

Which Cup

#1008

Study given by W.D. Frazee—October 4, 1966

[Singing.]

Where in the Bible is that taken from—beside still waters? Where is that? Where is it? That's right. The 23rd Psalm. Let's turn to the 23rd Psalm—Psalm 23. Of all the psalms of David, this is the most universally known and loved, and what a wonderful message of peace and comfort and courage—Psalm 23. Would you read it with me:

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever” Psalm 23:1-6.

Here is a beautiful picture of contentment, isn't it, friends. This evening, I would like to notice that expression in the fifth verse:

“...my cup runneth over” Psalm 23:5.

I wonder what's in the cup—I wonder what's in the cup. Apparently, it's something that is satisfying because David, accompanied by his harp, is singing a song of praise. It's wonderful to have a cup that is so satisfying, friends. Isn't it?

Now, you know, there's another cup. We were looking at it last Friday night. It's the cup that Babylon holds to the lips of the nations. The prophet sees that golden cup filled with wine that makes men mad:

“...Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” Revelation 14:8.

And it's because of that intoxicating wine that the multitudes of earth are rushing on in the path of death. Yet, there must be something about it, friends, that holds them. Is that cup that Babylon holds to the lips of the nations—is that the cup David is singing about? Is it? Oh, no. It's two entirely different cups, and I would like to suggest to you tonight, dear friends, that the difference between the cup of

salvation that David presents in the 23rd Psalm, and the golden cup of wine that Babylon is presenting—the difference between these two—is the difference between reality, on the one hand, and make-believe or pretense, on the other, and another name for that is intoxication—intoxication.

You see, when God makes the grapes, He puts into the grapes a delicious sugar. We call it glucose, or grape sugar. It's the same sugar that's in the bloodstream. That's why these long distance hikers carry packages of raisins for quick energy. And that sugar that's in the grape or the raisin is accompanied by delicious flavors, delicate odors. God made the grape and the other fruits like that.

In the 65th of Isaiah, He says that the new wine is found in the cluster, and there's a blessing in it. And the Bible says, Destroy it not. But the great enemy long ago had a counsel with his evil angels. In the early ages of this world, he gathered them together to study what new plan might be laid, what new trap might be designed, what new method might be concocted to degrade and destroy man.

And as this subject was kicked back and forth across the demons' council, and one suggested one thing and one another, finally, Satan himself suggested a plan. He said, I will take the fruit of the earth, the wonderful gift of sweetness and delicate flavors and odors that God has given men, and I will transform that sugar into a poison.

But he had so studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature, and had so studiously looked into the brain arrangement in man, and he was so diabolical in his cunning scheme, that he did not produce a poison which would at once kill man. Oh, no. After all, dear friends, if alcohol were something that killed men, like prussic acid, we'd never need to study the problem, would we. No. It would be self-liquidating. That's right.

But alcohol is a very interesting scheme. It is true that it kills, but that is not the main purpose of alcohol—to kill. It's certainly not the purpose of those that drink it. Neither is it the main purpose of the Devil who invented it. The reason that people drink alcohol is because of its effect upon the forebrain.

Here in the forehead is the part of man's brain which in a special sense lifts him above the beast, above the animal, shall I say, above the mere physical. Here in the forebrain, reason and conscience have their throne, and alcohol is cleverly designed by Satan to have its first effect and its worst effect upon the forebrain. Very clever.

And so, when a man drinks alcohol, he does not pass out. It takes quite a bit of alcohol to produce that effect, but even a little alcohol begins to dull and dim the conscience.

We were noting it last week, as we studied Herod's birthday party. And you remember there in the New Testament, the scripture tells the story of that birthday party in the fortress of King Herod, when rich foods and wines produced an intoxication which was increased by the music and the dancing. And you remember that that night's festivities cost the life of the greatest of prophets, John the Baptist.

Again, my dear friends, a harlot is seeking the death of her reprover. We're living in the hour when the scarlet woman of Revelation 17 is seeking revenge upon the Spirit-of-Prophesy-inspired people that dare to condemn her fornication and her illegal alliance with the kings of this earth.

And as we noted last week, like Herodias, she has a daughter, who is playing to the politicians, the kings, the nobles of this world. And there will, one of these days, be a death decree against those who, like John the Baptist, lift their voice in protest against disobedience to the law of God. Is that true?

But the thing that I called your attention to last Friday night and that I want to study further tonight is this, friends. The reason that Herod and those that were with him went along with that blood-thirsty scheme was this—their minds were benumbed. The forebrain was not functioning. Conscience was asleep, and this is the power of alcohol—to put the forebrain to sleep—and *by* that, to get rid of the inhibitions that conscience causes.

On the other hand, the cup that David is singing about is a cup of reality. Whether you envision in that cup the pure waters from the spring or whether you envision the fresh juice of the grape, unfermented and uncontaminated, there is blessing in that cup, my friend. It will never produce any illusions, any delusions, any hallucinations. It will not put to sleep any reality.

And by this simple test, you may measure everything in this world tonight, my dear friends—by this simple test—whether it comes out of a book or out of a bottle, on a TV screen or in any other way—the simple question is this—does it bring to you reality and the sense of reality or does it produce an illusion, a delusion.

One is the river of the water of life. The other is the wine of Babylon. And both have a great attraction. One or the other will eventually fill us, my dear friends. Eventually, we shall either be fully and completely satisfied with reality, as given us of God, or we shall be fully intoxicated, deluded, by the wine of Babylon. Gone, even the power to *think* reality. Gone, the ability to weigh and measure evidence. Gone, the ability to respond to real motives, real appeals. That is the picture of the alcoholic.

Finally, oh, let me say right here, lest I should be misunderstood. It's wonderful how the golden chain of the grace of God can reach down to the lowest depths and pull up the worst slave, *provided* he wants to be lifted.

But the worst thing about alcohol, and I repeat whether it comes out of a bottle or out of a book, whether it enters the mind—this intoxicating agent—through the stomach or through the senses—the worst thing about it, friends, is that even the first small doses reduce the ability to say, No, to further doses.

That's why so often the man who says, I'm going to take one beer, no more—I'll take one little glass of wine, no more—so often, he finds himself, having taken that, with the resolution weakened, and it is easier to take the second than it was to

take the first. That is the power of alcohol, and that applies to the book of fiction, as well as it applies to the glass of wine.

It applies to the excitement of the [unintelligible] on the TV screen, as well as it applies to the bottle of whiskey. It applies to everything that is false, unreal, artificial. It intoxicates. It affects the forebrain.

You will remember that we noted last week the First Commandment referred to by Jesus:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” Matthew 22:37.

Yes, we're to love God with everything we have. This must include the forebrain. First of all and most of all, it's dealing with the forebrain, for it is with the conscience that we serve God. What a stroke—a master stroke—the enemy has made when he can get man to put to sleep, partially or entirely, that part of the mind with which God is loved and sin is hated.

I was thinking of it this way, friend. Suppose that here is a family—father and mother, a number of children, some of them are in the teens and twenties—quite a family. How would it be if some of the youngsters in the teens or twenties decide to have a party, and they say, Well, I'll tell you, if dad is around and down there in the living room, he's liable to interfere with some of the goings-on. Things won't be so full of cheer if he's there.

And so, before the company comes, I think we'll take dad up in the attic and tie him up and gag him, and leave him there till the party's over. Then everybody will have a better time. It has been done. It's being done. I was about to say every Saturday night, but people don't wait for Saturday night any more. Any night, it can be done.

Now, I want to ask you something, friend. Where does father live in *your* house? I'll tell you where He lives. Right here, in the forebrain. And if the kind of good time you have is the one where, to enjoy it the most, father must be bound and gagged so he won't bother you, whiskey is one way to do it, tobacco is one way to do it, fiction is one way to do it. There are a lot of other ways to do it.

Anything that puts to sleep the power of conscience may *seem* to bring great mirth. Why? Because that which stands for law and order has been bound and gagged. On with the dance. Let joy be unconfined. Nobody to say, No. Nobody to say, Slow down. You've had enough. Nobody to say this is not for the Christian. Nobody to say, This is not good for you. Nobody to say, You've had enough now. It's time to go to bed.

Father is bound and gagged upstairs somewhere, so we can all do what we want any way we want, and that's why Babylon is fallen, my friends. That's what cost the life of the prophet of God 2,000 years ago at Herod's birthday party.

Oh, friends, if what we want is for conscience to be put to sleep, the world has a hundred advertising agencies offering us a thousand ways of getting conscience out of the way. But, on the other hand, if what we want is that cup that the 23rd Psalm speaks about, ah, God offers us that.

Jesus offers us the pleasures, the joy, of reality. I'd like to have us think of a few of them tonight. I'd like to have us think of nature. Here are these beautiful flowers. Tell me, friends, do they attract you? Do you enjoy them? They are real. They are not artificial. Who made them? God made them. And the first message of that three-fold announcement of Revelation 14 is:

“...Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made...” Revelation 14:7.

Worship Him that made:

“...heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” Revelation 14:7.

Worship Him that made the world and everything in it, and when we see what He has made and enjoy it, we're tasting the pleasures of reality, whether it be in a golden sunrise or a rosy sunset, whether it be as we listen to the song of the bird or enjoy the shade of the gold or the bright sunshine of a fall morning, whether it be as we look at the blue sky or the march of the clouds across the horizon—in a thousand ways day by day God is speaking to our minds and hearts the message of love, of joy.

But remember, friends, it's all real. Those are real squirrels hopping out there in the trees, full of the joy of abounding life. Those are real birds singing in the trees. It isn't sound effects. Real flowers.

And when we come to the table, thank God, it's real food. Aren't you glad? Real food. Nothing synthetic, nothing artificial, to just *look* like food to fool you. Oh, no. Real food, with real iron for the blood, and real phosphorus for the bones and teeth, and real vitamins for vim and vigor and vitality. Real, true, genuine, nothing counterfeit—that is the menu that heaven offers us. Am I right?

Do you like it? Or would you rather have the artificial, the make-believe, the put-together-to-fool and to deceive? You can get that. There's plenty of it. I repeat, we are given the simple but, oh, so important choice all through life, moment by moment, hour by hour, of choosing between these two—the real and the unreal.

And remember, to enter into the real, heightens our enjoyment of everything that's worth enjoying. To enter into the unreal, makes it impossible to really enjoy the real. Why it puts to sleep those faculties which enable us most to enjoy—the higher powers of the mind.

Take our reading. I mentioned a few moments ago the intoxicating power of fiction, and that is a very real thing, friends, whether it is in reading a book of fiction

or seeing it on the movie screen or the TV screen or listening to fiction over the radio. Anything which is unreal which has the excitement, the dramatic pull, of the fictitious—the unreality of it, as one of the greatest novelists of this century has said—the unreality of it enters into one’s very bones.

Yes, one of the greatest novelists of this century, after devoting his whole life to the writing of fiction—he said, What is left after a life of reading and writing this stuff. He said, Nothing, nothing, nothing.

Why is it that the Hollywood actors have an incidence of schizophrenia twice as much as the average population? In other words, why do the nerves and brains go haywire of so many of those actors and actresses? Medical authorities have called attention to the fact that one of the great reasons for that is that they are all the time living a double life, all the time pretending to be somebody else. The life they live is an unreal life.

But while that affects a few hundred actors and actresses out there in Hollywood in that way, it’s affecting millions of people who sit in the movie theaters and live that unreality, or over the TV screen, and therefore Babylon is fallen.

But God offers us, dear friends, the joy of *real* life. In His word, is literature unsurpassed in beauty and in appeal. It lacks the excitement of the novel, the unreal, but oh, my friends, to the mind that’s unspoiled, there can be nothing more interesting than the story of Joseph, the story of Esther, the story of Jesus.

Which do you prefer? The fermented wine of Babylon, which fills the mind with illusions and delusions, or the fresh, pure wine, the juice of the grape unfermented, that brings reality?

But now, I want to touch upon something, friend, which may come closer still to some of us. You know, when Jesus was speaking to His disciples there on the mount of Olives, in one of His last meetings with them, recorded in Luke 21, looking down to our time and calling attention to the fact that men’s hearts would be:

“...failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth...” Luke 21:26.

He gave a warning. Turn, please, to Luke 21. I want you to see it—Luke 21, 34th verse:

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares” Luke 21:34.

Three ways to have the senses dulled, so that our perceptive faculties are not alert. What’s the first he mentioned? Surfeiting. Herod had that. And the second is what? Drunkenness. Herod had that. And what’s the third? Cares of this life, and that, my dear friends, is one of the great dangers of many of us here tonight.

And I want to tell you something, friends. It is possible to have the higher spiritual powers benumbed and besotted by intense devotion to the cares of this life, to just making a living. Did I say to making a living? The problem is that today, as someone said, what the ordinary family needs in order to cover living expenses is 10 percent more income than they're getting, whatever that figure may be.

There are literally thousands of things that are being advertised today that a few generations ago, or even a generation, had not thought of. My eye chanced to fall the other day on a Sears Roebuck catalog, advertising specials for Christmas, and among them, mind you, in a Sears Roebuck catalog, was a mink coat for \$1,400.

Probably no one here will be bothered with that, but there are 1,400 other ways to spend those dollars, my dear friends. My point is, the people of this world today are in a rat race to get the dollars to get the things that they feel are necessary to make life worth living.

You notice how I paused a moment because he has your attention.

This warning here in this verse we've just read—and He's talking to his own people—He says, Be careful lest you be overcharged, not only with surfeiting—that's eating too much of the rich foods—or drunkenness—alcoholic intoxication—or what? Cares of this life—and so that day come upon you unawares.

Now, do you know, friends, what the best way to escape a lot of that is? You can never fight something with nothing. We'll never help people to get away from the wine of Babylon by offering them an empty cup. The most satisfying thing in this world is to turn from making a living to making a life. Far more interesting. Far more inspiring. Far more stimulating, in the truest sense.

In order that we might understand how to do that, God sent His Son down here in human flesh 2,000 years ago, and look at the record. It's written there in the Gospels. Look at the experience that He went through. Judged—as financial experts would judge it, did He make much of a living? But He made a wonderful life, didn't He, friends.

And Jesus is calling men today and women and boys and girls to devote their lives to making a life and helping other people make a life. This is the most satisfying thing in the world. And those who will put their souls into that experience will have no interest in the wine of Babylon. They'll not be interested in all those exciting, stimulating unrealities of the world. They have their minds on just one thing—to be like Jesus, to live for Him.

Now, some of you here tonight have settled that question. You've put your life fully into the hands of Jesus, and let Him fill you with the satisfaction of His [unintelligible]. Some of you, perhaps, have had a bit of both—you've had a bit of the satisfaction that comes from Jesus, and you've had a bit of the stimulation, the excitement, that the world offers.

I want to ask you tonight, friends. Do you want to end up like Herod, signing the death decree of the reprover? Do you want to finally come to the place where you will put to death the accusing conscience? Get rid of the thing that spoils the fun?

Or would you like to enter fully into a life where there *is* no accusing conscience because the conscience is happy, where every power of the mind and body and soul can in harmony enter into the life that he's chosen. That's the life that Jesus invites us to share with Him.

It's a life of service for others. It's a life in which self is put aside. The uninitiated cannot understand how putting self aside would be the way to happiness, but that's the truth. Living for self does not fully satisfy. Living for Jesus satisfies the entire being.

"...he that winneth souls is wise" Proverbs 11:30.

And if there's somebody here that has been seeking to be a good man, a good woman, a good youth, and yet, to live for self, I invite you, dear friends, to put your life fully into a way of life in which your one reason for existence is just to help Jesus—just to help Jesus.

And where you have just one question—Lord, how can I help you best today? Where the question of making a living is not the important thing—it's making a life—a life like His. Where your one question day by day is, Lord, how can I win the most souls?

Ah, but somebody says, what about my career? Indeed, what about your career. When Saul of Tarsus was a young man, he had entered upon a career that had already taken him near the height. He was a Greek scholar, a Roman citizen, and as a Jew, a member of the highest body of his nation.

But he met Jesus on the road to Damascus, and he was never the same after that. His conscience that had been accusing him and that he had tried to put to sleep was fully awakened that noonday, and it never went to sleep after that.

But Saul, after his conversion usually known as Paul—he came filled and thrilled with a way of life that, although it cost his body pain, cost all his money, his reputation, lost his friends and everything that the world holds dear, yet something entered into his soul that day that completely satisfied him, and all he wanted was more and more and more.

Read his testimony in Philippians 3. He says, I've suffered for Jesus' sake the loss of all things, but oh, he says, all I want is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. I'm pressing on that way, running that race. All I want is to please Him. All I want is to know Him. All I want is to live for Him. That is the cup of satisfaction which runs over. Nothing unreal about it. It fills the soul with abundant satisfaction.

Oh, I wonder, dear friends, can we testify tonight—can we witness—that this is true *for us*? Have we tasted and found that the Lord is gracious, that He's good, that His way of life is good? Can we say with David, He leads me beside still waters, in green pastures, and my cup runs over. And can we add the triumphant note:

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever”
Psalm 23:6.

Oh, friends, can we be happy there? I tell you this. We had better try it out here before we risk going to heaven and having it forever. Hadn't we? Yes. Oh, one of the great purposes of the Christian life is that we may try out here on earth what heaven will be like—the music of heaven, the literature of heaven, the food of heaven, the way of life of heaven, and deeper than all these outward things is the inward experience of living for Jesus rather than self, for others rather than our own personal pleasure.

This is what man was made for, and as fish need water, nothing else can satisfy them. You and I need unselfish service. For that we were made. When we have it, friends, we have that which satisfies the soul.

I'd like to ask a question here tonight. Is there somebody that, as we meditate together this vesper hour, you believe that God is speaking to your heart—that there's a decision you need to make—there's a decision that you need to make tonight.

Now, if you've already made that decision, thank God, but if there's somebody here that needs to make a decision along the lines we've studied tonight, as the Spirit of God may apply it to your hearts, would you just stand quietly where you are—somebody that Jesus is calling to make a decision.

You know, nearly 2,000 years ago, Jesus passed by the Sea of Galilee, and there he saw Peter and John and Andrew and James casting nets into the sea, for they were fishers, and He said, Men, follow Me, and I will do what? I will make you fishers of men.

Something happened that day, friends, that changed their lives and changed the course of history. And there may be somebody sitting here in this upper room tonight that God is calling to make a change in your life. He wants to take you away from the ordinary things into the extraordinary things. He wants to take you away from the common life of living for self into the uncommon life—the life of Jesus—of living entirely and completely for Him and for the service of others.

Is there another one that says, Jesus is speaking to me tonight. There's a decision that I need to make. Just stand where you are. You can tell Jesus about it. Oh, friends, He loves to have you respond, and if He's speaking to your heart just now, don't hesitate. He gave everything for you. He wants you to give everything for Him.

If there's something that has kept you from entering into the fullness of His purpose, give it up tonight. Remember, He left nothing undone, that He might make it possible for you to be fully happy. He gave everything. He emptied Himself for you. As He gave all for you, will you not give all for Him?

Oh, friends, it's a wonderful thing to give all for Jesus. Isn't it? Is there another that says, Yes, Jesus is talking to my heart. Just remain standing a moment, dear ones. There with bowed heads, tell Jesus about it—tell Jesus about it. Ah, it's a wonderful thing to lay all on the altar—to lay all on the altar—and do it now—from sin, from self-pleasing—and let Jesus have His way completely, forever.

Oh, it's a wonderful thing to get settled where we're going. Isn't it, friends? Yes. These men that are headed for the moon—when they take off, they're expecting to land right up there. But you and I have a goal higher than that, a destination far beyond it, but it's going to take all there is of us. That's my point, friends.

We can't have one foot on the earth and the other on the moon. Right? No, no. Everything has to go in a man's body and mind and soul when he takes off for the upper levels. So, let not one lingering link hold us to this world. Let not one selfish enterprise hold us back. Everything on the altar—all for Jesus.

Is there another one that says, There's something that needs to be settled in my soul tonight, and thank God, it's getting settled. Jesus gave all for us. We give all for Him. Jesus gave all for us. We give all for Him.

I'm so glad that God has helped me, and when I've fallen, He's helped me up again. When I've lost the way, He's helped me find it again. He'll do the same for you. Is there still one more that says, Yes, this is my night—this is my night. God bless you, my boy. Jesus understands what it is—He understands.

All right. We want to have prayer for these, and before we pray, is there anybody here tonight, whatever the burden may be on your heart, whatever the reason for asking prayer—is there anyone here tonight that would like to be remembered in a special way in prayer. Just raise your hand where you are, and we'll pray for you.

All right. Will you bow your heads with me. Heavenly Father, we thank Thee with all our hearts tonight that we can have so much help—that Jesus has died so that we may be redeemed.

And you see each one of these standing—just now, as we surrender all to Thee, do Thou accept us fully. In a special way, take us, as we put our lives into soul winning, the greatest work in all the world. Spoil this world for us, Lord. Let no ordinary thing take our time in this extraordinary hour. May every moment of our lives from this moment on be devoted to the one job of helping Jesus spread the message of His love.

Then, Lord, you've seen these hands. Answer every request, hear every prayer. And now, we thank Thee for a blessing for each one, in Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated.

[Singing.]

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine,
For Thee, all the follies of sin, I resign.
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus it's now.

After we're dismissed, if there's any of you that would like a personal word, come up. We'd be glad to talk with you. If there's any of you that need some special personal help tonight, we're here to help you. Every one can go down these steps tonight triumphant in God. Every one can leave this room tonight in the joy of reality, and in the sense of fellowship with Jesus. God bless you.

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