

How to Solve Problems 4 of 8

Respect the Means He Employs

#0342

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1960

Our opening texts this evening are John 6:45 and Isaiah 54:13. You will recognize them as texts that we have used recently, frequently:

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

Jesus is quoting in this verse from the text in Isaiah 54:13:

“And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children” Isaiah 54:13.

We’re going to school to God. He is our Teacher. Now, as I studied with you recently, there are three great textbooks in God's school. The first is the book of nature:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard” Psalm 19:1–3.

From the beginning on down, God's great book of nature has been a textbook in which He has been teaching the children of men about His character, His almighty power, His great wisdom, and His eternal love.

The second great textbook is the Bible. This is the written word. Here we have in *clearer* lines the revelation of His character. Again we see His great power, His infinite wisdom, and His tender, undying love; love so great that He gave His only Son as a sacrifice for us, forever to be one of the human family, our Immanuel, God with us.

And then the third great textbook, the third lesson book in God's school, is what? The book of experience or the book of providence. And as I pointed out in our lesson, a short while ago, on this subject, in some ways this book is the most important book of all. This is the book of life—your life. Nature is out there for everybody, you and two billion others. The Bible is here for everybody, you and all the other members of the human family.

But in the book of experience, there is a chapter that belongs to *you* and nobody else. It is a laboratory manual. And you know what a laboratory manual is filled with, don't you? Problems. But the purpose of every problem is to teach a lesson. There are no jokers in the book of experience that God writes. There are no questions without an answer, no problems without a solution. And every one is selected by the greatest of all Teachers with His eye on you as though you were the only one He had to plan for.

Oh, I'm glad He thinks that much of me. I'm glad He thinks that much of you. And once we accept that philosophy, that explanation of life, why there are a thousand things that fit right into their proper places, just like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle properly arranged.

This is really true, my friends, that your life and my life are planned by God, and the experiences of life are arranged to teach us just what we need to know and to develop our characters. And God intends that what we learn about Him in nature and what we study about Him and His will and way in this book, the Bible, He intends that what we learn through those two books shall be taken into this third book, the laboratory manual, the book of experience, and be translated into actual things that happen to us day by day so that we see how these principles work out.

Now, God intends that everything we engage in shall contribute to that end. That's why it is such a wonderful thing to be having a part in God's work, whether it be as a minister, a teacher, a doctor, a cook, a gardener, a farmer, a mechanic. In whatever line God calls us, if we are following the leadings of His providence, we shall find not merely a lesson, we shall find *the* very lesson that we most need to develop our characters for the kingdom of God. Isn't that wonderful, friends?

You see, that changes the meaning of work. It's no longer merely a matter of making a living. It becomes a matter of making a *life*, which is infinitely more important. Oh, I'm so glad that this makes life so *valuable* that there's no way to put a price upon it. The man who has this understanding in his mind will never put himself on the auction block to be sold either totally or on the installment plan, never. He recognizes that life is too sweet, too precious, too valuable thus to be bargained away. There is no amount of money that can compensate for the loss of the experience that God wants you to have.

Now, don't misunderstand me. It may be a part of God's experience to give you means, to give you wealth. Abraham was wealthy. David and Solomon were. But my point is this, friends: The man who understands what you and I are studying will never choose a particular course merely to get money. No, no. He will choose any course that he chooses because he is walking in the path of God's leading. He is following the providential guidance of the Spirit of God. And where he goes with God, he's perfectly satisfied with.

Now, I have mentioned that this third book, this book of providence or book of experience of God's dealing with human life, is perhaps the most important book of all

the books in God's great school. May I remind you that this is not an elective course. It's required. Everyone who is to graduate from the school in this world and obtain his entrance papers for the higher school must not only *take* but must *finish* this course in experience down here in this world.

Oh, if people understood that, friends, they would be a hundred times more anxious to spend time on this instead of the great mass of things that are cluttering up the mind in conventional education. Oh, that God may fill our hearts with an earnest desire to solve the problems in this laboratory book, the problems in our own life, day by day.

And what is a problem? Well, a problem, dear friends, is something that you don't know the answer to. That's it. A problem is something that you do not know the answer to. And *anything* you don't know the answer to is a problem. And anything you *do* know the answer to is a problem no longer. Is that right?

But there *is* an answer. And God has it. And you can have it.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" Matthew 7:7–8.

Recently, I gave you a study on the ABCs of solving these problems. And just to review those points briefly before we launch into our study tonight—A is what? Accept the assignment. Take the problem that God puts in your lap. Take it. Don't dodge it. Don't evade it. Don't run away from it. Take it. It's *yours*. Take it.

B—Believe that without Christ, you can do nothing, but with Him, you can do all things. Never express doubt. Express faith. Say, "Yes Lord, I believe that since you've given me the problem, I can do it with You. I know I can't do it without you."

C—Claim the wisdom He has promised (James 1:5). Go to God and seek Him for light and knowledge as to how to deal with that problem and claim it.

D—Do it. Do the thing that God gives you wisdom to do.

And when you've done it, then, dear friends, express your faith and thanksgiving. Express your confidence that God is going to take the thing you've done for His sake and bring good to men and glory to His name out of it. That's the program.

Now, tonight, I want to study with you another important principle that runs through this whole ABC of solving problems.

You know, sometimes a statement that we've read in years gone by comes back to us and gets to going through our minds. Do you have that experience? I'm always thankful when something like that happens. And this week I've been meditating on a

certain sentence. I looked it up and I found that it was in two places. It's in *Ministry of Healing*, page 481, and it's in *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8*, page 10. There's a slight difference in the wording in these two places, and we shall want the wording in both places.

"Let us be hopeful and courageous. Despondency in God's service is sinful and unreasonable. He knows our every necessity. To the omnipotence of the King of kings our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of the tender shepherd" *Ministry of Healing*, page 481.

Just like the folks were singing a few moments ago. Now watch:

"His power is absolute, and it is the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to all who trust in Him" *Ibid.*

Now comes my sentence:

"He has means for the removal of every difficulty" *Ibid.*

Will you say that with me?

"He has means for the removal of every difficulty" *Ibid.*

Once more:

"He has means for the removal of every difficulty" *Ibid.*

Now that's *part* of the sentence. I'm going to read the rest:

"He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be sustained" *Ibid.*

Now, you notice the word "means" is used twice there. He has means, and you and I are to respect the means He employs. Now what does "means" mean here? Ways. That's right. Agencies. In other words, God has some ways to get things done. Now right up the page, it says:

"Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing" *Ibid.*

Isn't that fine? So when it says He has means, we can say, "Yes, He has a thousand." Do you think that's enough? I think that will take care of us, don't you? But there's a little catch to it. It's that catch that I want you to look at it:

“He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be sustained” *Ibid.*

I wonder what that means to “respect the means He employs”? Well, I suppose for one thing it would mean to *recognize* the means, wouldn’t it? And I suppose for another it would mean to recognize the means as *God’s* means, God’s agency, and to accept it, and be willing for God to use that agency instead of another one. Is that the thought?

There are probably some other wonderful things locked up in that little word, “respect” as used there. You know it’s too bad, friends, but some members of the human family are so out of touch with God that they even sneer at the means that God uses. They pour contempt on the means that God uses. They make fun of them. They laugh at them. Or they would kick it about like a football. None of those, of course, would be respecting the means He employs, would it? No, none of those things would.

“He has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be sustained” *Ibid.*

Now I am going to read it to you out of *Volume 8*, page 10:

“Obstacles to the advancement of the work of God will appear; but fear not. To the omnipotence of the King of kings, our covenant-keeping God unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. Nothing can stand in His way”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8, page 10.

Don’t you like that? Say it with me:

"Nothing can stand in His way. His power is absolute, and it is to the pledge of the sure fulfillment of His promises to His people. He can remove all obstructions to the advancement of His work. He has means for the removal of every difficulty that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered" *Ibid.*

There it is again. Over in *Ministry of Healing*, it says that those who respect the means He employs will be what? Sustained. Here it says that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs will be what? Be delivered. Well, we need both, don’t we, friends? We need deliverance and we need to be sustained. And it’s all for us. God has the means to do it if we will serve Him and *respect* the means that He uses.

Reading on:

“The plans of the enemies of His work may seem to be firm and well established, but He can overthrow the strongest of these plans, and in His own time and way He will do this, when He sees that our faith has been sufficiently tested and that we are drawing near to Him and making Him our counselor” *Ibid*.

When does it say He will do this? In His own time. *How* does it say He will do it? In His own way. And how many ways does He have? A thousand ways. Well friends, listen. If here’s a problem over here, and my father has a thousand different means, a thousand different ways to solve that, which one is He going to use? Ah, my friends, that’s His secret. That’s His secret. But I read:

“The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and He will shew them His covenant” Psalm 25:14.

Now, if that’s true, what should be our attitude toward God as we come to problems? Should we run ahead of Him and say, “Is it going to be this road or this one or this one?” Or should we wait on God to see which one of His thousand ways He is going to select? Psalm 123:2:

“Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God” Psalm 123:2.

What do servants look to their master for? Why, to find out what he has decided shall be done today and the way to do it. Is that right? What does a maidservant look to her mistress for? To learn her duty, to find out what her mistress has decided about what to do and how to do it. Now, David says that’s the way we look to God.

Oh friends, God is conducting a school, and He wants you and me to learn to be adept at watching the signals of His providence, watching to see what He’s going to do and *how* He’s going to do it. And as dear, old Elder Warren used to say, “When you don’t know what to do, then you know just what to do.” And that’s pray and wait on God.

But too many people have their hand up. “Teacher, teacher,”

“What is it?”

“I know the answer.”

And the teacher may say, “Well, I haven’t even gotten through telling you the problem yet.”

Our eyes wait upon the Lord. We're watching for His signals. We're looking to see what *His* solution to the problem is. And His solution is the only right one, friends. And it's the one that will handle everything in the best possible way.

Now, I thought this evening, it would be very interesting for us to notice a few examples from the Bible along this line, to see how different men met various problems and what God's way was in solving those problems. And notice how in each case, the solution depended not only on God *having* means but upon the man *respecting* the means that God chose to use. All depended on that.

We'll go back there before the flood. God sees the wickedness of man that it's great, and so He's going to send a great flood to change the whole earth and destroy it. Now of course, the *problem* for Noah and his family is how they're going to get through that flood. How many ways did God have that He could have handled that? A thousand ways. Who decided which one of the thousand was to be used? Did Noah? Did Noah study the whole matter over and finally come to the Lord and say, "Lord, we've studied the matter over, and we've decided that the best thing is to build an ark. And we'd like to ask you to bless that now." Is that the way it happened?

Do you know that's the way a lot of people would go at the matter? Sure. They would have had their minds made up as to the way they wanted to solve the problem, and then come and ask God to do what? Bless it. And then they would say, "Well, we prayed about it, so it must be all right." Why no, friends. That would certainly be getting the cart before the horse. And not even any horse around, I'm afraid.

No. That wasn't the way Noah went at the matter at all. God told Noah what to do. He said, "Noah, I have arranged to have an ark, and you, of course, are to have a part in making the ark. I'll give you the plans and you make the ark." Did it work? Now, we're told that if it hadn't been for the miraculous power of God in protecting that ark on the stormy billows that the storm would have destroyed the ark. But because it was God's *plan*, God's power went with its execution. And it worked all right, accomplished its purpose. Didn't it, friends? I'm glad Noah *respected* the means that God chose to employ. Aren't you?

But may I call your attention to something. That's the only time in the history of the world when God ever told anybody to build an ark, that kind of ark. Of course, Moses built an ark for the law, by and by, but that was an entirely different thing. That's the only time that ever happened. Well, then there's no lesson we can learn out of it, is there? Oh, yes. The *important* lesson to learn is to find out God's *means* for the removal of a difficulty, and *respect* that means. Then the thing will work all right.

Let's take an incident from the life of Abraham. Abraham was getting old. God had given him this son, Isaac. But as yet, Isaac had no wife. How to get a wife for Isaac? Was that a problem? Yes, a definite problem. Abraham saw that around him were those heathen nations. The young women there weren't suitable. What could he do?

Well, under the guidance of God, he was led to *respect* the *means* that God would employ. His aged servant, Eliezer, was selected to make that long trip with the camels across to Haran, the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia. And in that longest chapter in the book of Genesis, we read that wonderful story of the guidance of God with that dear old man, as in the evening hour he approaches that city, and he sees those various maidens coming down to the well to draw water. The Spirit of God inspires him to open the way for God's providence to lead him. And finally, as you remember, Rebecca is selected.

Well, now God had that in mind all the time, didn't He? Abraham and Eliezer following Him. Those two were led to *respect* the *means* that God employed.

Now, what is the lesson from that? As far as I know, that is the only time in the history of the world that, that particular *means* in that particular *way* was used to select a wife for anybody. I never heard of anything precisely like it before or since. Have you? What's it in there for, taking up space in that longest chapter in the book of Genesis? Ah friends, it's to teach you and me that God has *means* to arrange the marriage of every one of His children that will look to Him for guidance and follow God's way. But He has how many ways? A thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing. And those who serve Him and *respect* the *means* He employs will be sustained.

Let's come down to Joseph. Joseph is down there in prison—sold into slavery by his brothers and then landed in jail under a false accusation. What's Joseph's problem? How to get out of prison. Now if you'd been in prison, that would have been your problem, friends, I can assure you. That was one of the greatest problems, I am sure, in Joseph's life and experience. I'm sure he prayed about that every day.

And finally—Watch this!—as he is ministering to the various prisoners, there comes that opportunity for him to interpret the dreams of the chief butler and chief baker. And out of that comes a gleam of hope. And Joseph says to the chief butler, "Now when you get back up there with Pharaoh, won't you speak a word for me"?

What did the chief butler say? "Yes, sure I'll be glad to do that." Did he do it? Yes, he did. When was it? Quite a while afterward, wasn't it?

"Well, now that's the *trouble* with God's ways. They sometimes take so long, and I'm impatient. I can't stand all that delay. I've got to have things settled today, if not yesterday. And here is this problem, it's pressing me. I've got to know right today how it is going to be solved." Did you ever meet people like that? Did you ever look in the mirror and meet a person like that?

But Joseph day after day after day, my dear friends, went about that dungeon doing his work and *thinking*, "I wonder if today's the day. I wonder if today's the day I'm going to get out or I wonder if today's the day I'm going to at least get some *word*." Did he get any word? Not a *word* until God's day came, and God's *way* was made plain.

Did Joseph respect the means that God employed? Was he delivered? Oh yes, friends, in a much more *wonderful* way than Joseph himself, probably had ever imagined. He was taken from the dungeon and put on the throne and became not merely a free captive, but the prime minister of Egypt and the Savior of that great nation, of his own dear father and all his brothers and the people of God.

Isn't it a wonderful story, friends? Talk about romance. Talk about truth being stranger than fiction. I think that the story of Joseph is one of the most intriguing, wonderfully interesting things that have ever been written in all the history of the world. Don't you? But the key to it is the very sentence we're studying tonight:

"[God] has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered" *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8*, page 10.

Oh, that we may respect the means that God uses. And how many means does He have? How many ways? A thousand ways of which we know nothing. And which one will He select of all the thousand? That's His secret. But in His own time and way, He'll let us in on the secret, whenever we need to know. And until we need to know, friends, why waste our time with a lot of guessing? Why waste our time going down a lot of blind alleys? Why do it? Ah, thank God, He's going to have some people down here that learn this lesson. I want to learn it. Don't you, friends? Thank God.

Well, let's come down to Moses. There he is in Egypt and he decides to cast his lot with the people of God. And there's the problem: How to get Israel out of Egypt? Did Moses have an answer to the problem? Oh, yes. It was a good one too, wasn't it? But it didn't work. It didn't work. And then Moses was utterly discouraged, and he fled and for 40 years he was out there taking care of sheep. Did he expect that there would come an answer to the problem? Apparently, he gave it all up and left it with the Lord. He was learning to depend on God and not himself.

Finally, after 40 years the Lord met him at the burning bush, He said, "Moses, I have come for you. It's time for you to go to Egypt and deliver my people."

You remember, he expressed his lack of ability and so forth, but finally he consented under the probing and the prodding of God. And *then* when he had urged his weakness and his lack and everything like that, God asked him a question. "Moses, what is that in thine hand?"

What did Moses say? "A rod—my shepherd's staff that I've been herding sheep with here for 40 years."

And God said, what? "Take that, for with that thou shalt do signs, wonders, marvels, miracles."

That was the *means* that God was going to use. That was the *agency* through which Almighty power was to work for the deliverance of Israel.

“[God] has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be delivered” *Ibid*.

And what’s the means? A shepherd’s rod. And so Moses takes that rod and he goes down there, and plague after plague falls upon Egypt as Moses used that rod. They leave Egypt and start to Canaan and they come to the Red Sea, and the rolling waves stand as a barrier that cannot be passed. But God says, “Moses, stretch out that rod over the Red Sea,” and the waves open through. Then they get on the other side, and God said, “Moses, stretch the rod out again,” and the waves roll back and bury all the Egyptians. They get out there in the desert and there’s no water. And God said, “Moses, take the rod, strike the rock and it will give forth its water before thee.”

Oh friends, Moses respected the means that God employed. And what a humble means it was—what a *simple* agency it was. And friends, have you ever heard the expression regarding some brother or sister, “They’re just a poor stick”? Did you ever hear that about somebody, “He’s just a poor stick”? Well, I’ll tell you, friends, God’s going to take some poor sticks down here and He’s going to do with them things like He did with Moses’ rod. Oh, that we may *respect* the means that God uses.

Who selected that rod? God did. Would it have worked if He hadn’t selected it? Why, no. But when God selected it, He selected it because as God looked out over the whole thousand ways that He had, *that* was the very best means to use, taking everything into consideration. No wonder He says:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD” Isaiah 55:8.

Moses finally goes up into the mountains and dies, and Joshua takes over the administration. They come across Jordan and there’s that great citadel of Jericho. How are they going to take it? That was the problem. Did Joshua accept the assignment? Did he believe *that without* God, he *couldn’t* do it? Did he believe *with* God, he *could* do it? Did he go out in a quiet, secret place and seek God earnestly for help? Did God tell him how to do it? Did he do it? Did it work? Yes.

And what were the means that God used? Did you ever hear anything like it, before or since? Never have. It seems God always has something new. And this time, what was it? Walk around the city, go home, the next day do the same thing over again. The seventh day came, what did they do? Seven times around, then shout. What happened? The whole city fell down; the wall fell down flat. They took the city. Did it work?

“Those who serve Him and respect the means He employs [will] be sustained” *Ministry of Healing*, page 481.

We come down to the book of Judges and there is Gideon, just to select one example. He's chosen by God to deliver Israel from the Midianites. There were thousands and hundreds of thousands of them, like grasshoppers for multitude. But God sifts the volunteers that have flocked to Gideon's standards until there are how many left? Just 300, that's all. God says, “Now these are the means I am going to use.” And how did He arm them? With lamps and pitchers, and a trumpet to blow in the other hand. Did it work? Oh, yes. They served God and respected the means that He employed. Did you ever hear anything like that before? Or since? No. God used it on that occasion and it worked.

We come on down to the days of Samuel and David. There is a whole army afraid of one man—Goliath. David comes down there and David has a problem on his hands. It's a big problem. Yes, it's about ten feet tall. And it looks at David and David is just a little pygmy alongside that big giant.

But oh, does God have means to solve that problem? Yes, He does. What are the means? Some little stones from the brook in a shepherd's sling. And David *respected* the means that God would use. He turned aside from that glistening, heavy armor of Saul. He left that. That wasn't the means that God would use. And he took his shepherd's sling and went forth to the battle with faith in God. Thank the Lord, friends, it worked. Didn't it?

I was thinking about Elijah, a bit later. I was thinking about the different times that Elijah was hungry and the different ways he was fed. When he was out there by the brook Cherith how'd he get fed? The ravens fed him. And then when the brook ran dry, and he had to go somewhere else, how'd the Lord arrange to feed him? The widow fed him. And when he got out there under the juniper tree, who fed him? An angel. Three different means that God used—the ravens, the widow, and the angel.

Now, which one would *you* like to have? Well, if you've learned the lesson, you would say, “Well, Lord, You're the one that chooses the means. I'll just take whichever one you see is best.” And until we learn that, friends, we have not become mature Christians; we're childish. You know it's a childish thing to be so sure of what we want when we haven't even gotten there yet.

Suppose I had a dozen packages up here just wrapped up in plain paper, and one of you should say, “Oh, I want this one, the second one from the end, right over here.”

“What makes you think you want that one?”

“Oh, I'm sure. That's the one I want.”

That would be very childish, wouldn't it? When I'm the one that knows what's in the packages. Ah, we know not what to pray for as we ought, the Bible says. And if God wants a raven to feed me, raven it will be, friends. And if He wants a widow to feed me, that might be humbling to my pride. Perhaps it was to Elijah's, but was that all right? That was the means that God employed. And if I'm out under a juniper tree, He may send an angel.

We think of Nehemiah *praying* day after day about the condition of His people down there in Jerusalem and Judea. And *then* one morning, all of a sudden, the means that God would use was there. What is it? The very sadness of Nehemiah's countenance. Do you remember reading it there in the first chapter of Nehemiah? Now, Nehemiah didn't plan it that way. That wasn't put on for effect. But God took the very sadness of that man's countenance and sent a message to the king.

So he said to Nehemiah, "*What's* the matter?" He said to his cupbearer, "Why are you so sad?"

Ah, Nehemiah prayed and he just poured out his heart. The truth just came tumbling out, friends. He said to the king, "Why shouldn't I be sad when the place of my father's sepulcher lies waste. The walls are broken down, and everything is in decay."

And the king said, "What would you like for me to do for you?"

Ah, there was the opportunity, friend. There was the answer to the prayer of days and weeks and months. He'd been pleading with God and God's answer was so much *better* than any of his human planning ever could have been. Nehemiah *respected* the *means* that God would employ, and it strengthened and sustained him, and led him through to victory. Didn't it, friends? Ah, yes.

We come on down into New Testament times and we see the greatest problem of the ages before us. *How* would God take a little baby, His own Son, born in this world, and develop in Him a character and train Him in such a way as to prepare Him for the greatest mission ever given to men? How would it be done? How would that be done, my friends?

Oh, I'm so thankful that Jesus, as He grew up, always chose to *respect* the means that His Father had chosen—a humble home in the Galilean hills; the discipline of earnest, hard work from day to day; the hour of communion with nature and the study of the Bible at His mother's knee; the hour of communion with God at twilight and dawn in the hills and the valleys. Day by day, Jesus respected the means that His Father was using to develop His character. That's why He kept working at the carpenter shop year after year. That's why He kept studying the Bible and memorizing it and meditating on it. That's why He mingled with nature and learned its secrets. That's why He ministered in the home and in the community.

Thus His life went on year after year, decade after decade. He didn't get restless and say, "Oh, I've got to get out of here, nothing going on here. I've got to get out and *make* something of Myself." He *respected* the means that God had chosen. And when the right time came, from that carpenter's shop at Nazareth, there came forth One through whom the glory of the Lord was revealed, and that light kindled there has been shining ever since, my friends. And will re-shine in a rekindled blaze of glory in the remnant of this people. Oh, that we may respect the means God uses. It may be very humble means, my friends. Very humble.

I think of Paul, that talented author, that eloquent speaker, that great scholar, that ruler of the Jews, member of the Sanhedrin. Finally, by his earnest work and labors and sacrifices in the cause of Christ, he's reduced to the place where he has no more money. He's used it all up. He's preaching the message there at Corinth, at Ephesus. What's he going to do? Will he quit preaching? No. How will he arrange the matter? That's the problem, the problem of a self-supporting worker. That's where Paul had chosen to be in answer to God's call. What does he do?

He doesn't quite preaching, friends, but along with the preaching, the Bible says, he was doing what? Making tents. That was God's answer to that particular problem. That was the *means* that God employed. Could God have worked miracles? Yes. He could have rained manna down from Heaven, but this time He didn't choose to do it. The means, in that case, was the needle and the thread and the canvass. And Paul respected the means, and it worked all right. He was sustained.

I think of the early days of this movement. I think of James and Ellen White, a young married couple with a little baby, and they're poor, so poor that they are just living with borrowed furniture. So poor that James White has to go out and mow hay with a scythe to get a little money. So poor that he hauls stone for the railroad until his hands are bleeding. So poor, that he had to take his axe and with a pain in his side, he goes into the woods to cut wood to earn a little money to take care of his family and go out to preach the message. Those were the *means* that God used.

But a few months later, we see him about to go and work, and the vision is given to the servant of God, saying, "No. This time you're not to go out and work. You're to write and print a little paper called, *Present Truth*." And what happened? It said, "Means will come." Did they come? Yes, yes. As the paper went out, donations came in to keep the paper going and to provide humble means of conveyance to go out and visit the church and the scattered flock.

You see friends, God has how many ways? A thousand ways. And those who serve Him and respect the means He employs will be sustained. How we need to be in touch with God to know when to cut the hay and when to write and wait for donations; when to cut the wood and when to go out without any means of support.

On one occasion, Joseph Bates was so powerfully impressed by the Spirit of God to go to a certain place to preach that without any money in his pocket at all, he got

on the train, got in a seat and sat down. But by the time the conductor got back in the car to where he was, a stranger had handed him a five-dollar bill. Now, you'd better not try that, friends, *unless* you have the same evidence that he had and then it's perfectly safe. It's just as safe as though you had a hundred dollars in your pocket.

Those who love and serve God, and respect the means that God employs, will be sustained. But He has a thousand ways of which we know nothing. And the great adventure of life is day by day watching to see which one He's going to use. Oh, if we'll do that, friends, we can have a wonderful experience with God.

Well, I had some more I was going to talk to you about, but that's enough for tonight, I think. There's a lot more in the Bible and the history of this movement, one experience after the other. We've seen some right here on this hill, haven't we friends? Ah, yes. We could just have a meeting like Paul had there at Troas that would last until after midnight talking about the experiences of that kind. But ah, tonight let's sum it up:

“[God] has means for the removal of every difficulty, that those who serve Him and respect the means He employs may be [sustained and] delivered” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 8, page 10.*

He knows, He loves, He cares,
Nothing His truth condemns;
He gives His very best
To those who leave the choice with Him.

Will we let Him work, friends? Will we watch to see if whether He'll use a rod or a pitcher, or a raven or a widow? Will we be willing to wait for the signals of His providence, not in restless uncertainty, but in calm and sweet assurance? And then when the signal is given, press right into the execution of the will of God. If it's to march around Jericho, march. If it's to come against the Midianites with pitchers and lamps, go. If it is to take the scythe and go out and swing it to cut the hay at eighty-seven and a half cents an acre, do it. If it's to wash the dishes or mop the floor, if it's to lay the fomentation on, or give the Bible study, whatever God's answer to the problem that's before us is, *that* is what we want, and that's *all* we want, isn't it friends?

How will He work? When will He work? Through whom will He work?

“The secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him;
and He will shew them his covenant” Psalm 25:14.

Shall we bow our heads in prayer?

Our heavenly Father, we thank Thee tonight for the full assurance that Thou art conducting a wonderful school, and we're so glad to be students in this school. We are sorry we haven't made better grades in the past, but we thank Thee for every lesson

Thou hast taught us through our mistakes as well as through our right answers. And tonight we're looking up to Thee as servants to a master, as maidens to a mistress, watching for the signals of Thy providence and glad to respect the means that Thou dost choose. And we thank Thee in Thy wonderful name, amen.

Just this closing word before we pray. I'm impressed, dear ones, that our time to learn these lessons is very short. I believe the things that we've been studying tonight are of very great importance. May I urge each of you to take the notes you've taken on tonight's study and go over it with God. If you didn't take notes, get the notes from somebody that did. Go over these things. I know they're simple, but they're deep and basic. And if you and I will learn them, oh friends, where we've been walking or even crawling, we can run the way of God's commandments.

Dear Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing and keep us happy with the assurance, that the King of kings is our Shepherd; that the Almighty Creator is our father and that the One who hangs the world in space is holding us with that dear Hand. In His name, amen.

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