

How to Solve Problems 1 of 8

The Book of Providence

#0339

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1960

Concerning that beautiful home toward which we are journeying, I read:

“O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted,
behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy
foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of
agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of
pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the
LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children”
Isaiah 54:11–13.

There in that glorious home, God is going to have a school, dear friends. We are all going to be students in that heavenly school. Won't it be wonderful to be taught of God?

Before we can enter that higher school, we must take some preparatory work here below. And Jesus took this text that I have just read in Isaiah 54 and He applied it to the preparatory school down here in this world as well:

“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of
God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned
of the Father, cometh unto me” John 6:45.

Right there and then in Galilee, He had disciples, pupils in His school that were being taught of God. They were preparing to graduate from the earth school to the higher school above.

Ah friends, it's a wonderful thing to be sure that what we are learning here is accredited. I find a reference to that in *Desire of Ages*, page 69. When Jesus was a boy, we're told that there were certain schools that He didn't go to. And I was interested in noting on this in *Desire of Ages* why He didn't go:

“The mind was crowded with material that was worthless to
the learner, and that would not be recognized in the higher
school of the courts above” *The Desire of Ages*, page 69.

He wanted to be sure that everything He got was accredited. I hope you are equally in earnest about it.

Now at this point, I raise the question: Why do we have to study so much and learn so much to get ready for Heaven? Why isn't it enough just to do what Paul said to that Philippian jailer when kneeling down at midnight, he cried out, "What shall I do to be saved?" Paul answered:

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,
and thy house" Acts 16:31.

Did Paul tell him the truth? Was that all right? Could the Philippian jailer be saved that way? Can you be saved that way? Yes, friends. That's the only way anybody will ever be saved. But we must carefully distinguish, if we are students of the Scripture, between the *title* for Heaven and the *fitness* for Heaven.

A man can have his sins forgiven and be justified, and in that sense, be saved and ready for Heaven all in a very few moments. It happened to the thief on the cross, didn't it? But I want to tell you something friends, the thief on the cross wasn't ready to go through the time of trouble. He was just ready to die, that's all.

God is preparing some people down here in this last generation whose glorious destiny it is, not to be ready to die—they're ready to die all right—but oh, to be ready to live, and to live forever; to live through the greatest time of testing and pressure this universe has ever beheld, and to live right on through and welcome Jesus at His appearing without ever dying. *That*, dear friends, is something more than the Philippian jailer got in the dungeon that night and that the thief got on the cross. Something more.

Now, you remember we are told that rightly understood, the work of education and the work of redemption are one. That's to restore in man the image of his Maker. And those who go through this time of trouble ahead and vindicate the character of God will be those in whom the image of God has been fully restored. That's their unique characteristic. That's what makes them different from generations past and gone. In them, the work of redemption has reached its full objective. They are ripe fruit. They didn't drop off the tree before they were mature.

In restoring the image of God in man, God does not deal with man as a passive creature. When God made man in the beginning in Eden, He took the lifeless clay and formed it in His own image, and breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. And man stood there perfect, fully reflecting the image of his Maker. Is that correct?

You know there are a lot of people that would like to have God do it that way today. They would just like to lie still or think they would, while God just molds them and makes them. And someday they wake up and look around, and there they are. They're all like God again. No, friends, that's not the program.

In this work of *restoring* the image of God, the choice of man himself has a part, a most vital part to play. That's why education is necessary—Christian education. The

choice of man in this work of restoration is not merely a blanket choice that we make once for all, that we simply turn ourselves over to God and we say, "Lord, wheel me in the operating room and give me anesthetic and do some plastic surgery and make me like God." No. No. It's a lot more than that.

It must be an intelligent choice. We must not only be willing to be like God, but (Watch this point!) at each step, we must choose to be like God on that point. And so, therefore, we must see the step before we can take it.

Don't misunderstand me. We're told in 2 Corinthians 5:7 that we walk by faith, not by sight. But what Paul is talking about there is that we can take God's word for it. We may not see any sense in what God says, but if we see He says it and we believe God, then by faith we can step out and take the step. But I will tell you this, friends: We must see that God says to take the step before we can take it. God does not take possession of us so that we automatically take the step whether we see it or not. No, He doesn't do that.

The mind must be educated. God is dealing, not primarily with our muscles in *acting*, He is dealing primarily with our minds in *thinking*. It's not by direct control of our minds that God is leading us. It is by the study of His Word and the revelations of His Spirit that we come to see His will—to think His thoughts.

And when we graduate from this school in this world where we have learned these lessons, then and not until then, we will graduate to the higher school. By the time we get ready for that higher school, we will have learned to think as God thinks. We'll have all the negative thoughts, all the errors, pruned away—gone. And we will have gotten into the channel of God's thinking. Then when we go into the higher school with that sort of preparation, oh friends, we have an eternity of progress ahead of us. I want to get there, don't you?

Now in this earth school where God is teaching, He has three great books. One is the Bible. Another is the book of nature, the things that God has made. And the third, what is it? The experiences of life. Yes, you know the name of that book, don't you? Now, there are three other names for these three great books. There is revelation. That's the written Word. Creation, that's the unwritten word, the book of nature. And the book of providence. I love those three books of creation, revelation, and providence, don't you?

In observing nature and in studying the Bible, we learn certain principles. But then we must take them into that laboratory which we find in our human experience.

Several years ago, when I was a student at Loma Linda, one of the courses I took was chemistry. And every morning at seven o'clock, we'd be sitting there, and the door would open and in would come Dr. Wrisley. He was a wonderful teacher. He'd come in with a nice smile. Then he would have a word of prayer, and then he'd write on the blackboard a little five-minute paper, he called it. And then he'd lecture to us for an

hour on chemistry to explain things. We'd study the book, and recite on it and all that: studied our textbook, listened to His lecture.

And then what do you suppose happened? Why friends that class was over, and then we went across the campus to the laboratory. And there Dr. Gardner led us into the laboratory manual. We had bottles and cans and various containers with chemicals. We had the test tubes and beakers and pipits and all the rest of the apparatus. We would mix the acids and bases to make salts, and we'd combine the various things.

I remember one day, the doctor had us figure out the exact amount of acetylene and oxygen that it would take to make a precise chemical combination. We put them together, and something happened that I don't think was intended by the teacher because it really combined according to the laws of chemical reaction, and there was an explosion there that just went all over the laboratory.

Well, my point is, we had experiments. Now, what were they for? They weren't just haphazard experiments. *Every one* of those laboratory experiments had been put in that manual for the purpose of teaching a certain chemical law, and demonstrating a certain chemical reaction. And the things we listened to Dr. Wrisley talk about during the first hour, we spent several hours working out in the laboratory, don't you see?

In this school that God is conducting here in this world, my friends, I repeat, we have this great textbook, the Bible, with the magnifying commentary of the Spirit of Prophecy. And we have the great book of nature. And looking at what God has written here in this Word and in the book of nature, we learn certain principles. But oh, that is not the end of the school. And that's where so many people, as I view it, are missing some of the most important things in their education.

Do you know what the rest of it is? Oh, it is the laboratory. And what is that? Oh, that is this book of *experience*. And shall I tell you something, friends? God thinks so much of you that He has caused to be written and planned and executed a special laboratory manual with your name on it. And nobody else has that copy. Do *you* have it? Oh, if you don't, friends, get it, your own copy of the laboratory manual, for it has been written just for you. Your laboratory manual is different from mine and from Brother Ficklee's, and Brother Anderson's and Brother Jensen's. God has a laboratory manual just for you.

Now in this, this third book differs from the other books. We all look around us and see the world of nature. It's out there. We look out the window and there it is. And we all open this Bible and there it is, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Genesis to Revelation. It's there for everybody, isn't it? But listen friends, nobody has that third book but you, as far as *your* life experience is concerned. Nobody ever had the experience that you have had and *are* to have, today, tomorrow, next week.

If people would only get that wonderful fact, it would settle a hundred problems. They'd quit asking, "Why do I have to do this? I don't see other people doing it." "Why

do I have this trial? Oh my, I seem to have trials nobody else has.” Why do I have this thing or that thing?”

Why of course, friends, you should feel honored that God thinks enough of you to write a special laboratory manual, the book of experience in God’s dealing with human lives.

[Audience response] Amen.

And shall I tell you, that in some ways this is the most important book of all three, for no matter how much you study the Bible, and no matter how much you study nature, unless you go on into the laboratory and open that laboratory manual of your own experiences and apply the principles you’ve studied in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, let me tell you frankly, it will be all in vain in the end, friends. You’ll never graduate. You’ll never graduate. To state it in another way: the laboratory course is not elective, it is *required*.

Are you studying this laboratory manual—your own experience? Are you learning to trace the leadings of God’s providence? Do you know how to read that book?

Now, like every laboratory manual, it’s full of experiments. But I want to tell you about two different kinds of experiments. Scientists today in research are conducting all kinds of experiments. Many of them are just trial and error. They try something to see whether it’ll work. It doesn’t, so they try something else next. That’s the way many people are bungling through life, my friends. May I tell you honestly, God hasn’t called you to any such bungling.

There’s another kind of experiment. The kind of experiments that we had in this chemistry course I was talking to you about. Were they experiments to try to find out something that nobody knew? Oh, no. They were something to teach me something that the teacher already knew. Is that right? Why couldn’t I just take his word for it?

Why, I remember how we took some tin and we weighed the tin. And then we burned it, combined it with oxygen and weighed it again to see how much weight it had gained. Why couldn’t we *read* about it in the book? Well, we could have. But we remembered it a lot better after we’d done it, don’t you see. We saw it actually happen. We learned what oxidizing means. That it actually means combining two elements, and it weighs more when you get through than it did before. I might go on with other illustrations.

My point is, friends, this book of God’s providence in your life experience, this book of God’s providence is made up of experiments. Experiments. And they’re not thrown together at random. They are chosen with care, *each* one to teach a certain lesson.

Now both in the laboratory and in real life, we often call these experiments problems. I think that's a good name for them. That's what they are. Do you know what a problem is? Well, I'll tell you, friends. It's something you don't know the answer to. Isn't that right? If you know the answer, is it a problem? Why no, not at all.

Suppose I'd ask you here this evening, what's three times three? Any of you could tell me? Would you say, "Well, that's quite a problem, Brother Frazee. I'll have to take that home and study it"? No, that's no problem.

But if I were to ask you to take a certain budget and spread it over a certain number of days or weeks of expenditure, you might say, "Well, now that's a problem."

Or if I were to ask you *how* to give a Bible study on a certain subject and prove that the 2,300 days ended in 1844, some of you might say, "You know, that would be a real problem." But others of you might say, "Well, that's all right. I can do that right now. I can go to the board and do that."

Do you see, friends, a *problem* is something that you don't know the answer to? Is that right?

Now, let me tell you a little secret in case you haven't already encountered it. The way you learn is dealing with problems that you don't know the answer to rather than with exercises that you already know the answers to. And the wise teacher knows that. And the wise teacher is not forever giving the students exercises that they already know how to do. That would be, in many cases, largely a waste of time, correct?

And if God is teaching you, (Watch this point!) if He's the teacher and He's the one that is assigning the problems and outlining the experiments, He will give you, every day, some problems that you don't know the answer to. And if you get every one of them right today, He will reward you by giving you tomorrow some others that you hadn't had before, that you won't know the answer to.

And if you don't understand God's way of working, you'll be disappointed and say, "Oh Lord, why can't I, once I have learned some things, why can't I have a chance to do *them* all the time? Why do I have to forever be meeting new situations, tackling *new* problems, and jumping from the frying pan into the fire? Why do I have to have things like that?"

Why, it's all very simple once you get this picture, dear friends. God is teaching a school. And His objective is not to show off right now how bright you are by giving you questions that you always can just rattle the answers off to. Rather He's trying to teach you things you don't know yet. Therefore He must give you some problems you don't know the answer to.

Now, once we put it that way, it makes sense, doesn't it? Sure. So what shall we do with these problems that come to us every day? How shall we deal with them? How are we going to learn the lessons that they are designed to teach?

Tonight, I want to begin with you a study of the ABC of problems. And another evening we'll go further with it. But tonight, I want to give you the A. We'll have the B and C and perhaps, at another time, the D and the E if you wish it. But just tonight the A—the Alpha, if you please. And this A is very simple—*accept* the assignment.

Now, sometimes in our laboratory work, the teacher would say, "Now, part of the class are going to work this experiment, and part of you are going to work this experiment over here." I remember in some laboratory work we had in hydrotherapy and physiotherapy with the medical students out there, there were about 20 different experiments. And on any given day, you'd find groups of medical students, a group over in this part of the laboratory, a group over here and a group over there, and each group would be working on a different experiment. Now, how did they know which one to work on? Well, the teacher told each one.

Dear friends, the Teacher will give you your assignment if you let Him.

But you know, our poor childish natures sometimes say, "Oh, but Teacher, that isn't the problem that I want. I want a different problem. I think if I could go over there and get Harry's experiment, I think I could handle that fine." Or "If I could go over there where Alice is working and do what she is doing, I think I could handle that. But oh, this one that is staring me right in the face, I just couldn't do that at all."

I knew a woman once that had five children. And bless her dear heart, do you know what she wanted to do? She wanted to be a missionary. That's right. She wanted to be a missionary. She thought if she could just go and be a missionary, what a wonderful thing that would be. But of course, she had those five children. Now, what would you do?

Accept the assignment. God is giving day by day, certain problems in the place where His providence has placed you. Right where you find yourself, friends, there are some providences, otherwise named *problems*.

Do you remember that God made an assignment to Jonah? What was the assignment? Nineveh. Now that looked to Jonah like a great big problem. Was it? Yes, it was. And so Jonah did what? He left school. But the teacher transferred the classroom to the bottom of the ocean. Didn't He? That's right. And down there for three days, Jonah went to school. And when he had learned *that* lesson, he was promoted. But do you remember what the Teacher said to him the very next day, "Remember that assignment I gave you the other day? I still mean that. You still must have it."

And he might have said, "Well, Lord, didn't I learn all I needed to down there with the whale?"

"Not unless you learn to accept the assignment, Jonah."

Jonah might have said, "Well, haven't I already suffered enough?"

"You haven't suffered enough unless you're willing to accept the assignment."

Some people think that when they get into troubles and problems where the waves go over their heads and the seaweeds wrap around their heads, they feel that they have suffered so much that God ought to release them from assignments. But no. The assignment is, "Arise and go to Nineveh and do what I told you."

I'm rather of the opinion, friends, that God was thinking of Jonah quite as much as He was of Nineveh. Don't you think so? I think there were some lessons that Jonah needed to learn. I think there were some things deep down in Jonah's experience that needed to come out. And did they come out? Oh, yes. Think of it: A man that could preach under the inspiration of the Spirit of God so that hundreds of thousands of people fell on their knees and sought God. Think of it: More converts than any evangelists on earth today ever had in that effort. And yet so sulky and moody and selfish that he would get out there under a gourd and sulk because God had spared the city. Isn't that humanity for you?

But I'm inclined to think that Jonah finally listened to what God taught him out there under the gourd vine and that he got his lesson. I hope so, don't you? And I hope we'll learn what God is trying to teach us with our problems.

Accept the assignment. That's the A. Now, that is not the B, nor the C, nor the D, nor the E. That's just the A. But you can't *start* unless you take A. You must accept the assignment.

And notice the wording. I did not say, "Accept *an* assignment." I said what? *The* assignment. *The* assignment. I think Jonah would have been willing to preach in Tarshish. He took a boat there. Perhaps he thought maybe he could do something for the Lord over there that would make the Lord willing to compromise so he wouldn't have to go to Nineveh. I don't know about that. But finally, he had to go right back where he had failed.

Oh, my friends, how much time we waste on these trips to Tarshish. How much time we lose in the whale when we could be learning the lesson that God's providence has assigned. But oh, if we finally learn it, thank God, it'll be worth it. Won't it? Accept the assignment.

Now, in other words, that means that when we get up next week sometime and are planning to do something of a work nature that requires being out in the open and

we need a sunny day and it rains, that we *accept* the assignment. The problem is, my plan was to do something outside today. I thought it was going to be clear, but it's rainy instead. Is that a problem? Yes. I don't know the answer right off. Is it my privilege to *accept* the fact that it is God that has put me in that position?

Now, let me tell you an interesting thing. It's a lot easier to accept that kind of problem than it is the problem that people make. Or at least have sense enough not to get angry at the rain, because I know it can't help it. But I may be very tempted to get angry with my brother or at least to get a little fretful if he's promised to meet me at a certain place at eight o'clock, and eight o'clock comes and goes, and I stand there first on one foot and then the other. And a half-hour goes by and maybe an hour. Is that a providence?

Why, you say, "No, Brother, that's just his forgetfulness or laziness, or carelessness."

Now, right here I must tell you this, remind you of this. That while it may be all that as far as he's concerned, as far as I'm concerned, it's a providence. Is that right?

David said:

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" Psalm 76:10.

God is using the mistakes of men, the failures of men, the wickedness of men, to put me in positions where He *wants* me to be to learn certain lessons. Is that right? Did He call Nebuchadnezzar His servant when he went down there to Jerusalem and burned it up and took those Hebrews captive? Did He? Yes. And so no matter what men may do to me, against me, it is all a providence as far as I'm concerned. Is that correct? Is that Bible teaching? I'll not multiply evidence on that.

But I want to read you some things, friends, that have greatly stirred my heart lately. From *Volume 3*, beginning on page 493, I want to pick up a few sentences. This is talking about Brothers B and C:

"They have shunned responsibilities because in assuming them their deficiencies would be brought to the light... They have not dared to follow their own independent judgment, lest they should make mistakes and be blamed for it"
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3, page 493.

So they wanted to put it all on James White. Did they accept the assignment? No, they didn't. And so they got weak. Next page:

"These brethren have not self-reliance, or confidence that God will indeed lead them... God never intended that strong,

independent men of superior intellect should cling to others for support as the ivy clings to the oak. All the difficulties, the backsets, the hardships, and the disappointments which God's servants will meet in active labor will only strengthen them in the formation of correct characters" *Ibid.*, page 493.

Now comes the sentence that I would like to emphasize:

"By putting their own energies of mind to use, the obstacles they meet will prove to them positive blessings" *Ibid.*, page 493.

Isn't that wonderful? Oh friends, have you ever noticed as you're dealing with problems in practical life, you start to work with some wood, and lo and behold, you find a warped piece or a crooked piece or a knotty piece. Why? Why isn't it all smooth? Because you need the problem. And you are working with a piece of machinery, and something goes wrong and breaks. You say, "Why did this have to happen to me?" Why *indeed*? Because you need the problem.

Now, the people of the world that don't know this lose their tempers and curse and swear and let loose a flood of oaths at the poor machinery. What good does that do? Not a bit. But you and I as Christians, we *know* that God is running the school, and that every one of these problems is a providence and it's an *assignment*. And so, we accept the assignment.

Suppose instead of dealing with warped boards, we are dealing with warped minds, my friends. Suppose instead of being in the woodshop, it's in the sanitarium or in the home or in the classroom, and we're trying to deal with human minds. That's the nicest work, we're told, ever given to men. And that "nicest" doesn't mean what a lot of people think it means. It means you have to be very particular and careful and delicate with it. In other words, it's a *problem*.

Take this matter of caring for children. The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that some people have thought that if they could just find somebody that was just so, just nice and everything and easy to take care of, they'd be glad to help somebody like that. But oh, to take somebody that's undisciplined and weak and needy and warped, and to try to work with material like that, too much work, too hard.

I wonder why God doesn't have more perfect people around for you and me to take care of? I wonder why we have so many *difficult* cases to deal with—medically, socially, religiously, every other way? I wonder why so many discipline problems? I'll tell you, friends, why. Because it takes it to get us through this preparatory course so we'll be ready for the higher school.

And let me whisper something to you. If suddenly all the students and the patients, and everybody that you're around working with should become perfect so that

it'd just be so nice for you to work with them, God would either move them on and leave you here to take care of a new lot, or else He'd have to move you out to someplace where there were a lot of problems, just as certain as can be. I don't think you need to worry about it. I think the Lord will see to it that the supply equals the demand.

But oh, friends, let's learn to thank Him for it instead of lamenting and groaning and moaning. What do you say? And once we learn this lesson, we'll quit *blaming* people. "Who in the world did this?" "I had my plans all laid for such and such a thing, and here is something that entirely upsets it."

Do you remember that one morning things had gotten so pressing with Jesus and His disciples that He said to them, "Come apart and rest awhile." Do you remember? And they stole away in a little boat and went over to a nice green place out in the country. And there they were preparing to have a *whole* day of relaxation and rest and recreation. Do you remember?

And what happened? People were just watching. "Where is Jesus?" somebody says.

"Oh, I saw them go off here in a little boat."

"You did. Which way did they go?"

"Oh, they went this way."

"They did? Well, probably they are over there in those hills."

And so away they went with various boats. And after Jesus and His disciples had been there just a little while, here they came, by the hundreds and the thousands until there were 5,000 of them there. And most of the day that Jesus had planned for refreshment and rest and recreation was taken up in the hardest kind of work of healing and teaching and all that sort of thing.

Is that what the Bible tells? Am I telling it straight? That's it. You can read it there in the sixth chapter of John and in the other Gospels.

All right. Now, what did Jesus do? My dear friends, He accepted the assignment. That's the beautiful picture. He accepted the assignment. He didn't get fretful or worried or nervous. And when the day wore on (Watch this, oh please watch it!) and the sun was setting there toward the west, He called His disciples to Him and said, "Now, where shall we buy bread that these shall eat?" Do you know what the next verse says?

"And this He said to prove Him: for He Himself knew what He would do" John 6:6.

Did Jesus know what He was going to do? But why did He let His *disciples* wrestle with the problem? Precisely because He wanted them to learn a lesson in the book of experience.

And do you know what the disciples started to do? They started to do exactly what too many of us have done, my friends. God forgive us. Oh, get this lesson if you miss everything else tonight. They started to evade the thing and try to pass it on to somebody else. Didn't they? Yes. They started to explain all the reasons why they couldn't do anything about it. And they had their answers right at the end of their tongues. "Why," they said, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread wouldn't be enough even if we could buy it to satisfy all these folks." They said, "There is only one thing to do. Send them home."

"Ah," Jesus said, "But some of them would faint on the way."

Well, I don't know. Did they ever solve the problem that evening? No, my friends, they didn't. The Master had to solve it, just like He's had to solve it for you and me times without number.

But oh, the Teacher is so happy when once in a while a student catches on and begins to say, "Oh, I see, this *is* my problem, and by God's grace I can solve it."

Oh, that God would give us hearts of faith that instead of *evading* the assignment and avoiding it and trying to alibi out of it, we would *accept* the problem that God puts right in our laps, my friends.

Now, I know there's an extreme we need to avoid. I know there are people that are just running around looking for assignments. But I think many times it's because they have missed the one God sent them because I think God will load us down if we let Him. But there is a danger of taking on burdens that God never gave us. And I'll throw this in here for balance so nobody will think that we're extreme:

"Not all the burdens that you have been carrying have been laid upon you by the Lord" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8, page 189.*

This was written to Dr. Kellogg.

"You have gathered to yourself responsibilities that the Lord, the merciful Father, does not place upon you. Duties He never ordained that you should perform chase one another wildly" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8, page 189.*

So we need that for balance. But I want to tell you if that's *all* we know, we're not balanced. If all we know is *protecting* ourselves from being overloaded, we're not balanced. We'll be weak and inefficient. And do you know the terrible result of it is this:

We will keep urging our growing weakness as a reason for taking less and less load. And we can lie there in bed and keep moaning over how weak we're getting. And we're going to have to lay down this load and lay down that responsibility, and not accept this one, and we can keep on, friends, until we prove ourselves *right* on everything we ever said of what we couldn't do.

The ten spies said, "We can't go up there." Could they? No. Their words were proved true. Jesus said, "What you've said, I'll just let it come as you have said. You said you couldn't go, so you can't."

But Caleb and Joshua said what? We can do it. They accepted the assignment. Did they do it? And Caleb, an old man, finally cleaned out that nest of giants up there, you remember, that had scared the others? He did it himself.

Oh friends, what a joy it is to God to get students who will accept the assignment. Let's do it. What do you say? Whether it's a health problem or a discipline problem, or a study problem or a work problem, or a financial problem or a relationship problem, or a disposition problem or whatever it is, friends, let's accept the assignment that God's providence arranges.

Now in closing, I want to bring you a wonderful text here from John 18:11. These are the words of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane when the mob came to take Him. And Peter zealous for his Lord, drew his sword and cut off a man's ear. You remember that, don't you?

"Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" John 18:11.

Did He accept the assignment? That's just what He did, friends. Now, Peter didn't want Jesus to accept the assignment because he was afraid that he, Peter, would be included in the assignment, and he didn't want that one. And so he wanted to keep the Master from accepting it and also then Peter wouldn't have to take it. But Jesus said:

"Peter... The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" John 18:11.

Oh friend, in your home, in your situation, in your very room, in your own heart of hearts, there may be a problem facing you tonight that you think, "Anything but this. Oh, if I had any other trial, any other problem than this. But this is the one that of all things, I wish I didn't have. The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, as Job said." What will you do?

Will you come tonight to Gethsemane with Jesus and watch Him as He wrestles through those hours of prayer, until like Him, you can say: "Not my will but Thine be

done. I will accept the assignment and do something about it. Instead of trying to load it off to somebody else or get rid of it or avoid it or back up from it, by God's grace I'll go through it. I will accept the assignment"?

And no matter if the people that bring it are the wicked, no matter if it's the Devil that's driving you into the problem, seemingly, no matter if Caiaphas is leading the band, no matter if Roman soldiers are there and the mob, it's the *Father* that is giving you the cup as far as you're concerned. Is that right?

May I share these beautiful lines that express this thought:

I will not take that bitter thrust which rent my heart today;
As coming from an earthly soul, though it was meant that way;
But I will look beyond the tool, because my life is planned;
I take the cup my father gives; I take it from His hand.

He knows, and even thus allows these little things that irk;
I trust His wisdom and His love, let patience have her work.
Though human means have brought the sting, I firmly take this stand;
My loving Father holds the cup; I take it from His hand.

Now those who watch may wonder why these things do not disturb;
I look right past the instrument and see my Lord superb;
The trials which would lay me low must pass through His command;
He holds the outstretched cup to me; I take it from His hand.

How many of us would like to send the word to Jesus tonight that we're willing to accept any assignment that He makes? May I see your hands, friends? Is that your response? God grant it.

Copyright 2021. All rights reserved.

W. D. Frazee Sermons
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org