone into homes and translated those homes from veritable Hells on earth to nothing but bits of Heaven.

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This mighty power is manifesting itself in all the spheres of human activity today.

I challenge you, sirs, to give a satisfactory explanation of these things that the Gospel has accomplished in the world on any other hypothesis than the fact that the Gospel has the power of God. Not only has it the power of God, but it is God's power and wisdom in its supremest manifestation. Says Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation." Not "a" power. It is the definite article. You see the wisdom and the power of God in his handiwork, in nature around about us, beneath the sun above us. You see a manifestation of the wisdom and the power of God in his daily providence in the world, but you can see the manifestation of the wisdom and the power of God in its supremest manifestation in the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The great cardinal facts of Christianity are not of the natural character; they are supernatural. They can be accounted for on no other basis than the intervention of the mighty power of God. Take, if you will, the incarnation of Christ. Nature can make a man; nature can't make a God man; and when you see a God man walking among men you are witnessing a manifestation of God's power in a superlative degree.

You witness the wisdom and power of God in this Gospel concerning the crucifixion of our Lord.
Socrates, speaking to his beloved disciple, Plato, said, "Plato! Plato! Maybe there is some way by which a man can be saved from sin, but I don't see any way." You can travel the world around, you can ask all the sages of the centuries, the great statement of Socrates stands true today. There may be some solution of this problem of sin that is breaking the human heart, but I don't see any unless you see Christ. Only as you stand beneath the outstretched arms of the Cross can there be any solution to this supreme problem of mankind.

I have driven an automobile, and I have learned that when something goes wrong with the mechanism of the machine the longer that automobile is driven the greater the hurt that is being done to that machinery. There is within that machinery no power to rectify a thing that has gone wrong. There is no problem with me concerning eternal punishment. I know full well that when sin is left uncontrolled it carries its nemesis. No man in himself can get better and can rectify the vile thing that has happened somehow, somewhere. But there is a solution. No human mind could have conceived it. No human power could ever have executed it.

The same thing is true in regard to the resurrection of our Lord. Nature kills. Nature fills graves. Nature does not empty tombs. But here is something that happens, something that is above the natural, something that is divine. One has
yielded to the sway of the laws of nature for a time, then has come forth triumphant over death and over the tomb. Behold, then, a manifestation of the wisdom and the power of God in the Gospel of his Son!

This Gospel has a very benevolent design. Ofttimes man is possessed with power that is malicious, that is hurtful, that is damaging. There are some powers of God that are destructive. There is a manifestation of God in the physical forces that you dare not play with. But the manifestation of God in grace is redemptive, is reconstructive, is beneficent, for it is the power of God unto salvation.

Now, my beloved, the great searching question is growing out of this latter statement of the Apostle. "I," said he, "am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth." That is the practical aspect of the Gospel of Christ. You are challenged by the universality of it. It is not a Gospel manifesting the power of God to the Jew alone, nor to the Greek alone, for the Gospel of Christ rises above all nationality; the Gospel of Christ reaches on both sides of the wall of racial prejudice and hatreds; that Gospel of Christ is such in its power that it reaches out to all classes, castes and conditions. The Gospel of Christ is a power that reaches unto the uttermost ends of the earth, and saves all who come unto God through and by His Son, Jesus Christ.

But, Paul, you don’t know humankind. Paul,
you are not acquainted with the difficulties of saving a lost humanity. Did he know? Follow him in the succeeding verses, that we hesitate to read, even in a promiscuous audience, because of the description he gives of the condition of those to whom he is writing. He says that by nature they have so violated all of the dictates of conscience that God has been constrained to give them up to their vile passions, to give them up as haters of God. Yet Paul, facing that condition, said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel in the presence of you moral reprobates. I am not ashamed of the Gospel in the presence of you who hate me. I am not ashamed of the Gospel in the presence of you who have abandoned yourselves to unspeakable inhumanities, for it is within the power of God to save you."

Dare you and I face that moral situation yonder? Dare you and I endeavor to accomplish this service of the Master because we believe there is a dynamic in the teaching of Christ equal to the situation? Dare you and I go to that hardened wretch, dare you and I go to that soiled soul and say, "My Gospel can redeem your life; my Gospel can set aright that which has gone wrong?" The condition is very simple. If we are to get light from the power-house, we must comply with certain conditions by which that light can be transferred from the power-house to these bulbs. And if this mighty power resident in the Gospel is to be set loose in the world, is to
operate effectively in your life and mine, then there is a condition which we must meet, and it is a very simple one. Beloved, the Gospel does not destroy the freedom of any soul. The Gospel comes to you inviting, entreating, imploring, but it stands with bared head before the citadel of your will. God Himself will not invade the sacred precincts of your volition. God will not do violence to your free agency. He stands at the door and knocks and knocks and knocks, but unless you by faith reach out and pull back the bolt and fling open the door He will not force the door. What though God has so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, what though He has reached down into the bosom of the Godhead and plucked out its very heart and laid it on the altar in sacrificial love for you, it will not avail unless you respond to it by your faith. And so I am tonight asking you this very searching question: What will you do with this Gospel of Jesus Christ? Will you have this power of God for your salvation, or will you have it for your eternal destruction? He has manifested His power in planning for your redemption. If you steel yourself against it, if you trample the blood of His Son under your impious feet, I swear that God is morally bound to exercise that power finally for your undoing; else He is not worthy of my love, and I can not trust Him to do justly and to deal honorably. He is today imploring in the power of love and tenderness and
compassion. If you heed Him not, if you yield not to His entreaty, the day will come when you will stand before His bar, and you may plead, but a deaf ear will be turned to your pleading. Will you accept, then, this power of God to lift you up, or will you have it to be for your undoing? God grant that it may be the expression in the mind and heart of every one of us here tonight to say, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," for Jesus said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me in the presence of his fellowmen, of him shall I be ashamed in the presence of My Father and the Holy Angels." Let us pray.

O God, our God, our Fathers trusted in Thee and were not put to confusion. We would trust in Thee and have adjustments made in our moral characters. We believe that Jesus Christ alone can do for us the things that we stand in need of. There is no situation that can baffle Him; there is no need that He can not fully meet. There is no heart so cold and hard or corrupt that He can not take into His loving hand and make to become radiant with the manifestations of His presence and of His power. There are those of us here tonight who from our own personal experience can bear faithful testimony to Thy saving power. We beseech Thee, O Christ, that by the power of Thy Holy Spirit that which Thou hast done for some of us Thou mayst do for every one here gathered; that no one shall go away from this
temple dedicated to Thy service without having felt the touch of the finger of Thy love, without having heard Thee say unto them, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace, and sin no more."

Gracious Father, we pray that Thou wilt cause that everyone this night may humbly bow at Thy feet and call Thee Lord, and by their own voluntary choice dedicate themselves without reservation to the advancement of Thy cause and Thy Kingdom among men. O our Father God, we so love this Thy people, we so desire that they should be true and loyal and devoted to Thee! Hast Thou not been gracious unto us? Hast Thou not favored us highly in our day? May the mercies of the Lord lead us to heartfelt repentence and to a consecration that shall be acceptable in Thy sight, so that as individuals and as a collective body we may meet for Thy service here and for Thy glory hereafter. We thank Thee that we can commend them to the watchcare and to the ministry of the Good Shepherd who lay down His life for the flock. We ask that Thou wilt keep all devouring wolves from their midst, and that Thou wilt ever lead them out where the pastures grow, and cause them to lie down where the waters are quiet, and when Thou dost constrain any one of them to go down into the dark valley of the shadow make them sensible of Thy presence with them. May Thy rod and Thy staff be their comfort. We pray that their heads may ever be anointed with Holy oil, and that even in the presence of the enemy a rich

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banquet may be spread for their souls; and at last, Great God, may we one and all come to the Father's house of many mansions where we, with the redeemed in glory, shall praise Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.