The Cure for "Crabby" People

An Inspirational Thought taken from the sermon "Problems"

"Those who would be overcomers must be drawn out of themselves..." *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 207.

Last month down in Florida on the beach, I picked up a shell. Low and behold, a crab put his little pinchers out. Dr. Harmer and I did a little surgery on that thing. I say "surgery" - part of it was not intentional. The fellow stuck his pinchers out and I got hold and started to pull. You know what happened? I pulled them off. Dr. Harmer helped me, and we finally got the whole thing pulled clear out. Then we had an empty shell. That's what I wanted, an empty shell. I didn't want that living crab in there.

Did you know you had a crab in *you*? Well if you don't know it, ask your roommate.

"Those who would be overcomers must be. complish this great work, is to become intensely interested in the salvation of others" *Ibid*.

That seems to make it pretty clear, doesn't it? Lord, that's what I want to happen. If you will help me to get all my problems solved, I promise you I will do that very thing.

Such an expression has been used so often that it is almost trite. Some people get the cart before the horse. If we are trying to get God to solve all our problems so that after they are solved we can go and work for Him, we have the cart before the horse.

"Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet" *Ministry of Healing*, page 481.

As I was meditating on these things, my mind went to that matchless passage where the Lord says:

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord" Isaiah 55:9.

Jesus doesn't look at things the way we do; He has a different angle of approach to come from.

I don't suppose any of us would have had the audacity to go up to a poor widow who had only enough for a piece of a meal and suggest to her that the solution to her problem was in feeding us first. I don't suppose that we would ever think of such a thing. Anyone that would be heartless enough to do it wouldn't be interested in solving her problem. The idea of doing that as the way to get her problem solved would never have occurred to a human being.

It did to *God*. He sent his prophet on purpose for miles and miles in order to get there at the particular time when that was the last thing the widow had in the house. He could have sent Elijah a week before, and she might have said, Well, I don't have very much. It looks like it might last only a week, but I will share what I have with you. But God saw to it that the prophet got there when all there was left was just a little meal and a little oil. Just enough for one last meal.

The prophet said, Please feed me first.

"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days" 1 Kings 17:14, 15.

The margin says a full year. I would think that was many days to be eating out of a barrel that was almost empty and a cruse that was almost spent. But there are some people who would have developed ulcers sometime during that year, or high blood pressure, or a nervous breakdown. The idea of living under a situation in which every day you didn't know if you were going to have enough for the next day or not. It worked all right in that case. It was based on faith, simple obedience to God's Word.

I want to ask you friends, was that widow drawn out of herself? Was the very solution that was given to her one that in its very nature called for her to think of others? Sure. You can see that. That's the whole lesson of it.

Let's go to John. We will go to Matthew also because Matthew tells some things that John doesn't, and John tells some things that Matthew doesn't.

"When Jesus lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do" John 6:5.

Notice the disciples' solution to the problem. It is very interesting:

"And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals" Matthew 14:15.

They had the problem solved. Their solution was to let the people solve their own problem. Send them away so they can go into the villages and buy for themselves.

"But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat" verse 15.

The Lord threw the problem back on them and made it their problem.

"And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes" verse 16.

They thought they were out from under the problem again. First they tried to get rid of it by suggesting where it ought to be taken care of. Now they are seeking to get rid of it by proving that they can't do it, saying, "We have here but five loaves, and two fishes."

Jesus said, "Bring them hither to Me" verse 17.

I can fancy some of them saying, Wait a minute. What are *we* going to eat? There goes all there is around here. The little boy might have given it to the Master, and the Master might have let us have a bite. But here He thinks he is going to feed others with it.

I want to ask you something. Before they got through that afternoon, did they all have something to eat? Yes. It is proved that they had enough by the fact that when they got through they collected 12 baskets full of the remnants left over. Everybody had all they wanted and there were 12 baskets full to prove it.
Jesus and His disciples ate, but they ate last. When did the widow eat? She ate last. Do you see what Jesus is getting at?

Do you have a problem? Well there is somebody else that has a problem. If you will get out of yourself and take hold of the problem of somebody else who needs help more and worse than you do, God will see to it that in that very experience you will find the solution to you own problem...

… Oh friends, how are you going to get rid of that crab in you? There is only one way. Nobody is going to come along like we did and pull it out. No. It has got to be *drawn* out. And the only thing that will accomplish this great work is to become interested in others.