

UNIVERSALS

a balanced view of some particulars

Quotations from the classes of Dr. John D. Hannah,
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CONTENTS

Preface	2
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UNIVERSALS: SOME PARTICULARS

Educators, Education, and Ignorance	3
Fathers, Family, and Commitment	5
Patience, Discipline, and Greatness	8
History:	
Tradition, the Canon, and the Early Church	11
Renaissance and Reformation	12
Enlightenment and Revolution	13
Civil Disobedience, Civil Rights, and Civilization	14
John-Hannine Theology:	
Trinity and Relationship	16
Grace and Faith	16
Sinfulness and Godliness	19
Revelation and Truth	22
Liberals and Heretics	24
Theological Development	26
Preachers, Pastors, and Church Life	27
Revivalism and Missions	31

UNIVERSALS:
A Pamphlet Containing the Balanced and Symmetrical
Perspective of Dr. John Hannah on Some Particulars

Preface:

It was only a matter of minutes into my first history class at DTS before I scribbled out the title of the course which I had written at the top of my notebook paper and wrote in its place simply "Hannah." During the three ensuing years, I have kept that title at the top of my history class notes because, as much as Dr. Hannah teaches us history, he primarily teaches us something more: his philosophy of how we should live and love.

Thus the dry humor and wisdom of John Hannah have been a source of wisdom and inspiration for me during the last three years. I, along with many of my fellow students, have scrambled to copy down the aphorisms and insights he expresses periodically during his history classes. Now, in response to the requests of many for a compilation of quotations from Dr. Hannah's classes, I present this pamphlet with the prayer that it will stimulate as much thought, prayer, and life change in others as it has in me.

The quotations I have included cover not only Dr. Hannah's advice on proper attitudes toward life, but also his insightful reasonings about theology and significant comments on history. And if any dry humor has slipped into my presentation--well, I acknowledge it as just one more evidence of Dr. Hannah's influence on me.

The contents of an anthology is a function of prejudice, but if any of your favorite Hannine quotations have not been included in this pamphlet, please send them to me at Box 1596 for inclusion in a future edition.

Douglas J. Vardell
January, 1989

Educators, Education, and Ignorance

Get an education in part to learn what you can't know and what you can't say, in order to avoid error.

Not how much you know, but how well you know how much you know, that matters. Don't confuse bulk with quality.

Talk about the "what" only in so far as it contributes to the so what, the why.

Intelligence has nothing to do with getting degrees, only with getting into the program. Getting the degree is a function of the ability to tolerate boredom.

In Europe they reward expertise, not degrees. F. F. Bruce has "only" an M.A., but Americans want a Ph.D. from him because in America we think degrees are meaningful.

Men are proud of their heritage, education, or gifts in unwholesome ways. Remember we have nothing that we have not been given.

Have confidence in the midst of your ignorance that ignorance does not matter, as long as you have learned where to find the information you need.

If you want to talk well, read the great literature, the creeds, and the confessions.

Develop your mind and your soul, otherwise your mind will suffer from elephantiasis.

I have my own prejudices. I call them insights.

Learn to doubt the people you trust [i.e., your teachers]. Trust the Scriptures.

In higher academic circles it is easy for your faith to get shattered. You can afford to lose some faith and hope, but you must retain your love.

Is the purpose of the teacher to flunk a student? tell him what he doesn't know? No. It is to tell him what he needs to know in such a way that he won't forget it and won't attempt to cram it.

The goal of a teacher: Prepare himself for anonymity while his students rise above him.

The best books on most subjects are by Jesuits, because Protestants don't do their homework.

Harvard was founded to train the professional class of society, not just ministers. However, they believed all professionals needed a theological education, because if you don't have character, you are not qualified.

Men preparing to be pastors began college at age 14, finished at 17, and after two years of internship under a pastor were ready at 19.

Note how much preparation time Paul takes before each missionary journey.

The goal of Puritan schools was to create character, not to get a job. If you have good character, you will get a job.

The Puritans never believed all children needed to be educated to the same degree.

The USA is a generation away from extinction: witness our horrendous math and science scores.

Our liberties were won by intelligent, not mindless, people, and can only be perpetuated by the same.

One thing I have learned from history: Mindless people don't found great civilizations. It takes smart, motivated people.

Buy the system at DTS and learn it, then spend the rest of your life seeing if it is true. It is better to be wrong than to know nothing.

Come to a seminary not for truth but for options.

If you don't know your options, how can you know your position?

Seminary professors are myopic, thinking that what they teach is absolutely essential for the ministry. None of what you get in seminary is essential to the ministry, except maybe for some a union card.

You must outgrow the limits of an "ideal" (hence sterile, rational) education at Dallas Seminary. Dallas, Texas, and Dallas Seminary are not the real world, and you must learn the difference and adapt.

Fathers, Family, and Commitment

As a father, you must be intensely interested in submission; therefore you must be intensely interested in showing your children you love them; so you will of necessity do self-abrogating things, like sitting on the park bench at Six Flags for 2 days, to show your kids you love them.

Children can handle disasters better than parents; they are more resilient. Only parents get calcified, both in bone and in mind.

We don't really expect Christ's kingdom to come any time soon, but we do expect it to come in our children.

We really do not want much in life; but we do want healthy children.

If I am not witnessing, I'm with my kids, because I'm committed to them. All my cookies are in their baskets; I am committed to the hilt; we will either succeed or burn.

I've never encouraged my children to be successful; only to try their hardest.

My daughters are now teenagers, so our games have changed. In my activities with them, I ask "What is this teaching them?"

Children are not a hindrance to the ministry: they give you the opportunity to rest and enjoy life and play with toys and be childlike--things that you want desperately to do but fear what others will think. Children keep you from burning yourself out in the ministry.

It is a great joy and gift to me from God that He has provided for me so well that I can provide for my children.

You can't help children to see their potential unless you invest in their lives. For example, by coaching a baseball team.

In an agrarian society, kids realize their worth because parents really need them. Today, with day-care, etc., they never realize how worthwhile they are.

How are kids to realize how important they are unless we tell them?

Kids are expected to be adults by age 10--they dress like adults. Part of the reason is parents really don't want them around.

Kids move from myth to reality much more easily than adults. Destroy their myths, and you destroy their ability to dream. We desperately need dreamers--they are designed by God to be our saviors, because they can put information and ideas together in ways others cannot.

Doubt, questioning, and fear in youth have historically produced reformers: Martin Luther and C. S. Lewis, for example.

Settle for less that is meaningful rather than for more that is hypocritical.

No matter who you bless in your life, you will have cursed your soul if you neglect your wife and kids.

A father's working day is 6 A.M. to 9:30 P.M. if he wants a happy wife; any time for himself must come after 9:30 P.M.

Give your wife time. She married you, not your work.

Read books to improve your skills as a husband. What is worthwhile is worthwhile working at.

Familiarity breeds neglect.

We have a tendency to neglect the obvious, and a refresher course with reflection is valuable.

What Hannah wanted in a wife: a woman who could pray for him honestly (of course, it wouldn't hurt if she was cute too).

When a young man says, "Trust me," the young woman should respond, "Why? Where is the evidence on which you base such a life-changing request?"

Men are not prayer warriors because of their pride. Women do not have this abnormal affliction. Hannah knows some ladies who have never been to seminary, but who in their prayers can call God out of Heaven.

The man might be head, but the wife controls the home, telling him when to mow the lawn, etc. He must favor her to remain sovereign, so she won't rebel, so he will have a subject.

You can't be a sovereign unless you have a subject. I obey my wife because I don't want her to rebel!

Do not use guilt as a motivation. Such is a boomerang that can do immeasurable harm to her, you, and the ministry. Peter says, "Live with your wife in an understanding way, granting her honor."

The best thing you can do is admit your weaknesses--your family knows them anyway! Solve your ungodlinesses, persevere in your weaknesses.

Ask your family, "Where would you correct your Daddy/Husband?" The best thing you can do is admit your weaknesses--not your ungodliness, solve that, but persevere in your weaknesses.

You must learn what love is from your wife's perspective.

George Whitefield was a lousy husband. He enjoyed the fruits but avoided the responsibilities of marriage. His wife in England didn't know of his death until nine months later.

John Wesley had a very unhappy marriage which ended in separation. There is no evidence of promiscuity, but women mothered him.

Marriage is mutual toleration.

Living harmoniously is knowing what to avoid.

Sometimes when you recognize pain, it helps the pain go away.

Be practical in picking a place and kind of ministry: where and in what role is your wife comfortable?

The best of marriages are held together by a thin thread of commitment.

Wives want above all a communicative husband. Silence is not golden; it is horrifying. It is interpreted as an attempt to hide something; it breeds distrust. Wives find in communication a sense of worth and security.

The question [in anticipation of marriage] is not, Do you love the lady? but, Are you willing to love the lady when you really come to her?

Wives want to see their husband happy in what they do. They will be most fulfilled when you laugh and are relaxed about the home. This is the best gift for any mate.

Marriage is a commitment of the will to "suck it up" and live with it.

Are you preparing your wife to be the Bride of Christ?

I could not live without my wife.

Patience, Discipline, and Greatness

Patience will get you what hurry never will, with decidedly less pain, both in ministry and in marriage.

We want too much too soon, being too young, because we will think our brilliance organized and orchestrated it. Joy comes from working excessively hard but still only receiving it by God's grace--knowing it could never have come any other way. If I alone did it, without the touch of God, it is not worth having.

You can get slowly what you could never get in a hurry, and with far less pain.

Things that come quickly usually are correspondingly superficial. Those born out of pain usually last.

Wait. Nothing of importance has to be today, or even tomorrow. It just has to be.

Averageness, plus time (a long life), plus discipline = productivity, greatness.

Averageness, with time and discipline, will give a person influence by age 60. Straight A's and brains don't do it--usually those have to be gotten over.

If you pour your life into serving people and stay among them, at 60 you will be their patriarch. Gifts don't matter; that was gas poured onto the church in the 1960's; just integrity, faithfulness, and compassion.

Don't show me a person who can run a mile in 5 minutes; many can do that. Show me a person who can do it for 26 miles in a row.

If you fail enough times, you might succeed. What you lack in talent you can make up for in zeal. It only takes three hits every ten times a baseball player is up to bat to get him into the Hall of Fame.

If you fail and keep trying enough times, you will eventually succeed.

You only lose when you give up.

Calvin was a walking junkyard physically. Toward the end of his life he had to be carried to the pulpit.

"He did what he could" plus time is best, better than "he tried to do what he couldn't and died early."

You may not be able to afford to become great in one area, because it will be at the detrimental expense of other things. The goal is to bring all areas up to a good average.

Am I so weak in my emotional makeup that I have to be great in some area? If so, I will lose my children, because they won't be able to meet my standards.

Ultimately, the men that shape the world are the quiet people who touch the catalyst people: Melancthon's influence on Luther, for example.

The Puritans kept diaries. Today we call people on the phone. Without writing, you can't develop your mind. You can look back in your diary and realize it is a sin to be despondent because "He has been so good to me." It is also helpful in times of despair, when you feel you haven't accomplished anything.

If you learn the habits of working hard and setting impossible goals and meeting them, you will carry those habits your whole life long. Live for the long term.

The only reason life ever gets organized is so you have enough time "spare" to do the things you enjoy. So, for example, plan your weekdays well so you have time to enjoy the weekend--it only comes once a week, so do plan to enjoy it.

Life is a function of expectations.

We are significant not because of who we are but because of who made us.

Fear is the great enemy--the fear that God cannot sustain us if we choose one ministry over another. The Christian to feel most sorry for is the one who comes to the end of his life and realizes his faith was too small.

Feel sorry not for the person who goes out into the anonymity of the mission field, but for the person who listens to the counsel of his fears.

If we don't develop a generation of people who are not afraid of anonymity, who are willing to be nothings as far as being unknown, who don't see sacrifice as a crime, and who realize God has commanded contentment, not happiness, then what will happen to the missionary enterprise in two generations?

Great movements are born of great sacrifice in anonymity.

For the sake of cultural values, we sell our soul to mediocrity.

Happiness results from the perception of fulfillment (e.g., that you are where God wants you, doing what you delight in), not from either pleasant or difficult circumstances.

The Christian life is not living averagely in a democratic society. The Christian life is changing your world.

If I did only those things I was comfortable doing, I would have a lot of free time. I have never felt the necessity of avoiding those things I am not good at.

Uncertainty, like fear, breeds a sense of inadequacy. It is not an unusual experience to have doubts about yourself when the future is uncertain.

There is nothing I could be working on which your interrupting would be a tragedy. I have already accomplished in my life more than I expected, which was not much. So I am ready to die. My purpose is to get to know people.

If I die tomorrow, my greatest disappointment will be that I have thought too much about myself, put too much energy into myself, and baptized it by calling it ministry.

When you are unknown no one cares to pick you off--either by attacking you or by joining you.

Americans confuse meaning with physical activity. Overworking is an American phenomenon. Overworking might cause us to underthink.

Ideas are "great" when they anticipate the public mind.

"Great literature" is the anticipation of an inarticulate public mind.

Greatness has to do with timing, not IQ.

What makes a great writing a great writing? Because the writer was able to assemble in a logical manner the disassembled, random thoughts of that generation. He says what we would all like to say, at least subconsciously, better than we could say it.

If I make as much progress in the 25 years left of my ministry as I have the last 25, I will be deeply disappointed.

"We have no dreams of becoming great and famous, for You are all those things, and You alone."

History

History will tell you what won't work, but no one will believe you. When you live long enough to have insight, you are too old for the young to believe you; no one will listen to you.

That Christ's birth occurred "in the fullness of times" (Galatians 4:4) means that it occurred under brilliant circumstances of primary phenomena prepared by God through secondary causes over a long time.

Tradition, the Canon, and the Early Church

We say Roman Catholics have traditions equal to Scripture--so do we also. That Matthew wrote Matthew is a belief based on tradition which you must hold in order to teach at DTS.

Why do we have traditions? For balance and order in our lives; not because they are true.

The apologists equated tradition with Scripture because no tradition was heretical at that time. One was the Word given and the other was the Word described to us. Tradition = oral repetition of the wonder of who Christ was.

How can we reject anyone who doesn't hold to 66 books? It is just tradition. "Canon" doesn't emerge as an idea until the end of the 2nd century, and was debated until the 16th century. For example, Luther thought Melancthon's commentary on Romans should be put into the canon; Zwingli thought Revelation should be taken out.

We have inherited 1500-1800 years of pure sweat, yet we just blow our noses and go on. They [apologists, etc.] had to soak themselves in the various texts, and as they began to realize what wasn't Scripture, they began to have insight into what was.

Ultimately we have our own experience of Christ saving and transforming us, and then we look around and search for those books that best witness to our inner experience. Our faith is in God's providence; He has given no promise about this; it is therefore unprovable, "senseless," but highly probable, and thus not ludicrous.

In parallel, the ultimate reason we accept Christianity is because the probability of its being true is higher than all other religions; all others have a higher percentage of internal inconsistency, and therefore their faith is ludicrous in comparison to our reasonable faith.

The inerrancy debate rests in part on assumptions from the canonicity debate which we are ignoring. We cannot prove there are 66 books.

An early fallacy of the church was calling New Testament practices by Old Testament

terms, thus confusing matters: the Lord's Supper was called a sacrifice, elders were called priests. The other major fallacy was Platonism, a false dichotomy between matter and spirit, which resulted in legalism.

Why do the church fathers not understand grace the way we think the Apostles did? The Old Testament prophets wrote things without understanding them, maybe the New Testament authors did so too. If Paul was a premillennialist--would draw his charts the way we do--why don't all those who come after him share that view?

The church fathers seem to be naive theologically. They ask no great questions, and are non-speculative about issues such as how Christ could be both God and man and how we could have one God in three persons. Their writings contain no doctrinal discussions--strictly a practical "how to live" focus on morality. Either they read too much Old Testament, or we don't understand the Apostles, or . . . ?

You cannot base your understanding of most doctrines on the Fathers because they were not thinking about such things. They were enamored with forgiveness and went along sharing it, and eventually were so successful that people became interested in criticising them.

Renaissance and Reformation

Both the Renaissance and the Reformation attacked and pulled down the Medieval world view of the origin of truth, the first by turning to man, the second by turning to Scripture. There could not have been a Reformation without the Renaissance.

The Reformation: A visitation of the saving grace of God on some devoted Roman Catholic Priests.

Luther prayed to Saint Ann, his patron saint, even after his salvation. He just started the break from Rome.

You can't take something important away from people without giving them something to replace it. Calvin ripped out the sovereignty of the pope and replaced it with the sovereignty of God--for cultural reasons, and also because he thought he saw it in the Bible.

The Reformation was not an era of toleration or pluralism. Men held their convictions, knowing they could die for it, and willing to see others die who disagreed with them. Their courage got in the way of their need for clear thinking.

Luther: You can't know what he meant. He spoke off the cuff, in an embarrassingly coarse manner. He was fond of beer, and said it would be better to be baptized in beer than water. He could be tender enough to write "Away in a Manger" and fighter enough to write "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

Luther died of a heart attack, old, fat, bitter, cruel, and godly. Yes, godly, but not looking like the post-Pietism model.

Enlightenment and Revolution

Once you cross the Reformation, things go downhill.

Pluralism is unheard of in the Reformation, but is uplifted in the Enlightenment.

Why is Germany such a unique nation?

Because they believe in the significance of minute details.

Because they don't have a quick-fix-it society.

Because they don't have a Spanish "Manyana" procrastination.

Because they don't have a stratified society based on wealth. Kings and peasants eat together.

Hegel viewed history as moving toward perfection, which was: himself--his philosophy and the dominance of the German people. In his view, the thesis of the medieval church met the antithesis of the late medieval discontent, and resulted in the Reformation. Then the thesis of the Reformation met the antithesis of the Enlightenment, and resulted in Hegelianism.

Russia's application of Hegelianism: The government won't allow an antithesis of freedom to pull against their thesis of totalitarianism, so they can avoid a synthesis of something new that won't be Communism.

Hegel's and Darwin's books do the same thing: give 600 illustrations of their theory, illustrations which are chosen selectively from the available knowledge. Then we readers confuse the 600 illustrations for proof that the theory is true.

John Locke wrote two treatises trying to prove from the Bible that the monarchy should be limited. Today, our culture doesn't believe the Bible, so to link our ideas to it is academic suicide.

John Wesley wanted to found societies, cores of spiritually alive believers who would infiltrate the Anglican church and reform it. He held to that desire all his life. He never wanted Methodist churches.

There was far more religious liberty in England than in America. The Puritans tried to change the Church of England, gave up, and came to America to set up a "City on a Hill," hoping England would be impressed and invite them back.

The exodus to the American colonies was not for the purpose of establishing freedom, but for the purpose of freely practicing their prejudice, and not allowing others to practice their prejudices.

The Puritans had a monopoly on the only method of mass communication available in early New England: preaching.

An evidence of how faithful the Puritans were to God is how long it took evil men to undo their system.

Our Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, but not freedom from religion. The purpose of government, according to the Constitution, is to aid all religions without preferring any one.

A rule of thumb in history, with the exception being the American Revolution: Every war for freedom results in greater tyranny.

When Jefferson wrote that all men are entitled to the "pursuit of happiness" he meant keeping those who have property in possession of property. Not an individualized good feeling, but a societal stability of possession.

By "all men are created equal," Jefferson meant that we all stand equally before God, that He has put the same abilities in all of us.

To be scientific in Thomas Jefferson's day you had to believe the "Aspiring Ape" theory, that Blacks came from a sexual match of baboons and white women, so they had no soul. Jefferson believed this, and promoted emancipation in order to get Blacks out of the country. When Jefferson wrote "all men are created equal," he meant farmers in Virginia, not women, Blacks, merchants, or bankers. When Jefferson couldn't send the Blacks back to Africa, he bought the Louisiana Purchase and sent them there.

Civil Disobedience, Civil Rights, and Civilization

Stonewall Jackson taught a Black Sunday School class and brought Blacks into his home to eat at his table. Most Blacks fought for the South, not the North.

The point of the Civil War was to test the US Constitution at the point of states rights; this was the central issue, not slavery.

We think superficially: If we cut the symbol, the chain of the slave, we will get rid of slavery. The English thought much more deeply: Educate the slaves so they can be freed and become useful citizens.

Is slavery always sin? No, we are all slaves; we sell our services and our souls to the highest bidder.

Men seek the ability to order the external world rationally and thereby bring in the kingdom, utopia. They say "If we can only get rid of _____, the kingdom will come." At various times in American history, the blank has been filled in with the Indians, the French, the British, slavery, booze. Today Americans think, "If we can only obtain civil rights"

In a war, especially a civil war, you choose sides based more on which side first steps on your liberty and family than on ideology. You don't have time to think.

The years from 1880-1910 may be called the Era of Pragmatic Acquiescence, because standards became relative. Our morals didn't change, but the reasons for them did change, from the truth of the Bible to practical consequences. At that time, 36% of America was in church on Sunday--the highest percentage ever.

In this world there is always a class system: the haves and have-nots. Karl Marx's followers simply put themselves into the place of the haves, while using beautiful rhetoric.

If you want to see an economic key to unlock history, you will, because we act as we are--complex; we rarely do anything with a single motive.

Why do we have a Polish Pope? Because the Roman Catholic Church is accepting socialism as the dominant world system, and is rejecting communism. They have recognized that their greatest enemy is not Protestants but atheistic secular-humanistic communism. At least Protestants are religious, and Christianity is now sociology, so because we are religious we have subconsciously accepted the Church.

And why does this Pope have a double name? Because of the Church's conciliatory efforts to gloss over its internal cleavages--Paul VI (traditionalism), John XXII (latitudinarian).

Capitalism can become a synonym for selfishness.

The most culture-changing phenomenon in US history has been the Model T Ford.

In a democracy we are all free, but some of us are freer than others.

I fear any political system that denies the humanity and right to life of its subjects.

That which was the ally of the United States government at its beginning (the Bible and sovereignty of God) is now its enemy.

The United States is not a warring nation. It must be pushed to the brink of extinction before it fights.

We are mortgaging our children down the economic cesspool. Three times we have declared war in order to recover our assets.

If the earth ends soon, why did God allow America to exist? Well, what have we done? Something that no other nation has ever done: created the ability to destroy the world.

Every generation has been validly criticised by the next generation. What is wrong with us, and why are we so uncritical of ourselves?

In any era of social declension, you will find groups rising up in anger and fear against the societal structure. For example, the hippies of the 1960's: we should have listened to their views of what was fundamentally wrong with society, rather than just condemning them.

It is pretty empty now in the USA. Some try suicide (the brilliant ones), some religion, and some making money.

Why can't we criticize the status quo establishment rather than trying to sustain it? Can't we criticize and love at the same time?

John-Hannine Theology

The issue in theology is avoiding errors, not stating truth positively.

The proper view answers more questions and creates less problems.

The real answers are beyond the questions.

Most people are not searching for truth, but answers.

Don't neglect what we know for what we don't know.

More information usually simply confirms your prejudice, whatever that might be.

Trinity and Relationship

"Trinity" is a metaphor to summarize an idea that emanates from Scripture.

Trinity = Triunity: one as to community of attributes, plural as to personalities, all sharing in the one community, all equal; i.e., three distinct personalities sharing a certain core of attributes equally.

God is a many-faceted diamond of attributes.

It is very hard in our culture to view God as a monarch. We see Him more as a benevolent, doting grandfather.

How can you with finite words describe or explain an infinite phenomena, except by saying what it is not?

Did the Lord have two wills that never conflicted? What happened in the Garden? Was Christ being an unwilling sacrifice? Thereby causing Scripture to apparently be in error because it says He did the will of the Father perfectly? If "the cup" was the cup of suffering, then His wills conflicted. He had two wills, but they never conflicted because He was without sin.

Grace and Faith

Three things will amaze you in heaven: who is there, who is not there, that you are there.

"We are not skilled to understand what You have willed, what You have planned. We only know that at Your right hand is one who is our Savior."

God is no democrat; He is a judge.

Why has God chosen me and not my neighbor? Why does God open the hearts of some and not of others? It is not that some lack and some have the ability to affect infinite choices. It is the extent of our ability that is the problem: we can all affect finite choices, but none can affect infinite choices. So He chose merely as a function of His will; that is all I know. Why His will so functions, I do not know.

If God only saved one person in all of time, He would be infinitely gracious.

Calvin thought the extent of the Atonement was an unrevealed mystery, not for speculation.

Until you buy the bad news you will never see the beauty of the good.

Man is wonderful, but lost.

All men are eternal; the only debate is locality.

My message: Jesus Christ forgives sin in a world that does not think sin exists.

A person may legitimately hold to transubstantiation if he holds that the grace imparted is sanctifying, not salvific.

The real question: Is grace infused or imputed?

"If men and women come to Christ it is a miracle. It is not like planting corn."--Finney

God renews our wills so we can embrace Christ. He makes our wills willing. He woos us and says, "I love you," and we ignore Him. Eventually, He makes our wills willing. The example of courtship is appropriate: a man wooing a woman against her will. She slowly "gives in" to the man's advances as her will is made willing.

Remember that marriage, like life itself, is a temporal institution. Someday (forty years or so at most) we shall be married to Christ, and earthly contracts will be abrogated. Someday your wife (as co-heir of grace) will enter heaven and all administrative relationships will be abolished. Your wife is precious; how are you preparing her to be the Bride of Christ?

Is the reason for accepting Christ to escape hell? No. Rather, to enter into a love relationship with the only meaning that has ever entered the world.

Is the reason for accepting Christ that you will have a car in your garage and a chicken in your pot for eternity? No. Those are consequences, never to be confused with and sought instead of the essence.

God opened my eyes to the wonder of His character, and I cannot go back, because there is nothing to go back to.

To be redeemed means that you have unexpectedly fallen into a love relationship with the God of the universe.

We are tied to Him with cords of love--not that reach up but that reach down and entangle themselves in our lives, so that we have fallen in love with Him.

How free is the free will? Will is a function of nature. We act in our nature. A fish has absolute freedom, in its fishness, to swim. We are not free to be what we are not.

Ask not, "Is the will free?" but, "What is it free to do?"

Although man is capable of many good things, he is incapable of the necessary thing: meriting the mercy of God.

If you become a sinner by sinning, then how do you stop? By using the same ability. So you have messed with the Atonement, denying penal substitution. If you can't impute sin, you can't impute righteousness.

After faith, argument is useful; not before.

All men exercise faith. The Holy Spirit graciously offers us a new option to choose, a new object for our faith.

The object of saving faith is God, not Christ. (Through Christ in God).

Faith is not a contract, but a covenant.

The difference between classic Protestants and Roman Catholics is the word "alone."

Sometimes Jesus Christ asked for faith, sometimes He didn't; He didn't say to the Widow of Nain's son, whom He raised from the dead, "Follow Me"; rather, He gave him back to his mother.

Our hope is in something God cannot do--act in violation to His character.

Newborn Christians know three things: I'm a sinner, Christ is the solution, the Bible is true.

God's goal in the world is not redemption--if it was, He has done a poor job. His goal is glory, and both heaven and hell will one day sing the same song: Worthy is the Lamb.

The reason we have such a narcissistic, self-centered church is they don't understand their redemption.

Christ said in a victorious voice, "It is finished." Why was redemption procured before He died? What then is the meaning of His death and resurrection?

Sinfulness and Godliness

God loves you so much, He won't let you act like a bastard forever--unless you are one.

If sin is inside of us, you need a Savior. If it is outside of us, you need a revolution periodically. Those are the only two options: inside or outside.

There is a profuse garbage can in me.

The greatest threat to the Gospel is a denial not of inerrancy, but of depravity.

What devastated Calvinism was infants. Preachers backed off original sin because they couldn't convince parents that a dead baby was going to hell.

By 1750 very few people believed the doctrine of original sin, because the Age of Reason said that whatever is true must be reasonable and fair. But the issue in life is not fairness, but justice; and the Gospel cannot be truly understood.

No theologian has ever denied free will. The question is, what is man's will free to do? A fish is free to act like a fish, not to become a non-fish. Even so, we are free to remain corrupt, period.

Possessing sin does not define humanness. Sin is an intrusion upon our humanity. At the day of glorification we will be truly human again.

If Satan tempts us in a rational context, over sins of commission only, then yes we could live victoriously over all sin. But this does not keep us from sins of omission, in which we are not thinking rationally, and Satan is not attacking us rationally. In other words, if we sit and think, we will avoid many tragedies, and cause many more. We do not and cannot think and act rationally.

Augustine said man's mind is like a ball of string that has come unwound. It is all there, but messed up--the emotions are messed up, the will is rebellious. Man is spiritually dead.

Christians are culturally irrelevant because our culture is in rebellion against God.

Cults are founded to meet the unmet needs of the founders. For example, Joseph Smith (Mormons) had an inordinate desire for sex, so he justified it.

Loyalty is not a sign of conviction necessarily; it could be just a selfish desire for something.

The best decisions are filled with 60% selfishness.

On a good day, my motives are 40% pure. But we do things because they are right. Only Jesus had a pure heart and pure motives.

Godly people in our churches have only selfish interests, living off those who gave their lives to preserve freedom.

Oh, God, deliver me from myself! Not, "Oh how I love Jesus," but "How much Jesus loves me." We have met the enemy, and he is us. To have a revival, we must forget our selfish belly buttons.

A true friend believes neither the best nor the worst things you say. When you are telling the Lord how much you love Him, He knows you are being pious and says, "Oh brother, here we go again." When you are down on yourself and others, He understands your lack of self-control and loves you.

When people say, "It is the will of God," they mean, "I want to do it."

One way to get rid of our sin: dismissing the holiness of God.

There are two ways to deal with guilt: neglect or repent.

We think Christianity is a superior rational system, but arguing that is not what helps most people. So don't answer their system but get them answering you on the sin problem, because that is the great question that Christianity answers: "Have you experienced the forgiveness of God to your soul?"

So befriend the unsaved, so that when tragedy hits they will come ask you, and will thus listen when you answer. Don't go to church so often, just use the time to make as many friends as possible so there will always be someone around with a tragedy. Tragedy is the greatest thing we have going for us.

"I don't have any answer to this, but I do know what forgiveness is, what a lifted burden is. So when are you going to come to Christ?"

It is the good that deters us from doing the better. Evil is too obvious.

We would like to be more godly, but we wonder how much we can stand the pain.

Today, "godliness" means the ability to avoid the big sins and hide the little ones.

If we could see God as He is, we could see ourselves as small. When we see ourselves as small, we are in a great position to be blessed.

Theology is the art (not the science) of living blessedly forever--a living unto God.

Today we are still influenced by Gnosticism. We still think we are spirits in bodies, and think we can earn the pleasure of God by acting in certain ways. But there are no "if's" and there is no "more"; there is just love. We cannot obtain more of His favor; we have it all.

Works justify one who is saved in his profession of his salvation. In the concurrence of the words and works, the validity of the faith is established.

The mark of a Christian is his affections and desires, not his momentary lapses. Not that he does well, but that he knows the pit out of which he was dug, and knows where to go for cleansing when he falls back into it.

The mark of a Christian is not one who knows the Gospel, but one who delights in it.

A Christian is not one who knows the content of the Gospel, but one who in his heart has a witness to the Gospel.

You might have all the right doctrines, but if God hasn't spoken peace to your soul, you are nothing.

Don't judge a man by what he believes, but by how far he has come.

Freedom is knowing your limitations and reveling in it.

Freedom is limitation: the ability to maintain your holiness.

Fear is a good motive--not the best, but it's handy, particularly in a fallen world.

We don't believe in mechanics, but we retreat to them all the time.

The Protestant work ethic is fine in a non-technological society with plenty of land, where there is more land for farming than necessary and more work than can possibly get done.

The church equated joblessness with moral dereliction, so in the Great Depression men polished their shoes with holes and got up early and put on a suit to go off to a non-existent job, to keep up appearances.

The Bible urges us to be somewhere in between poverty and wealth.

Many rich have made many poor. Let it be said that you made many poor rich.

God to Hannah at the end of the road: "You did probably better than I thought you would."

Jonathan Edwards edited and published David Brainerd's diary as a model of what a good Puritan should look like. Reading Brainerd is similar to reading George Mueller: don't believe all of it or take them as a paradigm for your life. God creates some unique people just for Himself--the rest of us are normal, though we should be just as zealous, because that is biblical. God has given them to us not to emulate but to appreciate.

Mueller prayed for fog to lift, and it did. When I pray, the fog gets thicker.

Prayer shouldn't be a psychological means for overcoming inhibitions. It should be grabbing God by the knees and pleading for mercy until He gives it.

"We ask it as a favor in Jesus' name. Amen."

Much of what we call prayer is not wrestling with God on your knees--it is whipping yourself into a catatonic state, convincing yourself that you have no fear.

I find myself attracted to a mushy vertical relationship, "My soul pants after God," but not to horizontally telling people, "Oh, how I love Jesus."

You don't have to be consistent to get to heaven, you just have to have received Christ.

There is no room for discouragement until God is off the throne.

The Christian life, as its beginning, is a perpetual miracle of the work of God.

The normal Christian life: living from one tragedy to another.

Life gets deeper and richer as it gets more restricted with old age.

Think often of the temporality of your life and the nearness of death. If you thought life could end tomorrow, would you allow resentment against another to go unresolved, thinking at some future, more convenient time you would take care of it?

Know your calling: What do you like to do? Want to do? What are you good at?

You never escape your heritage. You will never escape the desires of your idyllic past.

The question asked by Pentecostals is, "How do I walk with God in a powerful, victorious way?" This is a legitimate sanctification question.

What happens when I have jumped through all the sanctification hoops of those I trust, and it doesn't work? What do I do?

Life has meaning in it, which is all bound up in pouring out ourselves in service to Christ. He has not called us to self-realization, but to sacrifice.

Revelation and Truth

God is and has revealed Himself: the two assumptions of the Christian faith.

If there is no revelation, then "we are at the mercy of ourselves."

Christ's ministry was not confirmation or demonstration, but revelation. The motive was not compassion, but revelation.

Jesus was not primarily a humanitarian. He performed His miracles primarily for a pedagogical purpose: to prove He alone was the Messiah.

Why did Jesus yell to a dead man who obviously could not physically hear Him, in the process of raising Lazarus from the dead?

"Help us to understand Your Word; not what we have been told it means, but what You meant when You gave it to us."

To be biblical does not mean you have to have verses for it.

What does it mean to be biblical? Most would answer that it means that what you teach can be found in the Bible in a verse or verses. It seems to me that this is only partially valid. Not only is it found in the Bible, but it is prioritized by the weight and centrality granted in the Scriptures. To over-emphasize some few verses to the neglect of the total

witness of the Bible is to ride a hobby horse.

The issue: not what the Bible says, but what weight you put on what verses.

To have Bible verses is not enough; you need the entire testimony of Holy Writ.

If you are myopic enough you can prove anything from Scripture.

A text out of context is not evil if it is not a pretext.

All meaning of prophecy is a function of a rear-view look.

Notice that most movements with unusual exegesis are founded on either the Gospels or the book of Proverbs.

We are all allegorists to a degree. It is not that we are literalists and they are allegorists, but that we take literally what they allegorise.

What you are you bring to the Bible.

Our culture is our eyeglass through which we look at Scripture.

The Bible is a book of comfort.

How do we know that Russia is the great northern kingdom of Ezekiel? Common sense ultimately is our exegesis. Every biblical king that ever hit Jerusalem came from the north, over the fertile crescent. And what does "north" mean? It could be southeast.

Prior to the American Revolution, New England preachers upheld the monarchy by going to passages on David. During the Revolution they went to Judges to prove republicanism.

We simply hold inerrancy, but actually pick texts to prove our prejudices and refer back to inerrancy to make ourselves look good. The issue is not "What is it?" but "What does it mean?"

Experience divorced from exegesis leads into a quagmire of subjectivity we must avoid.

To form a philosophy, you first decide the machine and then the engine. For Christians, the machine is history and the engine is the God-man Christ.

Our conservative approach to the text makes us hurry over exegesis to application, because our ultimate criteria is to make it "meaningful." We should accept truth as meaningful whether we understand it or not, then we will have the leisure to do proper exegesis.

The purpose of apologetics is to prove that something is probable, and that I have a right to hold to it.

If belief is predicated on the ground of explanation, I will not believe much; I have lost my faith.

Just because something makes sense, explains reality, does not mean it is true. Basically, we search for answers, not truth.

The human mind is so prolific, we can hold opposites without knowing it. We don't think synthetically.

Knowledge is both rational and experiential. Thus Locke's Tabula Rasa and Descartes's non-sense approach are both incorrect.

If you do not doubt, you will never know--or discover.

Rational arguments prove probability, not certainty.

Is the criteria of truth that it makes sense? "Sense" depends on your circumstances. In anarchy, it makes sense to kill everyone else before they kill you. So to reject depravity through Adam because it sounds absurd is to rely on a subjective standard of "what makes sense."

My clearest insights have normally been the densest periods of my life; it just took time to realize it.

Liberals and Heretics

Two great questions today: What is the nature of language? and, Is there a God?

Liberalism did not come to the USA from Germany, but from the New England Divinity of the 17-1800's. The Germans just taught us how to say it.

Mainline denominations today are latitudinal, not liberal.

If we are going to send missionaries to the ends of the earth, why not send them into liberal denominations?

Modern religious liberalism is like a butterfly pinned to a cork board flapping its wings and going nowhere.

If there is no revelation, then theological liberals are doing the only possible thing: pointing man to the garbage can of his soul and saying morality and sociology must be our theology.

Liberation theology is taking from the rich and stuffing it into your pocket while you oppress the formerly rich.

Religious liberals have looked at the Bible and asked two questions:

1. Is it easily believable?

2. Is it worthy of God?

And they have defined the four underlined words.

Those who find errors in the Bible make us afraid of it; we are afraid of stepping on land

mines. So errancy is destructive to the faith.

Why is it that the liberals tend to grasp social justice much faster than conservatives? The emancipation of slaves, for example. Maybe it is because of their openness to new ideas and their high view of man.

We live in a Kantian era--Kant is the watershed in philosophy. Pre-Kant was authority, creeds, and absolutes. Post-Kant is relativity and morality = immorality because all is relative.

According to Kant, Jesus had the deepest moral sense of any person. That is Jesus' deity, and it can be yours. Man has reduced religion to morality.

By saying that God reaches man in Christ, Barth took a 180 degree turn, retrieving theology from morality. Barth said that the Bible witnesses to Christ, and when Christ witnesses to us, the Bible becomes the Word of God at that crisis point.

When a person tells me what he believes, I still don't know what he believes until he tells me what he doesn't believe.

We will not come to true knowledge of all things. We all go to heaven heretics.

A heretic is one who knows better, but persists.

Most heresy has good verses.

Whenever you read heretics, ask yourself, "What part of the Bible did this poor person not have?"

Heretics raise the knotty questions.

There are two kinds of heretics: moral and theological.

Most heretics are good guys, but they are wrong.

Heretics are insightful people who are wrong. Don't attack them, but attack what they say.

Feuerbach is a testimony to the grace of God--that God let him exist.

Heretics cause us to know to do our work.

Don't believe what people say if you don't understand them.

Religion is the tail of the dog science.

In summary form, Voltaire said, "Based on what I can perceive, there is a design in the universe, so there must be a Designer." Hume later responded, "OK, but that tells us nothing necessarily about what that Designer is like." Then Darwin came along and "proved" that the Designer did not have to be a person.

B. B. Warfield was a theistic evolutionist. Only Charles Hodge was upset with evolution. G. F. Wright, the editor of Bibliotheca Sacra, introduced theistic evolution through BibSac and in the 10 volume Fundamentals defends evolution on the basis of Calvinism. It was not until 1918, when the Russian revolution was linked to Darwinism, that American Christians got upset with evolution. They saw it as a political threat, not a theological threat.

If order "proves" God, what does disorder "prove"? In other words, what is the origin of evil?

Theological Development

If God's work is the same in all ages, then the New Covenant is no better than the Old.

Theology is born out of the Bible in history, so understand the questions being asked at the time resulting in birth.

Apologists gave a reasonable, rational defense for holding to the certifiability of our truth claims, while also exposing the uncertifiability of heretics' truth claims. As they did this, they began to construct systematic theology.

When a person holds a view, he doesn't hold it in light of what it could become, so don't judge him based on how the view developed. You must judge him by what he was reacting to, evaluate him by looking at what he looked at and tried to change.

The company of the great Christian thinkers of the past includes the great five: Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Luther, Barth. Read with compassion, resulting in less criticism and more understanding. The minds of these men, plus the Apostle Paul and Schleiermacher, have shaped the Western World.

Did the Western church have the right to change the accepted creed of the church, specifically of Constantinople? If so, then creeds are simply cultural expressions of our present progressing understanding of theology.

Coming to a view is usually a flashbulb, and then we assemble reasons to support our decisions.

The Spirit of God frequently leads us negatively into truth. We know what it isn't before we figure out what it is.

Be careful how you claim Providence. All religions are able to claim some temporal "deliverance," including Christianity, so the essence of Christianity must be different.

"The proper study of man is the study of God."--Calvin

Christianity rests on an existential foundation. Our claims that God exists and has communicated to us are based solely on our experience, which witnesses those things have a reasonable probability of being so.

Preachers, Pastors, and Church Life

We have been called not to be preachers, but pastors. Pastors can always preach, but preachers can't always pastor.

Much of today's preaching is baptised psychology.

Our goal is not to understand the Gospel, but to preach it. Whether even we believe it is ludicrous, it is terribly exciting, and worth giving several lives to.

Be a student of God's grace. Study throughout your life the great themes of the Bible, e.g., the grace of God, the mercies of Christ, the forgiveness of sin. Preach often to cure the soul sickness of our race: preach the Cross of Christ and Him crucified.

Don't ever confuse results with essence, effects with cause. Don't give me a seminar on how to love my wife, but on the love of God for me. If I confess my selfishness, I won't practice it on my children. So I don't want to focus on turning around broken marriages, though I hope my message does. I don't want to redeem societal structures, though as I focus on the Cross I hope my message does.

Most preaching deals with implications without essentials.

Teach universal principles in your ministry, not universal applications. Give people the freedom to hear the Word with the elasticity to make private, particular applications.

The Scriptures are eternally relevant, but will you be as you seek to use the Bible?

Preaching the Bible all your life is like licking the tip of an iceberg.

Our ministry is not to gray realms, but to what is clear.

Poor gospel preaching condemns people to hell.

Could I, should I be able to, preach the Gospel from the Old Testament as Paul and all the Apostles and early Christians did?

The reason people don't flock to Christ is because we don't present Him.

The clergyman is not only a guide, helper, and friend, but also a prophet.

Ask these questions when preaching the gospel: What am I looking at? and, What can they do?

The real tool in a pastor's bag is the Atonement.

Love is a greater glue than religion. False religions flourish if they demonstrate love. Proclaimers of the Word do not flourish if they do not have love.

Successful pastors: Some can preach, some can't, but their people know they love them.

Pastors, visit your congregation--they will love you and open their hearts to you and the Lord. Remember their birthdays and send cards. Be the first person to visit their new babies--five minutes only, but that five minutes is theirs. Put the baby's name in the computer and write a 1st birthday letter. You will have the parents for life!

The children in your church are the future of the Lord's work. Spend time with them; they will respect, elevate, and love you. A child needs stable heroes, and you can shape their lives.

Enter into the sorrows of your people. You must become a pastor of souls, not a mere preacher. The highest privilege a man has, as well as his highest calling, is the ministry of care. Sorrow is a wide gate into the lives of people for Christ.

Remember that your calling is to serve Christ, which is not different from any other Christian's calling. Your calling is unique in that you serve Him by and through His people.

Go without a great program, but with abundant faithfulness.

Plan to remain in your first ministry until the Lord calls you home. When a man moves about every five or so years he undermines his productivity. Develop a spirit of perseverance; overcome obstacles by patience, endurance, refusal to quit, and longevity.

Aim to approximate as closely as possible the biblical ideal in a blighted world. Settle for the best possible when the best is not attainable.

Young ministers want too much too soon. If they got it, they would go up in smoke, thinking it came because of themselves. You never want the perception that you organized it and got it.

True joy for us is not in what we do or get, but in having the touch of God on our ministry.

Don't plan on being productive for the first three years of your ministry. You will try to live like everyone else you have seen. At your next job, you will be yourself and it will go all right.

Your biggest enemy to your ministry is yourself, and your biggest enemy to yourself is your perception of the peer pressure from others.

The worst weight on anyone's shoulders is that of the perceived expectations of others. This is so because self-worth is a function of peer and hero perception and values.

Be no one's clone. Cloning, or the desire for such, is a function of inadequacy and weakness (as is hero worshipping). God made you unique, so do not efface His special gift.

I have a little motto in my wallet to remind me that I must take time to care for my

teeth; it says: "Neglect your teeth and they'll go away." Neglect your emotional needs and you'll go away from the Lord's work. More is not better; at times, less is wiser.

Wives find in communication a sense of worth and security. I am not saying you must tell her everything, but enough for her to sense that you are not withholding things.

It might serve no purpose to tell your wife that Mrs. X, Y, or Z called saying that she thought your sermon was terrible and affronting. Your wife might have thought so too, and even indicated that on your way home from church, but she takes criticism of you as a vicious attack. It might cause resentment in your wife long after you forget it.

It might be wise for you not to do some kinds of counseling: those that are beyond the exchange of biblical content, common sense, and the urge of repentance, such as deep psychological and medical disorders; and those in which you sense your allegiance to wife and family being altered.

Men have the ability to focus thought on a single object or factor and forget all others; not so, fortunately, for women. Due to our deep urge to help and male myopia, we can easily view ourselves or help others to view us as being the solution--in such a way as to hurt our families.

We can be so caught up with a good motive, to help one in need, that our emotions can easily be engaged in being part of the counselee's solution. This has caused many a man to leave his wife for another woman.

Remember that people seek comfort before they seek knowledge; product, not process; answers, not truth.

Controversy is nothing but people finally understanding the definition of something, and if they don't like it enough, they will split. If you understand this, you can handle controversy better.

Preachers should be driven to prayer--they could be detrimental to their people.

In my travels I think I have discovered a principle that ministries that have longevity and fruit are those rooted in this periodic habit: periodic special times when you get away from the normal surroundings for a day or so, alone, to pray over the Scriptures and meditate on the Word.

The power of God is the source that makes us all equal. What God does is beyond our abilities. Never assume you are qualified for the ministry. Have affection for the holiness of God and for His people.

You men are qualified [for the ministry] by virtue of God's grace to you (i.e., redemptive mercies, gifts of the Spirit, the Spirit's indwelling, and the methodological knowledge and skills derived in your training).

Teach people to pray and to come to church expecting great things from God.

A church should discipline its members, even if it means they leave and go to the church

two blocks down the road. Churches have given up their duty as moral courts in an immoral society.

We must temper our joy publicly, because some people might be at a stage in their lives where they have little reason to be joyful. Privately is another matter.

"Dance with the girl who brought you." Figure out your purpose and do it. You are a part of the body, not the Savior. Don't develop a messiah complex.

Revivalism and Missions

Great movements of God all come out of fasting and prayer, and with great joy.

God save us from having a "maintenance ministry" and being a "caretaker of the Establishment." I want to see God move!

When God is moving, people will always line up to serve Him.

People flock to evangelical churches not because we do something right, but we are not doing something wrong.

The 2nd Great Awakening: The clergy had once been in political power and had turned to the state to get rid of unorthodoxy. By the early 1800's the state was the enemy, so ministers turned to pietism and organized and planned revivalism and conversions in the 2nd Great Awakening. In spite of the shallowness of the clergy's motivation, they did the right thing, and the movement had long-lasting results in terms of schools and missions agencies.

We have recognized the futility of our culture, and sought quick-fixes for it.

The "size" of the church is determined not in numbers but in impact--so these are dark days.

Revivals never began with the conversion of sinners, but rather with God's people realizing and fulfilling their duty. Obedience leads to conversions.

A stirring to prayer is not a sign that God will bless, but that He is blessing; not that He might do something, but that He is doing something. It is the first sign of the moving of the Spirit.

In the best revival I am aware of, only 10% of the population was converted, but the rest were deeply affected by Christianity.

In evaluating revival, what is important is not counting heads of converts and the emotions of people, but rather lasting change. Does it shake the culture? Does it move people to affections for holiness, even moving unbelievers to righteousness?

The world desperately needs to see people committed to something, pouring their guts out for it. For example, George Whitefield: "Even if they are not attracted by my Gospel, I want them attracted by my zeal for it."

Jonathan Edwards discarded "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" after the 2nd preaching, because he saw he was motivating people to heaven by escapism, fear of hell. He thought we should be attracted to heaven by the beauty of God.

We Americans are a gullible people: "A chicken in every pot; a car in every garage." So because Baptist and Methodists made bigger and better promises than other

denominations in the 1800's, they grew most.

It is not pagans, but the extremes of the insightful that usually kill a great moving of the Spirit, when they meet Christians who differ with any of their views.

In a deep movement of God is the danger of reaching faulty conclusions about those who disagree with you--that kills the movement.

Revival, while bringing blessing, will always bring schism. Controversy is only people understanding the definitions. Some will split.

Revivals reach less than 1% of the population, but make lots of noise. Instead, expect fruit to come with gray hairs in the same place.

Rather than using a church as a stepping stone, labor through the boredom of the ministry, laying the foundation for when God will move. If He is not doing anything right now, you don't either--just rest, and save your energy so you will have it when He does work.

A small percentage in every culture have an interest in those beyond their immediate culture. Dr. Hannah wrote to 300 DTS graduates who had not yet been placed in ministry to invite them to go see Mexico City and pray about going back full time--not one responded.

If He would make the rocks cry out, it would accomplish the job more quickly--why doesn't He?

"I will build My church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." The preservation of the church as a promise cannot be taken universally, because twice in China and presently in all of North Africa the gates of Hell have prevailed against it.

It is amazing how the electing mercy of God seems to show up where Gospel preaching does.

Almost every founder of the modern missions movement was a five point Calvinist. William Carey was a Particular Baptist. Therefore holding limited atonement does not mean denigrating missions. The idea that unless you hold unlimited atonement you can't say to all men "Christ died for you" is an idea never realized until now after 2000 years.

We need a generation of people willing to be nothing, to live and die in anonymity.

In the 20th century, sacrifice is a forgotten enterprise and is almost a crime. Our goal is not happiness but contentment.

The Roman Legion was increasingly made up of Christians and planted the Gospel within one century over the entire world of the day. Rome was the womb for the Savior; once His purpose was accomplished, God let them do as they would and judged them in His time. If the United States ended tomorrow, what can we discern was His purpose in allowing us to exist?