

# How to Solve Problems 2 of 8

## *The ABCs of Problem Solving*

#0340

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1960

In our last study, you remember, we were studying the book of providence. We found that God had three great books. What is the first? The Bible, the book we speak of as Revelation. From Genesis to Revelation, it is a revelation—the revelation of God's will. And then we have around us the great book of nature, the unwritten book, the works of God, the book of creation. But besides these great books of creation and revelation, we have the book of providence—the book of experience in God's dealing with human lives.

And as I pointed out in our last study, this in some ways is the most important book of all. Because, I see more and more, dear ones, that unless what we learn from the Bible and nature gets over into the laboratory manual of the book of experience, the knowledge is largely theoretical and doesn't mean very much to us.

As I pointed out, the laboratory is for the purpose of working out what we learn in the lecture courses, in the textbooks. And in life, day by day, we are in a great laboratory. If we can actually look upon the experiences of daily life as a series of laboratory experiments, experiments designed by God and *assigned* by God to teach us wonderful principles, ah my friends, we can have a wonderful time in this school, the school that Christ is conducting.

You'd remember in that wonderful sermon in the sixth of John, He says:

"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God" John 6:45.

And when we finish this preparatory work, when we graduate from this lower school here in this world, we shall receive our credits to be accepted for entrance into the heavenly school, the school of the hereafter. Oh, won't it be wonderful, friends, to have credits that can be accepted? I appeal to each of you, be *sure* that every course you take, every textbook you study, is something that will pass the entrance examinations in the courts above. Be sure it is something that is accredited, *accepted* by Heaven's school. Is that important? Oh, yes.

Now, you remember that in our last study I told you that I want to go into the ABCs of the study of the book of providence. We took the A in our last study. And we're going into the B and C, the Lord willing, into the D and E of this study of the book of providence tonight.

The A was? Accept the assignment. In school, if the teacher gives you a problem, if you're going to do anything with it, you must first accept that. You must accept it as an assignment and go to work on it. And as I pointed out, the sad thing is that in the great school of life where Jesus Himself is conducting the assignments, so many people try to avoid or evade the assignments. How much time and energy is used up in trying to keep from accepting the very thing that God wants us to do.

But of course, the thing we're studying is a problem. But as I pointed out, a problem is simply something you don't know the answer to. If you know the answer to it, it isn't a problem. But a problem is the way you learn things. It's true in arithmetic, and it's true in any other kind of mathematics, it's true in the sciences, it's true in life. If you want to learn something, you must have problems. That's Heaven's way. Will you accept the assignment? And will you accept it as God's assignment?

Remember, it is not for the pupil to thumb through the book and say, "Oh, I think I'd like these problems over here on page 211. They look interesting to me. There are some pictures on that page. I think I'd like that." Who is giving the assignments? Yes. *God* is. God is conducting the school. And the way He gives us the assignment, friends, is through the events of His providence. Right where we are is something wonderful for us to do, if we'll not miss it.

You remember that by revelation, through His providence, God directed Noah to build the Ark. He directed Moses to go down and to deliver Israel. He directed Samuel in speaking to Eli. It was a hard job, too. It must have been a real problem for a 12-year old boy to speak to that aged high priest. He directed Jonah to go to Nineveh. He directed John the Baptist in his education. And He has been directing His children down through the ages. Accept the assignment.

*Ministry of Healing*, page 473:

"Let us remember that while the work we have to do may not be our choice, it is to be accepted as God's choice for us"  
*Ministry of Healing*, page 472.

That's it. Accept the assignment. May I read that sentence again?

"Let us remember that while the work we have to do may not be our choice, it is to be accepted as God's choice for us. Whether pleasing or unpleasing, we are to do the duty that lies nearest..."

"If the Lord desires us to bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be as pleasing to Him for us to go to Joppa or to Capernaum. He has reasons for sending us to the place

toward which our feet have been directed” *Ibid.*, pages 472, 473.

Oh, how wonderful that is, friends. Life is not a kaleidoscope with ever-varying patterns according to the whim or caprice of somebody turning the instrument. No, no. Life is not one throw of the dice after another, just depending on chance. Nothing of the kind. Life to those who are willing to accept the assignment is a *series* of carefully planned problems—experiments, if you please—through which the Great Teacher is giving you and me a most wonderful training.

And as we pointed out last week, the series of experiments is different for every individual. Nobody has ever had an experience like Noah and been told to build an ark to put all the living things in. Has anybody else ever had that experience? No. Did anybody but Abraham have the experience of being called to take his son up a mountain to offer him on the altar? The experience is absolutely unique, friends.

“Ah,” you say, “But nothing like that happens to me.”

No. That’s the point, nothing like that happens to you. But oh, something is happening to you and with you and for you and in you and through you, that is unlike any other experience that has ever been from the days of Adam to the present hour. Your experience is unique. The pattern of life that God has planned for you is special. And these problems, these problems are for you.

Oh, that we may accept the assignment, and no longer do as Saul of Tarsus did, kick against the pricks. Let us accept the assignment, the problems of daily life, the interruptions, the things that might irritate or vex. Let us say, “No longer will I complain or murmur. I will accept each problem that falls to my lot. I will accept it as the will of God.”

You remember we had a wonderful text on that in closing our study from John. Jesus is speaking in the garden of Gethsemane. And as the mob comes to take Him, Peter raised his sword, you remember, to try to interfere. But Jesus says to Peter gently, but firmly, “No, Peter.”

“Put up the sword... The cup which my father hath given me shall I not drink it?” John 18:11.

Why did Jesus take that situation and relate Himself to it as He did? Because He recognized beyond that mob, behind all the movements of men and devils, He recognized whom? His Father. Oh yes, *God* within the shadows keeping watch above His own, and working out His will. And oh, if you and I can see as Jesus saw, and He saw it by faith, we must see it in the same way. If we can see as He saw that God is ruling and overruling all things, we shall gladly accept the assignment as He gives it to us.

And remember, friends, if we do that, we will have harder problems today than we had yesterday. Long division is harder than short division. Eighth-grade arithmetic is harder than seventh-grade arithmetic. Isn't it children? Yes. It ought to be. Certainly. And so the reward, if we may call it such, for solving problems today with God is to be assigned harder problems tomorrow.

How foolish for us to think that if we're Christians that things ought to be easier all the while. Oh, as Philip Brooks said, "Let us not pray for tasks equal to our powers, but let us rather pray for powers equal to our tasks." That's the thing. And believe that God is going to lead us from victory to victory, from problems to harder problems, from glory to glory.

Well, that's A—accept the assignment.

Now B is believe two things. As you look at that assignment, there is a problem. And a problem is something that you don't know the answer to. There are two things that you need to believe. The first is stated in John 15:5, the last part. You've read it many times. Oh, I trust that it shall mean more to us tonight than ever before.

"For without me" John 15:5,

Jesus says:

"Ye can do"

What?

"Nothing"

I looked this up in various translations and copied them down, all very simple, of course. But I want you to notice how this thought comes to us in one way or another, one wording or another to emphasize how utterly incompetent we are without God.

Moffatt puts it:

"Apart from Me you can do nothing" John 15:5 (Moffatt).

Weymouth puts it exactly the same:

"Apart from Me you can do nothing" John 15:5 (Weymouth).

Twentieth Century puts it:

"You can do nothing apart from Me" John 15:5 (Twentieth Century).

And Goodspeed translates it:

“You cannot do anything apart from Me” John 15:5,  
(Goodspeed).

Well, there it is.

Now, there is your problem. It’s staring you in the face. You’re looking at it. Do not tackle it without God, for without God, you can do what? Nothing. Our first danger then is in thinking that we might at least make a try at it? No. Stop right where we are. Without Him, we can do what? *Nothing*.

And I want to tell you something, friends. If the problem you have tackled is something you can do without God, you may well doubt whether God ever gave you the assignment or not. But if the problem you face is one that is so colossal, such a big elephant of a problem that you know you can’t do it, don’t take that as evidence that God didn’t give you the assignment. It may well be evidence that God *did* give you the assignment.

“Without Me ye can do nothing” John 15:5.

But now having accepted that part, having believed that, let us quickly join with that certain belief and express faith in the other half of this same coin of truth, Philippians 4:13. What does Paul say?

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”  
Philippians 4:13.

That’s it. Apart from Him, we can do nothing, but with Him, we can do all things.

Let me share with you some of the different translations on this one.

Moffatt’s:

“In Him who strengthens me I am able for anything”  
Philippians 4:13 (Moffatt).

Isn’t that nice?

Weymouth:

“I have strength for everything through Him who gives me power” Philippians 4:13 (Weymouth).

Twentieth Century:

“Nothing is beyond my power in the strength of Him who makes me strong” Philippians 4:13 (Twentieth Century).

Goodspeed:

“I can do anything through Him who gives me strength”  
Philippians 4:13 (Goodspeed).

Don’t you like that? There it is.

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”  
Philippians 4:13.

So, express your belief in those two great truths. What’s the first?

“Without me ye can do nothing” John 15:5.

Second?

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”  
Philippians 4:13.

That is glorious, friends. That is glorious.

When David went down there and saw the whole army of Israel cowed and craven and fearful before that big giant, what did he say? “Let no man’s heart fail because of him. Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” He was a young man of faith, thank the Lord. He believed God. Now, did he think he could do it without God? No. But watch! His humility didn’t lead him to say, “Oh, I couldn’t do anything like that. Oh, no. I don’t have the talent nor the training. I just couldn’t do anything like that.” No, he didn’t. He knew he couldn’t do it without God, but he knew he could do it *with* God. Do you see?

Again, when they called Joseph out of the dungeon and he stood before Pharaoh, Pharaoh said: “Look here, I’m in a great problem. I’ve dreamed a dream. And I’m impressed that it’s very important. But I have called all the wise men of my kingdom, and they can’t shed any light on it. And I have heard of you, that you’re a man that can explain dreams.” Oh, get the wording of it right back here in Genesis. It’s too good to not have it exactly as the Scripture puts it. Genesis 41:16. Notice the two things that we’re studying right now: Without Me, ye can do nothing, but in Christ and with Christ and through Christ, I can do what? All things.

“And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me...”  
Genesis 41:16.

Did he stop there? What's the rest?

"God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" Genesis 41:16.

"It is not in me, God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace" Genesis 41:16.

So with the full acknowledgment of his own emptiness, there was the *certainty* of faith in God's fullness. Let's combine those two things. What do you say, brethren?

That's A, B. A is what? Accept His assignment. B? Believe these two things: without Him, I can do nothing, but with Him, I can do all things. All things, of course, that He has assigned me. That's what we're studying.

Now, C. C is to claim the wisdom that He has promised to deal with the problem.

James 1:5. You know it. Will you repeat it with me?

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" James 1:5.

Here's my problem. God has assigned it. I've accepted it. I've accepted the assignment. And I've expressed my faith that though I can't do it without Him, I *can* do it with Him. But now the problem is: What is it that I am going to do? What shall I do with the problem? How am I going to know what to do? That's the first thing. I'll have to know what to do before I can do it. How will I go about it? *Claim* the wisdom that God has promised. James 1:5:

"If any of you lack wisdom" James 1:5.

That's me. I lack it.

"Let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally ...and it shall be given him"

So I come to the Lord, and I say, "Lord, here's this problem that's dropped in my lap. Is this really my problem?"

"Yes."

"All right. Then Lord, I believe with you I can do it. I know I can't without you. Now Lord, help me to know what to do about it." Praise His name, friends, He'll give us the answer, won't He?

Now, I shall not take time tonight to go into an extended study on guidance. That's a study of its own. Just in brief, there are four great channels through which God will answer my prayer for wisdom. The first is through His Word. I am to study the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to find out any light that God may have for me on the problem that I'm tackling.

Two: I am to watch for His providence; watch for the signals that open this door and close this one.

Three: I am to listen for the impressions of His Spirit upon my mind, guiding my judgment and influencing my conclusions.

Four: I am to seek the counsel of my brethren, watching for the light that God may give me through His appointed human channels.

Now, those are the four great agencies of guidance—God's Word, His providence, the impressions of His Spirit, and the counsel of our brethren. That is just summing it up very briefly.

But my point is, that as I seek the Lord in prayer and claim the wisdom that He has promised to give me, and watch for it through those four channels, I am to come to a conclusion as to what God wants me to do.

"Ah," you say, "But Brother Frazee, that's just the point. I pray and I study and I counsel and I watch and I listen, and I still don't know what to do. There's my problem right there."

Well, I want to say: You can stick right there on that problem for days and weeks and months and years if you choose to. And that's the very thing that makes some people weak and inefficient. So let me help you, if there is anybody like that here tonight, let me help you right at that point. One of the best things I know to get help on this is *Volume 3*, page 497:

"Brother A, you are too slow" *Testimonies for the Church*,  
*Volume 3*, page 497.

Now for your encouragement, if you think that's a description of you, I will tell you that this man later, because he heeded the counsel of this letter to him, became president of the General Conference. You may never get that far, but you can get as far as God has intended if you'll listen to this counsel and follow it.

"Brother A, you are too slow. You should cultivate opposite qualities. The cause of God demands men who can see quickly and act instantaneously at the right time and with power. If you wait to measure every difficulty and balance every perplexity you meet you will do but little..."



“Sometimes various ways and purposes, different modes of operation in connection with the work of God, are about evenly balanced in the mind” *Ibid*.

“Oh,” you say, “That is my problem. As I look at it, it seems this would be the thing to do. And then I think, ‘No. Maybe I ought to do this.’ And so there I am, back and forth.” All right:

“Sometimes various ways and purposes, different modes of operation in connection with the work of God, are about evenly balanced in the mind. But it is at this very point that the nicest discrimination is necessary. And if anything is accomplished to the purpose it must be done at the golden moment. The slightest inclination of the weight in the balance should be seen and should determine the matter at once. Long delays tire the angels” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3, page 497*.

I got a wonderful lesson on this from my dear friend, Dr. Coolidge, who’s an experienced surgeon. He said, “A surgeon has to learn two things. One, is to make up his mind quickly at times, and the other is, when it’s made up, go through with it.”

He said, “For example, we open up a person's abdomen for a certain surgical procedure. But when we get in there, we may find a number of things that we did not know about before at all. And the surgeon has to make up his mind what shall he do. And he can’t go hold a committee somewhere. He can’t wait. He must make up his mind right there. And within seconds, perhaps, or minutes at the most, he must come to a vital decision, a decision that may mean life or death to the patient. And he has to do it right *now*. Everything depends on his doing it quickly.” Do you see, friends?

But then he said, “Once the decision is made, he must go through with it. After he gets an organ halfway cut out, he can't begin to say, 'Well now let's see, I wonder if I really ought to take this out. I wonder if I'd better sew it back up.'”

But friends, I see people doing things like that with things that aren't half so important, don't you? Hard to decide and then once they've made it, forever reconsidering, weighing the thing all over again. They've weighed it up. They've said, “It is a pound,” but they keep wondering, “I wonder if that really is a pound. Maybe I had better weigh it over again to be sure.”

What did I read here?

“Long delays tire the angels” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3, page 497*.

Now comes something to encourage your heart and jolt you out of your situation if you have been in the situation that I've been describing. Listen:

"It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be continually in a wavering position, to be hesitating, sometimes inclined in one direction, then in another. More perplexity and wretchedness result from thus hesitating and doubting than from sometimes moving too hastily" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3*, page 497.

Now, do you see from this what I see, friends? God does not intend, He does not require, shall I say, that you and I shall be infallible. As students in His school, He desires us to learn certain principles. And the learning of those principles is more important than our *always* getting the correct answer.

Let me illustrate it again with the schoolroom. Now, when I was going to school taking arithmetic in some of the later years of elementary school, I discovered that the teacher had an answer book—an answer to every problem in that arithmetic. Now, if I could have gotten hold of that answer book and written out the problems and put the right answer down, that would have been fine, wouldn't it?

"Oh," you say, "No, that wouldn't have helped you very much."

Why not? I would always have the right answer, gotten it out of the book.

Do you see that it was the answer that I worked through to a conclusion that helped me? And it's the same way in these problems of life.

The reason that God doesn't send Gabriel to every one of us is not because He doesn't have angels enough in Heaven that He couldn't spare one. He has plenty of angels. And if God saw it was best for us, an angel could come to our beds every morning and tell us exactly the right answer to every problem we'll meet all day, couldn't He? Why doesn't He do it? Because He wants you and me to *think*. He wants us to exercise our minds. That's why we're going to school, wrestling with these problems.

And one of the things He wants us to do is to learn to make up our minds from the available evidence, weigh things back and forth, and come to a conclusion as to what we believe God's will is. And when we've arrived at that conclusion, we come to D—A, B, C, D. D is *do* it. That's it. Do it.

Now let's review a minute. First, is to what? *Accept* the assignment. That's A. What's B? *Believe* that you can't do it without Him, but you *can* do it with Him. C—*Claim* the wisdom that He has promised, study His Word, seek Him in prayer, watch through His providence, listen to the impressions of His Spirit, counsel with our brethren, and through all those channels try to ascertain His will.

But having gotten all the light you can, you weigh the matter up, and you come to a *conclusion*. [Elder Frazee claps his hands together once for emphasis.] You say, "This it is." And remember, don't wait until you're infallible. As dear old Elder Luther Warren used to say, "Just play fair with God." Do the thing that you *think* He wants you to do. If you're not absolutely sure, if you are not positive, do the thing you *think* He wants you to do. Just ask yourself, "Well, now really, what do I think would please Him best? He's the One I am trying to please. What do I think would please Him best?"

Do that about the matter of your diet, your dress, your reading, your music, your recreation, your association, your companionship in life, your lifework, and every decision in life, friends. Bring it through these simple procedures: Accept the assignment of the problem, believe that without God, you cannot solve it, but with Him, you can; then claim the wisdom that He gives through these various channels and still part of that C come to a conclusion and then what? What is the D? Do it. And may I say, friends, don't be all day about it. Do it now.

I'm reading still from this *Volume 3*:

"I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes. God requires promptness of action. Delays, doubting, hesitation, and indecision frequently give the enemy every advantage. My brother, you need to reform. The timing of things may tell much in favor of truth... There will be crises in this cause. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect will result in great failures and positive dishonor to God" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 3*, pages 497–498.

Oh, isn't it wonderful, friends, to be ready to move? Now, watch! D is D. It isn't A, nor B, nor C. And D will not take the place of A, B, or C. I gave you A, B, C before we come to D.

Some people are all the time rushing around (I was about to say) like a chicken without its head. They are very busy, but they accomplish very little because they have not gone through A, B, C. They're just doing something. But when, on the other hand, we've gone through the A, B, and C, let's remember that the purpose of A, B, and C is to bring us to D. And that is to what? Do it. Do it. Do it. [Elder Frazee claps his hands while saying, "Do it" for emphasis.]

"Blessed are they that do" Revelation 22:14.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them"  
John 13:17.

“Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it” (John 2:5), were the words of Mary in John 2 to those servants at Cana, and Jesus is repeating it to us today, friends. Do, do, do—that little word of two letters.

Now E. E is express faith and thanksgiving. When, in confidence in God, we have accepted our assignment, and we have believed that He will help us; we have sought His wisdom and gotten it, and done the thing the best we know, then, friends, we should express our faith that God is making up our deficiencies and that He is using what we are seeking to do for Him, and that something good, God’s will, is going to work out from it. In other words, God doesn’t want us going around depreciating ourselves or what we have tried to do for Him. No. He doesn’t want us to do that. He wants us to express our faith and thanksgiving that God is using what we have tried to do for Him.

*Christ’s Object Lesson*, page 363:

“When we give ourselves wholly to God and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment. He would not have us conjecture as to the success of our honest tries. Not once should we even think of failure. We are to cooperate with One who knows no failure” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 363.

Did you notice what it said there in the middle of that paragraph that He doesn’t want us to do? He would not have us what? Conjecture. What does conjecture mean?

How are you getting along? “Well, I don’t know. Sometimes I wonder. I don’t seem to be making very much headway.”

How is the program getting along you are connected to? “Well, I don’t know. We seem to be moving awfully slow. We don’t seem to get much done. Sometimes I wonder how it will all come out.”

What is all that? That’s conjecture and doubt, and God doesn’t want us to do that. You know, if we would hear somebody blaspheming, taking the Lord’s name in vain, we’d all be shocked, and we’d feel we ought to pray and do something about it, shouldn’t we? But I want to tell you something, friends. That kind of talk does more harm in the work of God than swearing and blasphemy. Did you know it? Yes, it does, friends. It’s doubt. It’s unbelief. And the Israelites couldn’t enter in because of what? Unbelief.

God wants you and me when we have done our best to please Him, to look up and see Him smiling at us. And say, “Well, I have handed in my lesson. It may not be perfect, but Jesus is going to fix it up all right. If there are some lessons out of it, I need to learn. He will teach me. He will cover my deficiencies and make up for my

deficiencies. He's going to get something done out of them." Isn't that a nice way to be happy, friends? Sure. That's the way to do it too.

Let me read another statement on this:

"Whatsoever is done out of pure love, be it ever so little or contemptible in the sight of men, is wholly fruitful; for God regards more with how much love one worketh than the amount he doeth" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 2*, page 135.

Oh, isn't that beautiful, friends? So listen, when you have handed in your little arithmetic sheet, done the best you could to solve the problems, put it on the teacher's desk, go back to your desk happy. The teacher that gave you the assignment knows what he had in mind in giving you that assignment. He knows. You may not know, but he knows.

And *He* is working out His will. God is working out His will. We can be assured of that. He's taking our poor efforts, weak and worm-eaten as they are with our human failures and frailties, and He's working out the will of the Creator. The universe is being benefitted by our honest, humble efforts to carry out His will. Aren't you glad for that, friends? Oh, let us express that.

Let me read it the way it is put here in the last thing that Sister White ever wrote. You will find it in *Testimonies to Ministers*:

"Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory" *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 517.

"Ah," you say, "But I'll have to wait and see how it turns out."

No, that is not faith. That's what? That's unbelief.

"Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you..." *Ibid.*

What?

"Have gained the victory" *Ibid.*

Say it with me:

"Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory" *Ibid.*

Once again:

“Take Christ at His word, and let your lips declare that you have gained the victory” *Ibid*.

Now, you say, “But Brother Frazee, suppose that after I do all that, suppose I find out that I did make some mistake in what I did. Then what does all this amount to?”

Why that’s nothing to worry about. Listen. Did you ever go to school? Did you ever get some problems? Did you ever get the right answer? Sometimes. Did you ever make a mistake? Well, what did you do? Did you say, “Oh well, no use of my going to school. This thing may work for other people, but it doesn't work for me”? Did you? Oh no, you didn't. If you were a good student and even if you were a poor one and had a good teacher, you learned out of those mistakes, right? Of course you did. And oh, I thank God for some of the things I’ve learned from mistakes.

Listen: Did I say you might make mistakes? Let me be more factual and tell you if you are in this school you *will* make mistakes.

“Mistakes will often be made, but every error lies close beside the truth. Wisdom will be learned by failures, and the energy that will make a beginning gives hope of success in the end. Hesitation will keep things back, precipitancy will alike retard; but all will serve as lessons if the human agent will have it so” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 6, page 192*.

So friends, this is a very practical, down to earth study on how to deal with problems. It isn't some airy, imaginary fairy story. No. This isn't some lamp you rub and wonderful things happen. This is how to deal with problems day by day with what you have, what you and God have together. And remember, it even includes a margin for your failures; this plan does. Aren't you glad? That's what gives me hope and courage, friends; there's a margin in here for my failures. And God is carrying that margin. He's covering that margin.

Watch this! If He allows me to make a mistake, a failure, when I am trying the best I know to understand His will and carry it out, then out of that, He is going to teach me a wonderful lesson. And so I can thank Him for that, can't I? Sure. Why then should I hold back for fear that I will make mistakes? Why should I let that keep me from going to school? Why should I linger around on the playground and say, “Oh, if I go in there, I'm afraid the teacher will give me a problem, and I'm afraid that I'll get it wrong and then I'll just make a fool of myself before the entire class. I don't think I'll go in there?”

Why no. Let me get in there and if the only way I can learn is to make a mistake, let me get in and make it fast. Isn't that right? And *learn* from it.

Listen:

“If you have made mistakes, you certainly gain a victory if you see these mistakes and regard them as beacons of warning. Thus you turn defeat into victory, disappointing the enemy and honoring your Redeemer” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, page 332.

Oh friends, let’s launch out into the deep. What do you say?

In closing, I want to give something that just came to my attention today. It’s the story of a doctor who not long ago had an operation for cancer in the chest. And he has just a 50–50 chance to live out a year and what do you suppose he’s doing? Well, I will tell you what he is not doing, friends. He’s not just giving up to wait until he dies. Do you know what this man is doing?

This man doesn’t know this message. He’s a Roman Catholic. In the war, he was in the Navy, and he was down in Southeast Asia with the Navy, and he saw the terrible conditions among the people over there, the native people. When he got out of the Navy, he said, “I’ve got to do something for these people.” And so he got supplies and he started to work for them. He says, “There are three million people there, and I was the only doctor. We just had to do something for those people.”

Well, now since he’s had this operation and is not expected to live more than a year, what do you suppose he’s doing? Well, he’s gotten another doctor or two to help him over there, and he’s spending part of his time over there working in that clinic and helping those people, and then it says:

“Now Dr. Dooley is flying around the United States, 49 lectures in 41 days in 37 cities, picking up more dollars for Dooley to care for these people. Is all this travel too much for the man’s frail body? Tom Dooley laughed. ‘It is better than sitting around worrying about cancer,’ he replied”  
[Unknown source].

And friends, when I read that it went right to my heart. Now, God knows we need to use good sense and all that. But there are going to be a lot of people, when the Master comes that are going to say, “Dear Lord, here is that pound you gave me, that talent wrapped up in a napkin, and I never did anything more with it because it involved too much risk.”

It’s going to be a wonderful thing for some people who have taken some risks to be able to bring their five pounds and find that they’re how many? Ten pounds. And those that had two, bring their two and they’ll be what? Four. And the man that had the one, he could have used his one and had two, just double as the others could, but he didn’t want to take any risk. He didn’t want to exert himself.

And when I see what a little thing it takes sometimes to incapacitate us, to lead us to be afraid to undertake anything, afraid to tackle any problem of any size, I pray that God may give us the spirit of this dear doctor, who with cancer in his system and a death sentence, you might say, hanging over his head, is doing more than 99 out of a 100 of the good, well doctors over the earth to deal with the suffering humanity that he sees. I say friends, there is something to emulate. What do you say?

May God give us the grace to accept the assignment that divine providence has placed before us. In your home, my brother, in your kitchen, my sister, in your neighborhood, every one of us, there are problems—people needing help, problems that are calling for solutions. Some of them are on your list. They'll be hard. Let your great purpose in life not be to see how many problems you can avoid, but how many you can tackle. Let your boast never be, "I was careful and never got overtaxed."

Rather let it be your joy to say with Paul:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course;  
I have kept the faith" 2 Timothy 4:7.

He didn't dodge problems, he walked right into them. And when they stoned him in one city, he went on into another place where they were waiting soon to give him the same treatment. But on and on he went, and the only way they could stop that man was to take his head off. That's the only way they could stop him. If they beat him, he got up and went on. If they stoned him, he got up and went on. If they put him in prison, he sat there writing letters that accomplished more than his personal ministry would have done. They couldn't stop him. The Devil couldn't stop him. There was nothing to do but kill him. And even that God used to His glory.

Oh friends, if God be for us, who can be against us? When I think of the glorious opportunities that are just staring us in the face, the wonderful providences that are beckoning us to advance as individuals and as a group right now, oh, I pray that God may give us the spirit of Caleb and Joshua, not the ten spies, that we shall accept the assignment and go over Jordan and take the giants for God. What do you say, friends?

Dear Lord, add Thy blessing to the study of Thy Word and may our faith and courage and decision rise to the hour and may we rejoice that while without Thee we can do nothing, with Thee and in Thee and through Thee and for Thee we can do all things through Him that strengthens us. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.



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