

The
William Booth
Collection

HOW TO GET THOUGHTS & WORDS

MAY, 1895

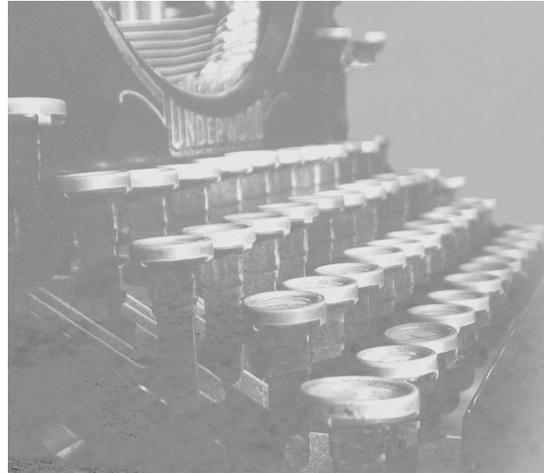
1. Perhaps no question is much more perplexing to the Cadet than that which expresses itself in the words, "It is all good and true; I see what I ought to do with the people, but how can I get the thoughts and words that will accomplish it? How can I get something to say?" He looks at the sinners before him, all cheerful and careless, full of the world and its interests, its pleasures and its gains; he wants to make them feel their condition, see their relations to God, and flee to Him for salvation. He sees the saints contented with their half-saved condition; he wants to say something that will make them seek the Purifying Blood. He sees the soldiers indifferent to the salvation of a dying world, and he wants to say something that will make them rise up, cry to God for the Fire of the Holy Ghost, and then rush into the fight for the salvation of souls. But how is he to get the words that will accomplish it? How is he to get something to say?

2. In answer to this question, you may teach him, as of first importance, that

A. He must keep his heart and life in harmony with the will and purposes of God. He must be a vessel fitted for the Master's use. God will then make him a mouthpiece by which He will speak to men – a prophet by whom He will declare His good pleasure – a medium through which He will pour blessings of light and love and salvation.

B. The Cadet should seek to be always actually filled with the Holy Spirit. As a room can be full of light, as the atmosphere can be full of warmth, as a body can be full of life and vigor, as a heart can be full of the spirit of evil, so the soul of a man can be filled with the Spirit of God.

C. This must have been the meaning of that remarkable passage, "In that last great day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink; as the Scriptures hath said, He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive." This was doubtless the experience of Stephen and Barnabas, and other of those early men and women of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles,



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who, like flames of fire, were said to be “full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.” they spake the Word of God with boldness; many were convinced, and turned to the Lord, and received the forgiveness of sins, and were in turn made into Soldiers of the Cross, who, filled with the same Spirit, turned the world upside down.

D. He must cry to God to give him a message, to impress him with thought and words and feelings that he can go and pour forth upon the people.

4. Great stress must be laid upon this qualification. The cadet must be taught that he must have the Fire and teaching of the Holy Ghost, without which, no matter whatever amount of information or knowledge of his Bible or of men he may possess, he will be simply like a body without a soul – cold, hard, powerless and dead.

5. And yet, whatever that baptism of the Holy Ghost might have been in those days, and whatever it may be in our days, so far as my experience goes, it did not then, and is not now, intended to supersede the use of our own faculties. However generous in nature the gifts of God to men may be, in soil, or rain, or sunshine, the farmer must still plough and plant and reap, if he is to have his harvest; and, however near God may come to the soul, and whatever revelations of His mercy He may make to it, the officer must still pray and think and read and observe and labor, if he is to have a spiritual harvest, In other words, he must labor to get something to say to the people likely to secure the object he has in view. In order to do this –

A. Let him study his own heart. Other people’s hearts are made very much after the same fashion as his own. That which affects him will affect them. Let him consider his own weakness and temptations and sins. Let him consider his feelings, his conscience, his fears; in fact, let him study himself. In this way he will get lessons as to how he will be most likely to move the hearts of the men and women around him. Let him study the people themselves: their natural characters, their likes and dislikes, their toils and pleasures, and ambitions and frivolities; their disappointments sicknesses, bereavements and deaths. Let him observe what most affects those about him; talk to them as often as he has opportunity, specially in the after-meetings, and find out, by personal contact, how they feel toward God, and Judgment, and Eternity. Let him observe how they live and how they die.

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(i.) Let him study the officers and soldiers about him who are successful soul-winners. Let him study the departed in their biographies, get to know how they talked and acted, so that he may find out what was the secret of their success.

B. Let him study the Bible. It is a wonderful Book, full of important teaching for the officer from beginning to end. Marvelous lessons have been got out of it, by those who have gone before him, and it will continue to the end of time.

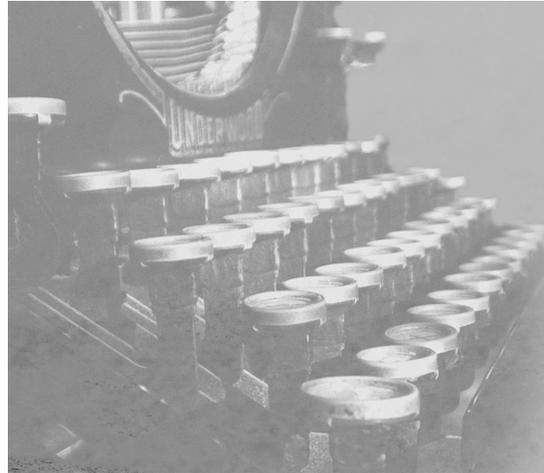
HELPS TO THIS END

How to help the cadet on this question has occupied my mind a very great deal, and I cannot say that the outcome of my thoughts has been altogether to my satisfaction. There is nothing in the world I should regard as more damaging than to say anything on this subject that tended either to develop the practice of sermonizing after the ordinary fashion, or to lead officers away from that freedom of mind and soul in speaking which is alike the birthright and the glory of a Salvation Army officer. The following, however, may render some assistance to the cadets not only during his training course, but afterwards: –

1. Let him make for himself a classification of those topics which most frequently form the subjects for Salvation Army addresses, and which are most instructive and effective in moving the consciences and souls of men.

2. The classification may run in something like the following order: –

- (a) The commands of the Bible.
- (b) The doctrines of the Bible.
- (c) The promises of the Bible.
- (d) The threatenings of the Bible.
- (e) The more important statements made by God and by the different personalities of the Bible.
- (f) The characters of the Bible.
- (g) The events of the Bible.



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(h) The experiences; that is the afflictions, trials, sorrows, and joys of saints and sinners.

(i) Such events as are constantly occurring in the world.

3. The plan to be pursued by the cadet, in seeking to understand, explain and enforce any passage from the Bible or any events which strike him as being appropriate to the circumstances of his people, or which appear to be likely to be useful to them, will be to discover to which category that passage or event belongs, and then to ask the questions annexed to that classification, and the answer which naturally comes to his mind will, I think, give him some idea as to what he should say upon it.

4. But we will set forth at greater length, and in doing so we remark, further that

(a) We have chosen passages and topics of the simplest character, and such as appear most likely to be useful and most readily understood by young and ignorant officers. Of course, these named are only sample passages and others can readily be added.

(b) Where several questions having the same meaning are given, it is with a view to assist the cadet the better to get at the meaning of the passage or topic. Where one question fails to gain a satisfactory answer, another may succeed. We will proceed, however, beginning with

SOME COMMANDS

Topics:

- (1.) Prepare to meet your God.
- (2.) Be ye holy even as I am holy.
- (3.) Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.
- (4.) Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish

Questions:

- (1.) What is it? or, What does this mean to you?

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- (2.) Is the fulfillment of this command possible? or, How can I comply with this command?
- (3.) Why should I seek to fulfill it? The advantages of obedience, or the follies of disobedience.
- (4.) When must I do this; that is, When must I comply with this command?

5. To illustrate the meaning of this plan, before going further, take one of the simple commands given above, viz., "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Now, I will suppose a Cadet looking at this passage, and saying to himself, "That will do; that fits my people; they need Repentance. I would like to talk about it, but what can I say?" He turns to these questions, and at once asks himself – or, if you will, he supposes that his audience asks him – the question –

i. What is it? That is, What is Repentance? What does it mean? He sees at once that the first thing he has to do is to show them what true Repentance is. He has known what it is from a child. He knows it to be that which the Prodigal did, and, therefore, finds no difficulty, after a little thought and prayer, of clearly explaining it to them. Then he goes on to the next question –

ii. Is it possible to Repent? The answer comes back: Yes; any man who has done wrong can be sorry for it. He remembers, or can easily be taught, that with every command in the Bible, power for fulfillment is given to those who wish to do so: – that it would be unjust in God to command us to discharge a duty which was beyond our ability.

iii. Then comes the question, "Why should I repent?" His heart will answer him back –

(a) *"I ought to do so. I have broken holy laws, sinned against a loving God, trampled on the mercy of Jesus Christ. I ought to be ashamed of myself and full of regret for having done so, and I ought to say so."*

(b) *"It will be profitable for me to repent. Repentance means the forgiveness of my sins, the favor of God, usefulness on earth and Heaven for ever"; and, lastly,*

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(c) *"I shall go to Hell if I don't repent."*

6. Now, I don't think that it will be very difficult for the youngest and rawest Cadet, on this plan, to get at the inner meaning of any simple passage of Scripture, or of any topic which may come before him. Of course, it will depend upon him being made to understand the working of the plan.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE

As they relate to experience:

Topics:

1. The forgiveness of sins.
2. Conversion.
3. A clean heart.
4. Faith.
5. Love.
6. Peace.
7. Baptism of the Holy Spirit

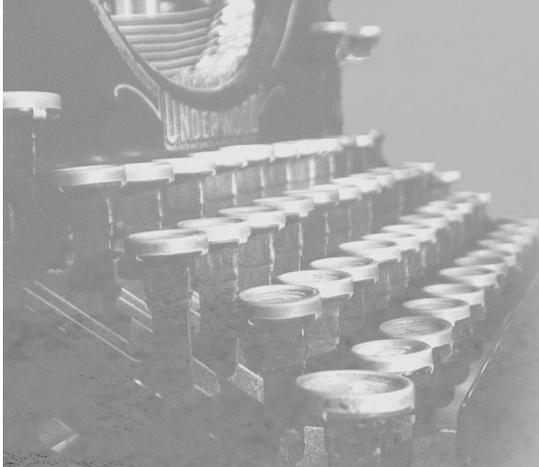
Questions:

1. What does this experience mean?
2. Is it possible to enjoy it?
3. Why should I seek to enjoy it?
4. When shall I seek for it?
5. What must I do to enjoy it? – That is, what are the conditions on which the realisation of this experience is made to depend?
6. What is the way of attainment? or, how can I get it?

IMPORTANT STATEMENTS OF THE BIBLE

Topics:

1. Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him...Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him. – Isa. 3:10-11.
2. No peace to the wicked. – Isa. 57:21.
3. I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. – Ezek. 32:11.
4. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. – Ps. 9:17.



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5. The great day of his wrath is come – Rev. 6:17.
6. The destruction of the world. – 2 Peter 3:10.
7. The Day of Judgment. – Rev 20:11-12.
8. The devil walketh about as a roaring lion. – 1 Peter 5:8.
9. If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. – Matt. 16:24.

Questions:

1. What is the meaning of the statement?
2. In what sense is it applicable to the people to whom I am going to speak? Will there be any one there to whom the statement will apply?
3. How ought every soul to whom it applies to act towards it at the present moment?

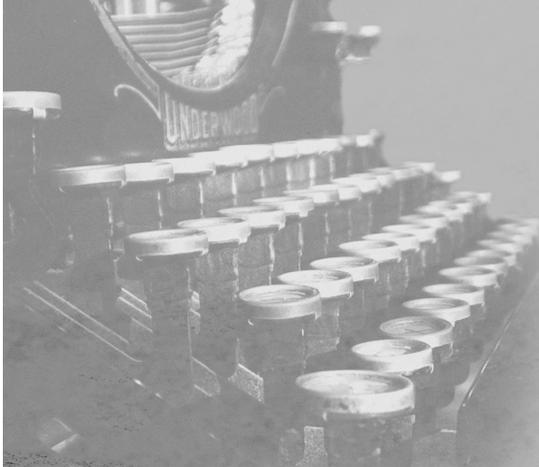
THE PROMISES OF THE BIBLE

Topics:

1. God will keep him in perfect peace. – Isa. 26:3.
2. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. – Jos.1:5.
3. Then I sprinkle clean water upon you and shall be clean. – Eze 36:25.
4. Return ye black sliding children and I will heal your blackslidings. – Jer. 3:22.
5. My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. – Phil. 4:19
6. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. – Rev. 2:10
7. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. – Matt. 3:11.

Questions:

1. What does this Promise mean?
2. Who is it for? or, does it apply to me?
3. What are the conditions on which I have a right to expect the fulfillment in my case?



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There are conditions connected with every promise, either expressed or implied. Explain this to the Cadet.

4. When is the time for the fulfillment of this promise?
5. Is God able to fulfill it?
6. Is its fulfillment desirable in my case?
7. Shall we seek its fulfillment now?

THE THREATENINGS OF THE BIBLE

Topics:

1. The wicked is driven away in his wickedness. – Proverbs 14:32.
2. Depart from Me, ye cursed. – Matt. 25:41.
3. My Spirit shall not always strive with man. – Gen.6:3.
4. The unbelieving and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death. – Rev. 21:8.
5. God will destroy the wicked. – Isaiah 13:4.
6. As in the days that were before the Flood..so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. – Matt. 24:38.
7. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. – Luke 13:4-5.
8. God is not mocked–He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. – Gal. 6:7-8

Questions:

1. What does this passage mean? Is not this threatening something terrible?
2. Who, or what class of character is this spoken against? or, Of whom is this spoken? or, To whom does this apply?
3. Show here that God is no respecter of persons, but that men's characters determine the character of God's treatment of them.
4. What course must be followed to avoid this call.

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THE GOOD CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE

Individuals

Enoch, Hezekiah,
Moses, Jeremiah,
Joshua, Nehemiah,
Elijah, Peter,
Eli, Barnabus,
Deborah, Stephen,
David, Mary.
Daniel,
Gideon
The Hebrew Children

Questions

1. What were the most sticking points? or, What were the points most worthy of note in the character under consideration? or, What were the points most carefully avoided?
2. How did this individual did this individual attain to this experience?
3. While the same earthly exaltation may not be possible to us, yet persistence in the use of the same means will bring a man as near to God both on earth and in Heaven.

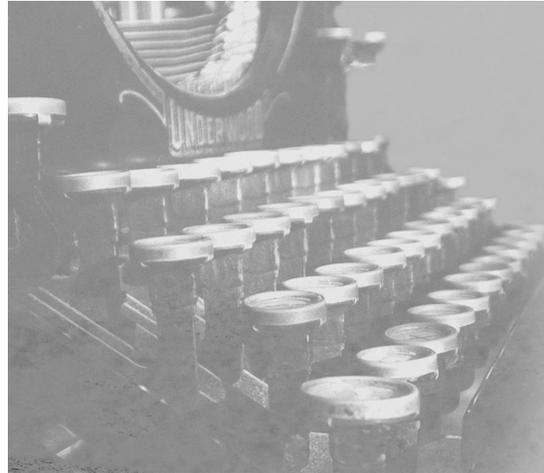
THE BAD CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE

Individuals

Cain
The Antediluvians
Lot's Wife
Saul
Ahab and Jezebel
Belshazzar
Judas
Ananias and Saphira
Herod

Questions

1. What were the most striking features in the characters named?



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2. How did this wickedness, or decline or backsliding come about?
3. Did the conduct of this individual work any evil upon other people? If so, what? Or what evils did it work upon other people?
4. Did this person's action bring any special consequences upon his own soul? What were they?
5. How can we avoid and be delivered from falling into the practice of the same evils and dangers?

BIBLE INSTANCES OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WICKED

Topics

The Fall
The Deluge
Destruction of Sodom
Death of Saul
Destruction of Jerusalem
Death of Ananias

Questions

1. Explain this event
2. Why did God send this destruction? or, Why did He destroy these people? or Why did He allow this destruction to come about?
3. Will the same conduct on the part of men to-day bring about similar calamities which, in the long run, will be equally destructive of human interests?

EVENTS TRANSPIRING TO-DAY

Topics

Sudden death in the neighbourhood
Sudden death in the Corps
Heavy affliction
Great Fire
A Flood
National Calamities

Questions

1. Describe the event referred to. What is the character of the event?
2. What lessons are to be learned from this event, or what does it illustrate, or, is there anything in the future of my hearers that can compare with this?