

What Is a Sanitarium?

Sermon #0917

Study given by W. D. Frazee—November 15, 1963

Our text is in Luke 14. Some of you will be interested in the fact that in the *Testimonies* this Scripture is applied to the work of the medical missionary. You might keep that in mind as we read the parable:

"And when one of them that sat at meat with Him heard these things, He said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Then said He unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse" Luke 14:15-18.

You have heard of people making excuses about a lot of things, but what a strange thing to make an excuse about a special supper they had already accepted invitations to.

"The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come" " Luke 14:18-20.

When should he have looked at the ground? Before he bought it. When should he have proved the oxen? Certainly before he bought them. Could the wife have come too? Why sure. These were excuses.

"So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" " Luke 14:21-23.

The one who made the supper was determined that they were going to have it. Where the plans changed along the way? Well, they were and they were not. They still had the supper, but the guest list was different. The method of getting them in was different.

God's plans never fail, they are never frustrated, but they are sometimes delayed. He devises various methods in dealing with man's free choice, but he is going to get His work done. Supper will be served.

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" Revelation 19:9.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" Revelation 19:7.

The marriage supper is about to be served. Somebody is going to be there. But oh, so many who gave their word that they would come when it was ready, will not be there. They have found something else to do.

Not more than one in a hundred today, even of those that know the special truths for this time, are doing more than engaging in common, worldly enterprises. There is one thing that burdens the heart of Jesus at this time. It is the wedding feast. The union of divinity and humanity. The reunion of Christ with those He loves. If you and I catch the spirit of Jesus, and are heart to heart with Him in that longing, there will be just one passion to consume. That is the passion to join with Him in getting people away from what they are doing and into the thing He is doing. What do you say?

"The medical missionary workers are doing the long-neglected work which God gave to the church in Battle Creek—they are giving the last call to the supper which He has prepared" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, page 71.

That was written in 1898. That is several years ago. The year before that in the *Review and Herald*, May 25, 1897, the Lord's messenger wrote these words:

"Why has it not been understood from the word of God that the work being done in medical missionary lines is a fulfillment of the Scripture. 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' This is the work that the churches in every locality, north and south and east and west should do. The churches have been given the opportunity of answering this work. Why have they not done it? Someone must fulfill the commission. A work which should have been done has been left undone.

Those who have been engaged in the medical missionary work have been doing the very class of work the Lord would have done." *Review and Herald*, May 25, 1897

If that is so, what had the medical missionary workers better do? They had better keep on doing it and not be diverted. This is the last call to the supper. Notice it goes to poor and rich people; those in the highways as well as in the hedges. It is talking about the great people of the earth as well as the little people; those in positions of influence as well as the weak and the neediest. Does God want them all? Is there a place for the rich man and the poor man, and all in between, at the table? Yes. Can the millionaire come? Does God want him? Does He want special efforts made to get him there? Yes. What about the poor beggar who does not have a penny. Is there a place for him? Does the Lord want some special efforts made to get him there? Yes. That is what is burdening the heart of Jesus. And the medical missionaries, among others, are to go out and get these people to come to the supper. They are to give the last call.

"Soon there will be no work done in ministerial lines but medical missionary work" *Counsels on Health*, page 533.

Let me point out that central in this plan of medical missionary work is a very specific, very peculiar type of institution. In fact, it has a special name. It is a sanitarium. I want to read something that was given at the last General Conference that the Lord's special messenger attended. That was in Washington D.C. in 1909.

"We are living in the last days. The end of all things is at hand. . . . There are stormy times before us, but let us not utter one word of discouragement. . . . Let us remember that we bear a message of healing to a world filled with sin-sick souls" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, page 167.

Have we got something for these millions of poor people who would like to quit tobacco and somehow can't? Have we got something for all the others who are bound to the chariot wheel of Satan, dragged down by habits?

"May the Lord increase our faith and help us to see that He desires us all to become acquainted with His ministry of healing and with the mercy seat" *Ibid*.

Isn't that a nice combination? That means we are looking up to where Jesus is in the sanctuary, and we are looking around to see souls who need help. If all we do is look up, we lose contact with the multitudes who need His help. If all we do is look around us we will get discouraged. But if we will with one hand lay hold of that mighty arm of Jesus, and with the other hand reach out to souls who need help, we can draw them together.

"Henceforth medical missionary work is to be carried forward with an earnestness with which it has never yet been carried. This work is the door through which the truth is to find entrance to the large cities, and sanitariums are to be established in many places.

"Sanitarium work is one of the most successful means of reaching all classes of people. Our sanitariums are the right hand of the gospel, opening ways whereby suffering humanity may be reached with the glad tidings of healing through Christ. In these institutions the sick may be taught to commit their cases to the Great Physician, who will co-operate with their earnest efforts to regain health, bringing to them healing of soul as well as healing of body.

"Christ is no longer in this world in person, to go through our cities and towns and villages, healing the sick; but He has commissioned us to carry forward the medical missionary work that He began. In this work we are to do our very best. Institutions for the care of the sick are to be established, . . .

"I have been given special light that in our sanitariums many souls will receive and obey present truth. . . .

"Our sanitariums are to be schools in which instruction shall be given in medical missionary lines. They are to bring to sin-sick souls the leaves of the tree of life, which will restore to them peace and hope and faith in Christ Jesus" *Ibid*, pages 167,168.

The word sanitarium is repeated again and again. What is a sanitarium? I suppose all of us know something about it, but I doubt if any of us know all about it. I am in school learning more about what a sanitarium is. I have been studying this for some time. Forty years ago this fall I enrolled as a student at the college of medical evangelists at Loma Linda, the Hill Beautiful that was selected by the Lord's messenger and those associated with her. I have been studying all these years about God's medical missionary work. But it seems to me I see it more now than I ever did before. If I keep studying and working and working and studying, and praying as I study and work, I expect to see it better next week and next month and next year.

What is a sanitarium? It is several things, but it is several things plus. Let me give you an example:

"In the night season I was given a view of a sanitarium in the country. The institution was not large, but it was complete" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, page 78.

Does a sanitarium have to be large? No. It doesn't. In fact, it is better if it isn't. We don't need elephants, especially not white elephants.

Can a little thing be complete? Yes it can. That is what I want to get hold of, and I want every one of us to get hold of it. You could take an elephant and cut him into pieces, and you might have something small, but what would you do with it? Mere smallness is not enough. That is the thing I would like to have us see. Some people are so afraid of bigness that they glorify smallness. This institution the Lord's servant was shown was not large, but it was complete. It goes on to say:

"It was surrounded by beautiful trees and shrubbery, beyond which were orchards and groves. Connected with the place were gardens, . . ." *Ibid.*

It sounds good, doesn't it? It was not large, but it was complete.

"Sanitariums are needed in which successful medical and surgical work can be done" *Medical Ministry*, page 26.

If surgical work was done in it, would it be a sanitarium? When most people think of surgery they think of a hospital. You can do surgery in a hospital. In fact, you need a hospital to do surgery. But there is a concept that a hospital is one thing and a sanitarium is something else. I would like to have you look at that. I was studying this some days ago, and I thought I would look up in a dictionary to see what a hospital is. I find it is a good thing to check up on yourself. This is what I read in Funk and Wagoner's dictionary as the definition for a hospital:

"An institution for the reception, care, and medical treatment of the sick or wounded. Also the building used for that purpose."

That is a hospital. Its purpose is to receive sick people, care for them, and give them medical treatment. I want to ask how you would carry on a sanitarium without that? Is that a fair question? How would you carry on a sanitarium without the reception, care, and medical treatment of the sick? It would be difficult.

To help us on this point I read:

"The purpose of our health institutions is not first and foremost to be that of hospitals" *Medical Ministry*, page 27.

Would you gather from that there might be some hospital work done there? Yes. But is that the first purpose? No. You can have an institution for the reception, care, and medical treatment of the sick without doing one thing about teaching them how to live so they don't have to come back again. You can have an institution for the care and treatment of the sick without telling them what made them sick, and helping them know how to not do it anymore.

How do I know that can be done? Because it is being done all over the world. You can have a hospital for the care and treatment of the sick without that education. But friends, you can't have a sanitarium without it.

There is another big reason why the purpose of a sanitarium is not primarily to be that of a hospital. You can have a hospital for the care and medical treatment of the sick without pointing them to Jesus Christ and getting them ready to go to heaven.

How do I know that can be done? Because it is being done in hundreds and hundreds of institutions all around the world. There are hundreds of places where people can go to have their appendix out, or a broken bone set, or given treatment for ulcer of the stomach or high blood pressure, or any one of a hundred conditions. It can be done without health education on the point, and it can be done without spiritual work, without seeing that soul brought to Christ as the power unto salvation. If that is done, and that is all that is done, is that institution a sanitarium? No.

"Sanitariums are needed in which successful medical and surgical work can be done. These institutions conducted in accordance with the will of God will remove prejudice and call our work into favorable notice. The highest aim of the workers in these institutions is to be the spiritual help to the patients" *Ibid*, page 26.

Would that have a bearing on what kind of work we should have in the sanitarium? Yes. There are people who can do successful medical and surgical work in an ordinary hospital in this world who could not qualify at all for the staff of a sanitarium. The people who staff a sanitarium must be spiritual specialists whether they are doctors, nurses, dietitians, cooks, bakers, helpers, laboratory technicians, people who help with the cleaning and laundry, people taking care of the lawns and flowers, or anyone who has any connection with it. Inspiration tells us that every worker in that institution is to be someone who has a spiritual experience and is working with Jesus to lift those people to a knowledge of Christ and Him crucified, and get them ready for the coming of our Lord. Isn't that a wonderful picture?

"Successful evangelistic work can be done in connection with medical missionary work. It is as these lines of work are united that we may expect to gather the most precious fruit for the Lord" *Ibid*.

Gather fruit. What kind of fruit? Precious fruit. What kind of precious fruit? The most precious fruit. Folks, thank God it is harvest time. No matter how many apples you get off of one branch, you can get more off a whole tree. Am I right? And no matter how many you can get off of one tree, you can get more off an orchard. Do we need some more trees? Do we need whole orchards of them?

Oh, has the day of the sanitarium passed? Why dear friends, compared with what is ahead, it is hardly started. Believe me, we are going to see the medical missionary work broadening and deepening at every point of its progress by the

flowing of hundreds and thousands of streams until the whole earth is covered as the waters cover the sea.

I was reading today that there ought to be a sanitarium near every large city. How many would that make? It would make a lot of them, wouldn't it? You see why it says:

"It is that thirsting souls may be led to the living water that we pled for sanitariums. Not expensive, mammoth sanitariums, but homelike institutions in pleasant places. Never, never build mammoth institutions. Let these institutions be small, and let there be more of them"
Medical Ministry, page 323.

I read it was small, but it was complete. Do you think we are complete yet? No, we are not. We do not have all that is called for here. Are we going to have it? I hope so. Do you hope so? The Lord grant it. Let's not rest until we get one that is complete.

I want you to think of the wonderful promise that Our Heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide which we know not. By the way, if God can think of a thousand, do you think it is all right for us to think of more than one? And when we speak of one or two or three ways, does it mean that is all we know about. Well, if it is, God still knows a thousand others, because He knows about a thousand we do not know anything about. So we can put our feet in the water and have faith.

In the meantime, let's use all we have, because it is those who use to the best advantage what they have that get more. Jesus is always encouraging us to do the very best with what we have.

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