

The background of the cover is a vertical wood-grain pattern in shades of brown and tan. A solid, dark red horizontal band runs across the middle of the image, serving as a backdrop for the title text.

HOW TO BE KEPT

JOHN R. CHURCH

How to Be Kept In Perfect Peace

Rev. John R. Church, DD



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REV. JOHN R. CHURCH DD
Winston-Salem, North Carolina
1899 -1984

Dr. Church, an approved evangelist of the United Methodist church, and a member of the Western North Carolina Conference since 1920, was one of the truly outstanding itinerant evangelists of 20th century Methodism.

In 40 years of evangelism, Dr. Church traveled over one million miles; preached in 31 colleges and universities; conducted over 1,000 series of meetings with some 40,000 seekers at the altar; and witnessed over 800 men and women answering the call to full-time Christian service under his ministry.

He has ministered in many of the largest camp meetings in America, including: Hollow Rock, Sychar, and Circleville in Ohio; Lakeland, Avon Park, and Brooksville in Florida; Wilmore in Kentucky; Bentleyville in Pennsylvania; and Indian Springs in Georgia. In his early ministry he shared the camp meeting platform with such noted evangelists as: Henry Clay Morrison, Joseph H. Smith, "Uncle Bud" Robinson, John L. Brasher, Samuel Logan Brengle, and C.W. Butler.

He received the Doctor of Divinity degree from Asbury College in 1942 and was on its Board of Trustees for many years: He was co-founder of John Wesley College, Greensboro, North Carolina, and served as Chairman of its Board for 28 years.

The dynamic power and success of his ministry, spanning more than half a century, is expressed by Dr. Church's own words: "It is still true that this is the will of God, even your sanctification...Men may quibble and question, but I choose to take my stand with the Word of God. I cannot do otherwise and still be a faithful minister of the gospel. Other men may feel that this is an elective course that can either be taken or left alone, but with the light and convictions I have on the subject, I could not be true to my own soul and fail to preach it...Every man must answer to God for his own ministry, but I would tremble for my own soul, if I should go into His presence without having preached this glorious truth."

HOW TO BE KEPT IN PERFECT PEACE

The text is found in the prophecy of Isaiah, the 26th chapter and the third verse. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Among all of the rich and precious promises to be found in God's Word, it would be harder to find a richer, more precious, suggestive promise than the one that we have selected for our text. In fact it would be hard to conceive of a greater boon or blessing that could come to a human heart than to be filled with perfect peace, and be kept moment by moment in perfect peace in this old, sin-cursed world in which we live. When you think of the chaotic condition of this world today, of the strife, the confusion, the fear and the uncertainty that is gripping the hearts and minds of people you can readily see that the great need of the human race is peace. Not only peace between nations, but peace between God and man. To think of having your heart filled with perfect peace and being kept moment by moment in perfect peace is something that is really worth striving for. In fact, if you should go out on the streets and begin to talk to the average person of the world about being filled with perfect peace, and being kept in perfect peace, many of them would laugh in your face, or would shrug their shoulders and say, "Oh, preacher, that's a pipe dream. Nobody could hope to be kept in perfect peace in this awful, sin-cursed world of strife and confusion." Friends, we readily recognize that from a human standpoint it is absolutely impossible. You can't keep yourself, I can't keep myself, none of us can keep ourselves in perfect peace, but, friends, this isn't a human proposition. We are not the ones who are to do the keeping. God Almighty is the one who has promised that He will keep us in perfect peace if we will meet the condition. While it may be impossible from the human standpoint, it is gloriously possible from a divine standpoint. Certainly God Almighty has proved His ability to do just the very thing that He has promised to do in this text. All down through the centuries you can find instance after instance, illustration after illustration, where God has literally fulfilled this promise, and verified His word in keeping people in perfect peace. You think of Enoch, living back there in that antediluvian age, where sin and wickedness were rampant on every hand, and yet we see that man day after day, week after week, month after month, walking with God, and having this testimony that he pleased God. In fact, he walked so long and so far with the Lord that one day the Lord said, "Enoch, it's closer to my house than to yours, how about going home with me," and Enoch walked with God and he was not, for the Lord took him. And we think of Noah living back there in that same age, and the Bible tells us that the very imagination of the man's heart was evil continually, and it even repented God that He had made man, and yet God testified to the fact that Noah was perfect in his generation. God saw him through, brought him through the flood, safe out on the other side. We think of Daniel, and the three Hebrew children being carried captive from their own beloved homeland; their own loved country had been overrun by an alien army. The crops had been destroyed, the villages had been ravaged and ruined. Even the holy city had been overrun by an alien army, and the holy temple had been invaded and the precious vessels had been carried down into Babylon. There they were down there in a heathen land, surrounded by idolaters, superstition, opposition and sin on every hand, and yet we see those three Hebrew children refusing to bow their knee to the golden image.

Being cast into the fiery furnace, but while they were in the midst of the flame one like unto the Son of God walks with them, and they come out without the smell of fire on their garments. We see old Daniel being cast into the lion's den down there among those ravenous beasts. I've often pictured him going to sleep that night using an old mountain lion for a pillow, and sleeping like a baby in its mother's arms, while the king up there in the palace paces the floor and wrings his hands and can't sleep. He comes down the next morning and he says, "Oh, Daniel, hath thy God been able to deliver thee," and Daniel said, "Yes, Sir; everything is all right. I had a good night's rest. Feeling fine this morning. How do you feel?" We think of the great apostle Paul being whipped and beaten, and stoned and left for dead, shipwrecked and all those things, and yet we hear that great man of God testify, "I've learned in whatsoever state I am in therewith to be content," and exhorting other people to rejoice evermore and pray without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks. We see John Fox and John Bunyan and the holy martyrs being cast into prison and cast into the arena, to be torn by the wild beasts, burned at the stake, and yet they die with their faces shining and their lips ringing with the praise of God and testify to the fact that God Almighty had been able to keep them in spite of the vicissitudes and trials of life. Someone told me that Uncle Buddy Robinson one time went to New York City and after he had been shown over the great city and seen the sights of interest, the great palatial homes and fine buildings, Uncle Buddy went to his room and dropped down on his knees and said, "Father, I thank thee that I ain't seen a thing I want all day." Just perfectly satisfied. He had peace and contentment in his own heart.

I shall never forget an experience I had a few years ago. I was holding a revival meeting in the first Methodist church at Winchester, Kentucky. At that time Dr. Virgil Moore was pastor of the Epworth Methodist Church in Lexington. He was a good friend of mine, and he invited me over one day for lunch. As we sat at the dinner table, he said, "Church, you've been out here to Kentucky a number of times. You've run around to see the sights of interest. You've been down to Dix Dam and out to see the Palisades and out to see Man of War. You've looked at these big fine bluegrass farms." But he said, "There is one sight here in Kentucky that you haven't seen yet. To me it is the most interesting sight in our State. I want to show it to you today before you go back." I said, "I'll certainly be glad to see this sight that you are speaking about." After lunch we put on our hats, walked down several blocks into a very poor section of the city of Lexington, in fact, it was almost a slum section. Down on a little lot was a small house. The lot was so narrow they had to build the house the long way of the lot. We walked up on the porch, and the door was slightly ajar. Dr. Moore just pushed the door open and said, "It's your preacher that has come to see you. I brought you some company this time." A voice from the second room said, "Come in Dr. Moore, I'm so glad you came today." We walked back there to the second room and there on a single iron bed lay a woman, her arms across her breast. She told me she had lain that way for five years unable to move a finger to even pull the sheet off her face if it happened to get up there. But friends, I don't think I ever saw a more radiant saint in my life. That woman lay there and talked about the goodness of God, what wonderful fellowship she had with Him, and how the blessings of God had been resting upon her soul. Her husband was a poor man and had to work as a day laborer. He'd get up in the morning at five o'clock, and wash and bathe her, and dress her, and feed her her breakfast, and prepare her for the

day, and then eat his own breakfast, and pack his own lunch, and go off to work and leave her there alone all day. She lay there and rejoiced and praised God. Not one whimper, not one word of complaint did she utter. You just felt like you were in the vestibule of heaven. Finally, she said, "Now, Brother Church, I want you to pray for me before you go." I said, "Sister, I'm not worthy to pray for you. I want you to pray for me." We got down there by that iron bed; and we had prayer together. As we walked back up the street Dr. Moore said, "Church, that woman is a member of my church. She's been a member for years. She hasn't been inside the church for years now, but she has a greater influence than any member I have." He said, "People all over this city and surrounding country know about her, and her affliction and her wonderful Christ-like spirit. When they get down in the dumps they come over here to that little cottage and sit by that bed, get a basket of sunshine to take back home with them to cheer them up for the dark, trying experiences of life." Friends, God is able. God is able to keep people in perfect peace if they will meet the conditions and do what God tells them to do.

Now there are two great truths that are suggested by this text, and I want to call them to your attention just as briefly as I can, by the help of the Holy Spirit. The first truth that is suggested by this text is this.

You must be brought into a state of perfect peace before you can be kept there. Now I think that is evident. You don't have to be a theologian. You don't have to know a thing about homeletics to see that you can't be kept in perfect peace until you are brought into a state of perfect peace. Now the sinner, the man or woman of the world doesn't have peace. They have a guilty conscience. They have a sense of dread. They have strife and confusion. In fact, an unsanctified person doesn't have perfect peace. They have peace with God. But friends, the Bible teaches that you can not only be at peace with God, but you may have the peace of God filling your heart and flooding your soul. When a person repents of his sins, and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and is accepted by faith in Christ, then he is at peace with God. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." But friends, you can not only be at peace with God, but you can have the peace of God filling your heart and flooding your soul. Now you may feel like saying, "Well, Brother Church, that's a distinction without a difference." I don't think so, and I think I can readily illustrate the difference to you. For instance, there was a time a few years ago when Germany and the United States were at war with each other. But there came a time when the people of Germany threw down their arms of rebellion, ran up the white flag of surrender. Since that time Germany and the United States have been at peace with each other. Now while Germany is at peace with the United States, Germany doesn't have the peace of the United States. They don't have the peace over there that we have here. They have division and strife and fear and live under constant dread. Friends, you may be at peace with God, but thank God you can have the peace of God flooding your heart and filling your soul. After I had been preaching a little while I came to see that the Bible makes a distinction between being in Christ and having Christ in you in the person of the Holy Spirit. Now when any person repents of their sins and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and is saved by faith in Christ, they've come out of the world and they are in Christ. They've been delivered out of darkness into light, and out from under the dominion of Satan into the kingdom of God. They are in Christ. But friends the Bible teaches that you can not only be in Christ, but you can have Christ in you, in the person of the Holy Spirit. Now you may feel like

saying, "Now, Brother Church, that's a distinction without a difference." I don't think so, and I think I can easily illustrate it to you. I might go down here to the Ohio River and pitch a bottle out there in that river. Now that bottle is in the river. But I can take the stopper out of that bottle, and let the water of that river get inside the bottle, and then the bottle is not only in the river, but the river is in the bottle. You see there is your two-fold relationship. A blacksmith may take a piece of cold black iron and put it in the fire. Now that iron is in the fire. But that blacksmith can start pumping that bellows, and the first thing you know that fire will permeate that iron, and then the iron is not only in the fire, but the fire is in the iron.

There is a two-fold relationship.

There is a two-fold relationship in the Christian life. You can not only be in Christ, but you can have Christ in you in the person of the Holy Spirit, living, infusing, and permeating you, and filling you until you can't tell where you end and He begins. That is one of the secrets of the Christian religion. You know there is a Greek word that is translated in the King James Version into the English word mystery. It is a mystery to the world, but I think that possibly a better word could have been found for that Greek word that would have conveyed the idea a little better. That word literally means a secret revealed to the initiated. It is used quite often in the New Testament. You remember that one time Jesus was teaching the people by parable, and after the crowd had left His disciples came up and said to Him, "Why do you teach the people by parables?" He said, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom, but not to them." Paul uses that word for he says, "Behold I show you a mystery." In other words, I'm going to tell you a secret; something that the world doesn't know about. I'm going to whisper a secret to you. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment; in the twinkling of an eye."

Some years ago I was holding a revival meeting in the first Methodist Church in Yanceyville, N. C., and they were inviting us into their homes for meals. We were going to different places day after day. One day we went into a fine home. A lovely lady when she was taking my hat, said to me, "Mr. Church, are you a Mason?" and I said, "No, I don't belong to the Masonic Order." She said, "Well, I am so sorry. I was in hopes that you were a Mason." She said, "You know, my husband is a Mason, and he goes down to the Masonic Hall and he stays late, and comes back and talks about what a wonderful time he had down there at the Masonic Hall, but he won't tell me what they do down there." She said, "I've begged, I've teased, I coaxed, I persuaded, I've tried every way to get him to tell me what they do down at the Masonic Hall, but he won't tell me." She said, "In fact, sometimes he has a habit of talking in his sleep, and someone told me if I would catch him talking in his sleep, and put his hand in a pan of cold water he would tell me anything I wanted to know, and I've even tried that, and he still won't tell me what they do down at the Masonic Hall." She said, "I was in hopes that you were a Mason, so that you would tell me what they do down at the Masonic Hall." Well I said, "Sister I'm not a Mason, but if I were a Mason, I couldn't tell you what they do down at the Masonic Hall, for," I said, "those are secrets that are not revealed to anybody but Masons. You have to be initiated into the Masonic Order before you can know the secrets of Masonry." And you know friends, God has some secrets that He doesn't reveal to just everybody. You have to get initiated into His family before you can know some of the secrets. If you do get initiated, and get into the family, then one day the

Holy Spirit will whisper to you and say, "Say, you can not only be in Christ, but you can have Christ in you, the hope of glory, in the person and power of the Holy Spirit."

Now that is the secret of perfect peace.

The two main things that keep people from being kept in perfect peace are these: First—that old carnal nature that is in you, that you inherited as a result of the fall of Adam. Now when you get saved, all of your past sins are blotted out. You are forgiven of every sin that you have ever committed, and in the sight of God you are just as innocent as a baby in its mother's arms. But you still have that old carnal nature, that old root of bitterness, that something that is contrary and not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Paul tells us about it in Galatians where he says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that you cannot do the things that you would." Paul tells us about it in the 7th chapter of Romans, where he says, "The things that I would do, I do not, and the things I would not do, those are the very things I do." He said, "After the inward man I delight to do the will of God, but I find in me another law that is contrary. It is the law of sin and death. Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Every person who has ever started out to live the Christian life, didn't go very far in the Christian life until they discovered that something in their heart. Now I am well aware of the fact that there are a lot of good people, who contend that you can't get rid of that carnal nature as long as you live in this world. They teach and contend that you just have to wrestle with it, and worry along with it, and do the best you can. Well, friends, if they are right in their teaching, then I want to say emphatically to you that God has promised something in this text He can't do. For God can't keep any person in perfect peace when they are having a civil war going on in their own breast. Now either God can and God will burn out that old root of bitterness, crucify that old carnal nature; either God can and God will do it, or He has promised something in this text that He can't do. Now I don't know how you are, but I choose to believe that John knew what he was talking about when he said, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*" and I believe that Paul knew what he was talking about, when he said, "Where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound." I believe that he was giving a testimony to the glory of God when he said, "The law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath, hath, hath made me free from the law of sin and death, for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." I believe he knew what he was talking about when he said, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you, and if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness, and if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, Brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The

Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and, if heirs, then joint heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." I believe that the blood can go deeper than the stain of sin has ever gone. I believe that the minimum of the atonement more than covers the maximum of the fall. I believe that He can not only save from the guttermost, but unto the uttermost, all that come to God by faith in Him. I believe that the old carnal nature can be eradicated, and in its place we can be filled with perfect love, and joy that's unspeakable and peace that passeth all understanding. But you'll never have perfect peace until you get that old carnal nature out of you.

The second thing that keeps people from having perfect peace is an unwillingness to say, "Yes," to all of the will of God, an unwillingness to make a complete surrender of themselves to God. Now friends, as long as there is anything in your life that is unsurrendered, that isn't given up, as long as there is anything in your life you are not willing to say, "Yes," to God's will about, that thing will be like a cinder in your eye, or like a thorn in your flesh. It will gouge and irritate, and you'll never know perfect peace until you have made a complete surrender of your whole will to the will of God. You think of Jesus when He lived here on this earth. He was sensitive to sin. He was sensitive to discord. He was sensitive to suffering, and pain, and yet He walked through this old sin-cursed world tranquil and poised. You never find Him off base. You'll never find Him upset. He was always the Master of the situation. Always poised and peaceful. Even when He stood in Pilate's judgment hall, and the Jews were yelling and screaming, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," and Pilate standing there wringing his hands, saying, "Man, say something." Yet Jesus stands there poised and confident. How could He do it? Well, I'll tell you how. He said, "I do always the will of My Father. Not My will but thine be done." Even when the crowds were forsaking Him, and turning away from Him in disgust, we are told that He rejoiced in Spirit. You wonder how in the world He could do it. Well, the next verse tells us how He could do it. He said, "It seemeth good unto thee to hide these things from the wise and the prudent, and reveal them unto babes and sucklings." Whatever is good to you just suits me. I don't want anything but your will. I don't want anything but your way, Brother, when you get to that place, you can go to the Annual Conference, and while the cabinet is in session, and you don't know where you are going next year, you can go to your room and go to sleep in peace, because you don't want to go anywhere except where God wants you to go. You don't want any appointment except the one God wants you to have, and you don't want anything but God's will done in your life. But you won't have perfect peace until you make a complete consecration and get the old carnal nature burned out of you.

THE WAY TO BE KEPT

Now the second truth set forth in this text is this; It says, "Thou wilt keep—that is K-E-E-P, him in perfect peace." Not just bless Him during the Camp Meeting, on the Mount of Blessings. But after you get home, and the tide's gone out, and the shout's died down, and the evangelists have gone to other fields of labor, and maybe your neighbors are feeding you on cold shoulder and hot tongue, and husband's out of work, and the baby is sick, and you don't know where you're going to get the money to pay next week's rent. He can keep you in perfect peace in spite of all the vicissitudes and trials and the tests that may come your way. You ladies no doubt, have had this experience. You canned some vegetables, sealed them up in a can, screwed the top on tight, took it off to some dark, cool place, set it up on a shelf. Then maybe in about two weeks you went into that room to get something, and you heard something go s-s-s-s-t, ssssst. Well now, those vegetables are not keeping. Something has happened. They're not keeping. When you see saved and sanctified people spew and stew and fume and fret, they are not being kept in perfect peace. Now I firmly believe that there have been many people who have been truly sanctified. They've made their complete consecration. They've received the mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost, and had the old carnal nature burned out of them, and they have been filled with perfect peace. But many of them haven't been kept in perfect peace. I do not mean to imply that they have backslidden; I do not mean to imply that they have lost the blessing of sanctification, and that they need to go to the altar again. In fact, I am firmly convinced in my own mind that many of them ought not to go to the altar again. Now you may not agree with me, and if you don't I won't fall out with you about it, but it is my honest conviction we've had too much running to the altar in the holiness movement. I think we've had some preaching that wasn't conducive to making saints. It was conducive to making a reputation for the evangelist. I think that a lot of times people have been dug up when they ought to have been settled down. I believe that a lot of people have been caused to cast away their confidence, when they ought to have been encouraged to lay hold on Christ, and take a firmer grip, and grit their teeth, and set their face, and decide they are going to be true to God in spite of shouts, or feelings, or close preaching, or anything else. If you backslide, by all means go to the altar, but don't cast away your confidence over every little wind that blows, and over every person that comes along and crooks his finger at you and says you don't have the blessing. He may not know as much about it as you do, and the Lord does. You can keep running to the altar until you don't know who you are or what you've got, or where you're going. You can become so confused that you wouldn't know straight up if someone pointed it out to you. And then another thing, it is confusing to the world. The world stands off and looks on and sees people going to the altar again, and again, and says, "Well if they can't keep it, what is the use of me trying to get it?" We need to see, that just as there are conditions that must be met in order to get the blessing, there are conditions that must be met in order to keep the blessing. If you don't meet the conditions that it takes to get the blessing, you won't get it, and if you don't meet the conditions that must be met in order to be kept in perfect peace, you won't be kept in perfect peace.

I'll be honest with you, the hardest lesson I've had to learn in my Christian life is right

at this point. When I was a student in college, preparing for the ministry, I got the light on sanctification. I sought earnestly for five months. One morning about one o'clock in the morning, God, for Christ's sake, heard and answered my prayer, and poured His Spirit out into this unworthy heart of mine, cleansed it from inbred sin, and filled it with perfect peace. It was the most glorious epoch that has ever taken place in my life. I'll never get over it if I live ten million years. So far as I know I haven't backslidden. I haven't lost the blessing. Bless God, in spite of all my failures, in spite of all my unworthiness, in spite of my blunders and shortcomings, and mistakes, the blessed Holy Spirit has walked with me down through these years. He has stood by me in my dark, trying hours, and if I know my condition this morning, bless God, He abides, He abides 1 He's right in here now. I don't have to wonder where He is. I know that He abides within my heart. I do not mean to imply by that, that I've always been kept in perfect peace** I haven't. There have been times when I didn't meet the conditions, and I got in a stew. It wasn't due to the fact that I had backslidden. It wasn't due to the fact that I had taken anything off the altar, I hadn't. God bears me witness this morning. I challenge heaven to witness to the fact that I put it there and have kept it there, and the altar has sanctified the gift. Shout or no shout, blessing or no blessing, doubts and questions, in spite of everything. It wasn't due to the fact that I had backslidden; it was just due to the fact that I hadn't learned the secret of how to be kept. Now what are the conditions that must be met in order to be kept in perfect peace? Well, they are given in this text. They are plain as the nose on your face. If you meet them I'll guarantee you that you'll be kept in perfect peace. If you don't meet them, I'll guarantee you, you won't be kept in perfect peace. Now what are they? The first one is, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." The first thing you've got to do, if you are going to be kept in perfect peace, is to get your mind stayed on God. That word stayed means fixed; it means set. It is kind of like a dead man. As long as a man is alive, his eyes can roll and he can look at this, and at that, and the other. But when he dies, his eyes become set; he quits looking around. It doesn't make any difference what happens. The house where he is lying a corpse may catch on fire, but he doesn't look around. The floor in the room where he is lying a corpse may cave in, and the casket may fall down into the basement, but he doesn't look around. One of the pallbearers may drop dead between the house and the hearse; he doesn't look around. The preacher may faint in the pulpit while he is preaching the funeral sermon, but he doesn't look around. His wife may have a heart attack, and have to be rushed off to the hospital, but he doesn't look around—his eyes are set. Isaiah says if you'll get your eyes set on God and look at God, and don't look at your neighbors, and don't look at your kinsfolk, and don't look at your feelings, and don't look at the holiness preacher, and don't look at the backsliders, and don't look at the hypocrites, and don't look at the weather, and don't look at the winds, and don't look at anything, but look at God! Keep your eyes on God, and you'll be kept in perfect peace. You get to looking around, and you won't be kept in perfect peace. You'll be kept in a perfect stew. You can get to looking at people, good people; you can get to looking at holiness people, and become confused, and bewildered and perplexed. Why I've seen enough out of professing holiness people since I got into the movement, that if it had not been for my faith in God, it would have made an infidel out of me. They've done things that I could not understand. They've done things that have bewildered and confused me, until some times I didn't know

whether I was going or coming. Then I have lifted my eyes to God, and I said, "O God, Thou art holy; Thy Son is holy; He suffered without the gates that He might sanctify the people with His own Blood; He loved the church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify it with the washing of water by His Word. The Holy Spirit is holy; the angels are holy; and heaven is holy; and You commanded me to be holy; and it is Thy will for me to be sanctified; and Thou hast called me to it, and I believe in it whether anybody believes it or not." I believe in the great, holy infinite God of heaven I

Jesus came walking on the water one night, and Peter said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You." Jesus said, "Come ahead." And Peter stepped out over the edge of that boat onto the water, and started walking like it was concrete 40 feet thick, and so far as he was concerned it might as well have been concrete, so long as he kept his eye on Jesus. But he didn't keep his eye on Jesus. He got to looking around like you and me. He got to looking at the winds and the waves, and then he started sinking, and said, "Save, Lord, or I perish." You'll have to keep your eye on God. Don't look at Brother Day, he may fail; don't look at Judge, he may fail; don't look at Roy Nicholson, he may go down; don't look at John Church, he may disappoint you. But God won't disappoint you. A thousand may fall at your right hand, and ten thousand may go down around you, but God Almighty will never fail you. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. The storms and the pestilences may come, and the winds may blow, and the storms may break upon your soul; but keep your eye on the Pilot. Don't even feel of your feelings, your trust is in God. Your salvation rests in the finished work of Christ. You are under the Blood.

Now, what is the second condition? It says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because—because!—he trusteth in Thee"⁹ You've got to trust God; not trust yourself, not trust your preacher, not trust your wife, not trust somebody else, not trust in your feelings, but trust God! Now there are three Hebrew words that are translated into the English word "trust," but those Hebrew words are far apart in their original meanings. One of them is the word "hiphil"—now that means to accept a thing as being true, or to give mental assent to. Now, some of you people are sitting out there and saying "That's the truth—that's the truth, that fellow is preaching the truth." We can read the Bible and say, "That's the truth." "That's the inspired word of God," but if you don't go any further than that it won't make any difference. There have been people hanging around holiness meetings for forty years, endorsing holiness preaching, and if a man doesn't give a certain sound on the trumpet, brother, they'll climb his frame and trim him up. They'll give a hundred dollars to see that the camp is open next year, but they haven't got the blessing. They have accepted it, mentally; they give assent to it, mentally; but they haven't accepted it with their heart. They haven't done anything about it.

The next word is the word "batah." Now that means to look to, or to rely upon, or to expect something from. Now, that is a much richer word than the word hiphil. That is the kind of faith you have to have to get saved. You can't save yourself. You can come to this altar and bawl like a dying calf in a snow storm, and beat your hands on this altar, and yell and scream until they could hear you down to the center of town, but brother if you don't trust God you won't get anywhere. You'll never get saved until you trust God. Some of you never have got through because you wouldn't trust God. The workers stood over you and sang, "I can, I will, I do believe." And you kept your head ducked

down and said, "I can't and I won't, and I don't believe." And you wonder why you didn't get through. Well, I can tell you—you wouldn't trust God. That's the kind of faith you have to have to get sanctified. You can't sanctify yourself. I hear people say, "Die, brother. Lord, help him to die out." Well, I say amen, but brother if he ever dies out he won't do the killing. The Holy Ghost is the one who has to do the killing. We've got people down in North Carolina who have been working on the old man for 60 years, and he's just as much alive as he ever was. You can't crucify the old man. All you've got to do is stretch him out on the altar and look up and say, "Holy Ghost, do that, that I can't do," and then trust Him to do it. That's what Abraham did. Abraham brought his offering and cut it up and laid it on the altar, and then he stepped back and waited for God to do His part. He didn't run off. He watched it, and he waited for the evidence. The vultures came swooping around and he beat them off and said, "Don't bother that. That's holy." "That's consecrated, lay off of that." And he waited, and waited, until the fire fell, and God bore witness that the offering was accepted. It is not your business to sanctify yourself—you can't do it. It's your business to lay all on the altar, and trust the Blood, and plead the Blood, and let the Holy Ghost do the work. All right, just stick around. It will be done, but you don't have to yell and scream, nor lacerate your flesh, nor pull your hair nor froth at the mouth. If you have met conditions, just take a trustful, reliant attitude and look up to God and expect Him to do it. He has never failed anybody yet. He put Himself on oath that He would not fail.

Now that is the type of faith you have to live by. You know you live by faith, not by feeling. You live by faith. You are kept by the power of God through faith. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. You live spiritually by faith, moment by moment, day by day. You just have to trust God all the time.

And you can live physically by faith. You know, Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need." Not needs. We often quote it needs, but it isn't plural, it is singular. You have but one need at a time. When you're eating breakfast you don't need dinner. You may have a heart attack before dinner, or Jesus may come before dinner. You know, that is the trouble with most of us. We are not willing to trust God just for breakfast. We are worrying about what we are going to eat for supper. Some of you people wring and twist your hands, "What am I going to do when I get old?" Well you may not get old; Jesus may come. You may have a heart attack. "What am I going to do if I lose my health?" You may not lose your health. You may go to heaven before you have a chance to lose it. Jesus said, "Give us this day —not next week, not next month—give us this day our daily bread." He hasn't promised us cake and ice cream, or pie a la mode. He hasn't promised us everything we want, but he has promised to supply our needs and give us our daily bread, and bless God, I know He does it. I've tried it and proved it. The first charge that I ever served was a little mountain circuit back in western North Carolina, about 40 or 50 miles west of Asheville, away back there in the Smoky Mountains. When I went there the people were mad. They were fightin' mad. It had been a big 8-point circuit, too big for one man, and they divided it and made two circuits out of it. The crowd down on the lower end of the circuit got the parsonage and the furniture, and my crowd didn't get anything, and they were mad about that. And then when conference came they didn't have enough preachers to go around, and so they left that charge to be supplied, and my crowd was mad about that. They thought it was a reflection on them to have to put up with a supply preacher. Then finally the District Su-

perintendent came to college and got me to go up there, and act as a supply until they could get a better preacher. When I got off the train and they saw what they had, they just hit the ceiling. They just went up in smoke. The charge lay leader called a secret meeting of the Board of Stewards, and he said, "Now, fellows, I don't have anything against that little old preacher. He looks innocent enough. I don't think he can do much harm. I don't think he could do much damage anywhere, but we are not going to be treated in any such manner as this. If you fellows will agree with me, and stand by me, we'll starve him out. We won't pay him anything, and he'll have to quit, and we'll let the Bishop and the cabinet know they can't treat us like this." And they agreed they would starve us out. They didn't have any parsonage. They had a little two-room house, which wasn't even weather boarded. Built out of rough pine lumber, all right from the saw mill, planked up and down like that, and strips nailed over the cracks. It had been built for a one-room house, but after they got it built they decided it was big enough for two. They just nailed some plank up and down the center and made two rooms out of it. They didn't have a stick of furniture. Our furniture was there, but it was in the depot. They knew it was there, but they were mad, and they didn't care whether we had any furniture or not. The first night we were there we slept on the floor. Used a quilt to sleep on and one to cover with. We cooked our first meals in the fireplace in a frying pan. Finally when I got my furniture out there and unpacked, we didn't have any wood. They didn't care—they were glad of it. I borrowed a team and an axe and went into the woods and cut down green trees. I hauled them in and sawed them up into wood and Mrs. Church tried to cook with that old green wood. It would spew and stew and sap would run out on the floor and stand in a puddle. She would cry and worry trying to bake bread. You can't bake bread with old green wood. You can dry it out, but you can't bake it. Finally one morning she looked up at me and said, "Honey, this is the last bite of meat we have in the house. I don't know what in the world we are going to do." Well, I said, "Honey, the Lord has called us into this work and He will provide." But, I'll be honest with you, my faith wasn't very high that morning. I was like the little boy whistling through the graveyard to keep up his courage. I went out and did some pastoral work that morning, and came in early in the afternoon, went to the barn, took the saddle off my horse, put the plow gears on him, hitched him to a sled and drove down by the house and called to my wife and said, "Honey, I'm going over to Will Farmer's to get that bushel of corn, that she promised me to feed my horse on. I'll be back in a little bit." I went over there and she wasn't at home. She was across the ridge at her mother's. The corn was over there anyway. I went out and told her what I had come for. She said, "Brother Church, get more than a bushel, get all your horse can pull on that sled." I loaded up my sled with corn, and started around the corner of the house, and thanked her for it. Just as I was driving off, her mother came to the door and said, "Brother Church, we are Baptist people, we don't belong to your church, but we go to hear you preach, and enjoy hearing you. Last night after we went to bed husband and I agreed that if it wouldn't make you mad we'd give you a piece of meat." Well, I said, "That certainly would be mighty nice of you, Sister Nelson." She took me out to the smoke house and unlocked the door. There was the smoke house hanging full of hickory cured meat. Just make your mouth water to smell it. She said, "Just help yourself. Cut down any piece you want." I started to cut down a middling, and she said, "Oh, don't take that middling; it's no good except to boil beans with. Here, take this ham." And she picked out a ham that

would have weighed at least 50 pounds. I thanked her for it, put it on the sled, and started home. I passed a little road where I had been going up to get some milk and butter from a family by the name of Moores. I thought I would get my milk and butter while over there and save a trip coming back. While I was standing in the door after I had got my milk and butter, Mrs. Moore said, "Brother Church, we killed two hogs here a while back, and our neighbor, Mr. Matthews, over across the way, didn't have any fresh meat and we sent them some. They killed day before yesterday and sent a big chunk of fresh meat over here to us. We don't need it, and it isn't large enough to salt down, so if it won't make you mad I believe I'll just give it to you." Well, I said, "I would appreciate it very much, Sister Moore." She wrapped it in brown paper, and I took it down and put it on the sled and started home. I passed the home of the richest man on my circuit, a fellow by the name of Charlie Byrd. He lived in a big two-story house, had a fine herd of registered Jersey cattle. He lived off the cream of the country. As I drove by, he came running out and said, "Brother Church, I was just getting ready to go up to your house. It will save me a trip. We killed hogs day before yesterday, and my wife wants to send your wife some fresh meat. If you don't mind I'll let you take it and save me hitching up and having to unhitch when I come back." And he came out with a big round-bottom basket, just full of backbones, and spareribs, and tenderloins, and liver mush, and souse meat, with a nice white napkin over the top. I thanked him for it, slapped the horse with the line and said, "Giddy-up." I drove up in the front yard and I said, "Honey, come out here, right quick. Hurry. Come quick." And when she came to the door I said, "You ordered meat this morning, and the Lord's filling orders now the same day He gets them. Here's meat. Here's cured meat, here's chunk meat, here's backbones, here's spare- ribs, here's all kinds of meat." He won't let you down. He won't fail you.

But Isaiah uses a bigger word than that. He uses the word "Batah" which means to take refuge in, or to settle down in. Literally he says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because He settled down in Thee." You know, you just quit moving around and jumping about from pillar to post and running here and yonder. You just move into God and unpack and settle down. Like a lot of people have done since the war. A lot of people during the war lived in trailers and attics and basements, and with their in-laws, all packed up. They didn't have elbow room, had to go outdoors to turn around and get a fresh breath of air. But since the war is over they've bought them a piece of ground, and built them a house, sowed the grass, and set out the shrubbery. They've moved in and unpacked; hung the pictures on the walls, and laid the rugs on the floor. They've looked at each other and said, "This is home. I'm not going to move any more. When ever I leave here they are going to carry me out feet first in a pine box, or a metal casket." And Isaiah says if you'll just quit jumping around like a flea, and will just move into God, and unpack, and settle down, and put out the roots of your faith, and say, "He is my dwelling place. Regardless of what happens I'll dwell in Him

If you will do that, then you may know what the poet was talking about when he wrote:

I yielded myself to His tender embrace,
And faith taking hold of His word,
My fetters fell off, and I anchored my soul.
The haven of rest is my Lord.

I have anchored my soul in that haven of rest,
I'll sail the wide seas no more.
The tempest may sweep o'er the wide stormy deep,
In Jesus I am safe evermore.

Some years ago I read of a very wealthy man in New York, who had made his millions on the stock exchange. He went out on Long Island and had him a fine home built. When this great mansion was finished, and he was ready to move into it, he took two great artists out and showed them over his fine home. Finally he came to a large comfortable room. He said to them, "This is my personal den. I had it built sound proof and comfortable so I could come here from the noise and confusion of life, and find rest and quiet. Now I want each of you men to paint me a picture for this room. It is to be hung over the fireplace there. I want it to be suggestive of rest and peace." They went away and after some months had slipped by' they notified him that they had finished the pictures and were ready to show them in the place he wanted to use them. On the day appointed they all went out to the home. One of them unrolled his canvas. On it he had painted the picture of a beautiful flower garden. The flowers were blooming on every hand. Birds were singing in the branches of the trees, and a placid stream was wending its way down through the flower garden. He had given the title of, "The Garden of Peace," to his picture. The man looked at it and said, "That is very lovely and suggestive, but let us see the other one before I make my choice."

When the other artist unrolled his canvas, and hung it in place, strange to say he had painted a picture of a wild raging sea. The waves were beating on the boulders along the coast, that were covered with white crests that spoke of terror. As the waves broke on the shore line they revealed the huge boulders along the coast, that were covered with the back wash of the waves. In the midst of those great rocks was the broken hull of a mighty ship, that had been dashed to pieces by the storm. There was a great gash in the ship, and the wreckage told of the mighty pounding it had passed through. Just out from the shore a short distance was a mighty rock, that rose up into the air for nearly a hundred feet. At its foot the waves were breaking and falling back. Up near the top of this great rock was a large cleft in the rock. In this cleft was a nest with a bird on the nest, and its eyes were closed in sleep. The artist had given the title of "Rest in the Midst of the Storm," to his picture.

As the man looked at it and caught its significance, he said, "That is what I want. I want rest in the midst of the storm. I do not live in a garden of Eden. I live in a world of turmoil and strife. I want something that can give me rest in the midst of the storm of life." Well, thank God, the inspired prophet tells us where we can find that rest. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee."

Amen!